

**Lean Six Sigma Quality Transformation Toolkit (LSSQTT)\***  
**LSSQTT Tool #1 Courseware Content**  
**“Team Building, Leadership, Communicating The Project And Change”**

1. Lean six sigma quality transformation toolkit (LSSQTT)
2. Team culture, communication
3. Moving projects--and teams forward--start of suggestion systems
4. Team behaviors, characteristics, general considerations
5. Change, improvement, leadership
6. Supervisor leader: manager, team facilitator, champion, mentor
7. Rewarding, recognizing, redirecting: Growing and handling leaders
8. Consensus building: Leader as communicator
9. Removing barriers to improvement, management versus leadership and change
10. Leading change, strategic planning

\*Updated fall, 2006 by John W. Sinn.

**Lean Six Sigma Quality Transformation Toolkit (LSSQTT)**

The highly competitive global economy is characterized by organizations with high quality products at competitive prices with just in time delivery. Frequently production of one product occurs at various locations around the world, composed of various supplier and customer relationships. The days of one facility providing all functions, and all elements of production being at one location, are rapidly becoming a thing of the past, as is production at the pace of the producer rather than the pace required by the customer.

Excellent quality, obviously, must be accounted for, as part of production, and clearly, organizations cannot ignore the cost of this quality. Customers will definitely require competitively priced products, delivered at high speed and with high quality. Passing along the cost of quality, to customers, simply “buried” in the product cost, as we may have been able to do some years ago, will not work any longer in the competitive future. Organizations wishing to be competitive, now and in the future, must provide high quality products, at low cost, faster than their competition.

The bottom line is that organizations that simply produce products or services without accounting for quality, in cost effective ways, will not be competitive and they will not survive in the global marketplace. Put another way, organizations must integrate quality systems into their production systems, and this must be done in seamless and value adding ways. International standards must be foundational as part of the quality systems for production globally, and the organization must

effectively apply lean and six sigma principles in the quality and production systems.

All of this must be done increasingly as part of the broader system. Quality systems can not be thought of as an “add on”, another element of what we must attend to because someone says do it. Quality must be a way of life in all that we do, integrated from top to bottom as the overall management system. Management cannot be thought of as a separation from actual value adding elements in production. All must be viewed as value adding systems, collectively identified as the quality management system (QMS).

Part of the key to this rather substantial paradigm shift is to truly empower workers. Particularly at the workplace level, where product is actually having value added, directly, the workers must now increasingly be managers. Changes throughout the organization must be attended to and bring about a cultural paradigm shift necessary to actually shift control and decision-making, in doable and respectful ways, into the workplace. While much will continue to be at the supervisory level, much will be as teams and workers in what used to be shop floor, or if not in manufacturing, the “firing line”.

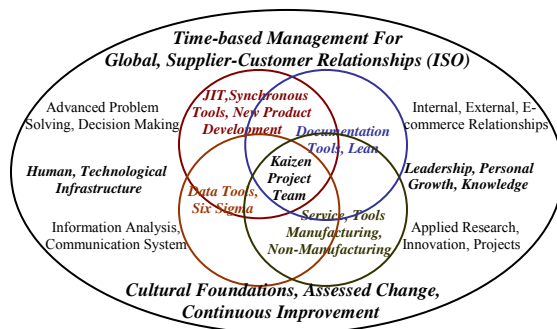
The QMS focuses on production, rather than manufacturing solely, since much of what the world demands today is produced but not necessarily manufactured in the traditional sense. Production takes into account virtually any act which attempts to add value, and is not limited to only traditional manufacturing value added functions based on changes in materials. The nature of value adding has shifted to include changes in information as value added, systems for moving information, and assuring effective communications in all that we do as value added services. This is also true since any service

industry function can be production, including construction, health care, transportation, recreation, academia, government entities, and so on.

QMS's are applicable to all functions and whether a traditional material based product is manufactured or produced is perhaps irrelevant. What is important is that we are adding economic value to the base of productive activity. While the main interest is on the QMS, obviously other elements and sub-systems are relevant and important as productive outputs. Production is the synthesis of infrastructural and organizational principles and methods used to produce products—relationally interconnecting the QMS. This also acknowledges the extent to which QMS principles and methods have permeated the organization.

The various systems rely on standardized processes to assure production of quality products and reduce counter productive forces in the systems and on workers. By being involved, workers have the opportunity to have a direct impact on the design of their production system, the performance required of them and continuous improvement. The QMS, thus, provides the framework for the implementation and further development of other systemic methods. Through consistent, ongoing, implementation and modification of the QMS, organizational competitiveness will be continuously improved.

A model to help facilitate what is being discussed is shown nearby, identified as the Lean, Six Sigma, Quality Transformation Toolkit (LSSQTT). While not a pure model for production, the LSSQTT is a blend of QMS and production elements. Based heavily around the QMS, the LSSQTT is an integrated process and system design, implementation and sustainability model.



**Lean, Six Sigma, Quality Transformation Toolkit**

The LSSQTT model describes how to add value in the process of producing products. The description as a model is deliberate to help illustrate integration of individual principles within a holistic system. Each part is not fully functional as an individual entity, and the resulting integrated model is one that is greater

than the sum of its individual elements. The LSSQTT is also a functional courseware designed to help define and do continuous improvement and change organizationally, within a context of the QMS. The LSSQTT courseware provides a template for organizations wishing to transform and change the collective culture, through workers, based on:

- 42 tools digitized for optimum flexibility, use via the internet online, or in traditional delivery.
- Lean, six sigma for variation and waste reduction using team-based "Kaizen" change focus.
- ISO, QS and Baldrige total quality and global "cultural" view, engaged as technical teams.
- Hands-on problem solving, real or simulated applied research projects, critical thinking.
- Courseware "template" facilitates portfolio development and assessment of quality issues.
- Content is structured in MS Word standard "text" long form and power point short form.
- Electronic communication assessing, reflecting on e-commerce issues and opportunities.
- Individual and team leadership in a learning community environment, service oriented projects.
- All tool applications are MS Word "excel" format, user friendly key concepts and examples.

The seven part toolkit series was developed through work with 100's of industries since the 1980's in various environments. The LSSQTT courseware system, as a template in model form, is the basis for structured discipline, explained graphically on the previous page, and further now.

The outer ring represents the broadest of culture or infrastructure required to conduct quality management system functions and productive work organizationally. Beginning on the upper left, advanced problem solving and decision making; and applied research and innovation projects in the lower right, define technical requirements for an organizational culture, to function as a disciplined system. Human and technological infrastructure are arranged to facilitate technical work of the organization via teams and projects. Information analysis and communication systems, internal and external, provide for e-commerce in the future, both shown at the lower left and upper right, since work in the toolkit is designed to be in electronic teams.

At the center, connected and inter-related data, documentation, service and synchronous tools are required to understand and do QMS's foundationally. Facilitating basic problem solving opportunities which lead naturally to teaching and learning in team projects, change and growth occur, based on continuous improvement through empowered knowledge, individually and collectively.

The nature of change that implementation of QMS's entails requires involvement of virtually everyone organizationally. Although the QMS can and should be applied across many aspects and functions organizationally, primary focus is team at work place level. Although much of the QMS is broad-based, requiring higher level management decisions and impetus, the team and workplace level are the primary interest in the toolkit model.

The QMS has been initiated under ISO 9000 rubrics, and in many cases now serves as a "umbrella" for the broader quality system. As ISO 9000 certification and registration systems were introduced and implemented in the 1980's and 90's, and beyond, around the US and world, this has driven the cause of quality to new heights organizationally and functionally. What was intended to serve as a vehicle for growth and change in the global marketplace was also a catalyst for change toward a quality focus for all of us in much that we do. This includes our workplace, but also many of the local community-based institutions which we are part of.

Various quality initiatives have come, and some have gone. But most have stayed in one form or another, and their impact continues to be felt as part of the broader quality movement and QMS. The quality tools which have risen to the forefront today, now a part of the broader QMS, include statistical process control tools such as variable and attribute charting, capability and gage R & R indeces, generally identified as six sigma or data-based systems; industrial engineering tools such as standardized work analysis, capacity analysis, corrective action, 5'S's, and others commonly now called lean systems; and, quality planning tools for new product development such as process control planning, quality function deployment, part qualification and others commonly identified as synchronous. There are others, and depending on the nature of industrial activity, products produced, resources used, and so on, the point must be underscored that the quality field has contributed huge tools which continue to be refined and applied.

Today's environment of change is a strong and substantive global emphasis, with overtones that cannot and ought not be ignored. The QMS model, defined as LSSQTT, enables and helps us prepare for this global reality. Part of what we must do is use the tools we have evolved in the quality profession in novel and innovative ways to help improve well beyond our workplace only. We must be continuously changing for the good, and developing a culture of learning and transfer of knowledge, grown based on problems solved day-to-day, turned into improvements. When we solve a problem today it should be documented in ways which can be shared

electronically with others to help them avoid the same pitfalls, and to therefore enable all to move forward collectively in a partnership for competitive growth. This is certainly also true at the community level. We will see an upsurge in changes at the infrastructural level in the future—changes which will need quality systems and certainly reflective of the QMS type rubrics being discussed here.

The LSSQTT uses data and documentation as the main communication vehicles, collected and housed electronically wherever possible. Data and documentation, are at the heart of the system, used to solve problems and add value in ways which disciplined and knowledgeable workers can do. The best emphasis in the LSSQTT is at the worker and workplace level, recognizing these people are the one's needed to be empowered and grown for future activities and leadership functions. Leaders at all levels will have been groomed out of and based on workplace functions, "where the action is".

Everything in the LSSQTT is about teams. Since we understand that teams composed of diverse and varied talents, many whom will look and speak different from ourselves in the future, will increasingly be our strength organizationally. Teams will be electronic increasingly in the future, and while production will be fixed place, we must understand that learning and growth for individuals first, and then teams, will come increasingly not from the person next to you only in the workplace. Increasingly, we will learn from persons who we are connected to based on a project or systemic workplace change—but done electronically—and from around the world.

Teams will focus not only on getting product out the door in the future, required to pay bills day-to-day. But we will also work synchronously with data and documentation collected and built around day-to-day production in fairly mundane, yet sophisticated and disciplined ways. Information collected must be used for longer term planning and decision-making issues related to new products, innovations, and how to do broad-based organization change as improvement. Teams must focus increasingly on use of what is learned day-to-day in basic production, and documented in data-driven ways, but we must also be applying what we learn and know in production, as value adding potentials to advance the organization in the future.

**LSSQTT organization and structure.** The toolkit is organized around seven separate sets focused on slightly different aspects of the model and QMS. Each set is used in different courses, as described briefly below.

**Primer Tools (1-6): Technology Systems Introduced.** Primer tools introduce and overview

Technology Systems and the toolkit system, explained at a rudimentary level. Primer tools are for introductory courses and persons just getting started.

1. Technical Foundations For Industrial And Technological Systems
2. Materials And Processes For Technical Managers
3. Process Engineering, Design And Innovation
4. Cost Analysis And Productivity Improvement
5. Quality Systems
6. Automation And Computer Integration

**Foundational Tools (7-12): Assessing Technological Innovation, Change And Improvement.** These tools provide understanding about technical management, innovation and assessment for change, within broader global forces.

7. Team Building, Communicating The Project: Problem Solving, Improvement, Innovation.
8. Technological Systems' Leadership For Change And Improvement.
9. Infrastructure For Managing Innovations, Problem Solving, And Creativity.
10. ISO 9000 Infrastructure For Standardized Management, Assessment and Decision Making.
11. Robust Design For New Product Development, Innovation And Patent.
12. Lean, Six Sigma Tools: Decision Making As The Engineering Economy.

**Data Tools (13-18): Statistical Process Control, "Six Sigma" Improvement For Lean Systems.** Data tools focus on improvement and enhanced decision making and problem solving via data applications for process improvement and variation reduction are the focus.

13. Statistical Foundations For Data Based Improvement, Lean, Six Sigma Solutions.
14. Attribute Data, The Obvious Starting Point For Lean, Six Sigma, Service.
15. Variable Data, Comparisons To Attribute Charting For Six Sigma, Lean Service.
16. Basic Measurement, Geometric Relationships, Broader Data-based Issues.
17. Gage Repeatability And Reproducibility (R & R): Inspection And Measurement.
18. Capability, Charts And Quality Characteristics Analysis For Six Sigma And Lean

**Documentation Tools (19-24): Genealogy of Lean, Six Sigma.** These tools build on data and foundations via documentation for analysis and problem solving in technical management. Systematic analysis focuses on Kaizen techniques for lean environment variation reduction.

19. Genealogy Of Selected Lean, Six Sigma, Quality Management Systems' Tools.
20. Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) For Lean And Six Sigma: Infrastructure For Understanding Process.
21. Quality Management Systems For Continuous Improvement.
22. Synchronous And JIT Production, Lean Six Sigma Best Practices.
23. Total Productive Maintenance: First Line Management For Improvement.
24. Global Technological Learning Organization Culture: Human Resource Development Infrastructure.

**Documentation Tools (25-30): Communication, Management Systems, For Lean, Six Sigma.** These tools build on data and cultural concepts via documentation for analysis and problem solving. Systematic analysis focuses on Kaizen for lean environments and variation reduction.

25. Kaizen Documentation Foundations For Process Variation And Waste Reduction.
26. Economic Considerations, Cost Related Documentation And Quality Relationships.
27. Ongoing Process Control Plan (OPCP), Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) Communication.
28. Synchronous Production: Enhanced Best Practices, Change, Lean.
29. Failure Mode And Effects Analysis (FMEA) And Quality Functions Deployment (QFD).
30. Total Productive Maintenance, Safety And Ergonomics: Re-engineered Lean Environment.

**Service Tools (31-36): Lean and Six Sigma For Non-Manufacturing Industries.** Service tools apply data and documentation principles to non-manufacturing and technical service environments for improvement via six sigma and lean for variation reduction in systematic ways.

31. ISO 9000 Maturing: Foundations For Quality Services, Auditing, Lean Improvements.
32. Culture For Service, Communications And Management As Disciplined Opportunities.
33. Documentation For Quality And Productivity Improvement: Lean Foundations.
34. Data, Basis For Kaizen, Six Sigma, Quality Systems, Service.
35. Information Technology, Maintenance And Safety.
36. Innovative Leadership: Managed Service For Change In Lean Environments.

***Synchronous JIT Tools (37-42): Time-based Management For Kaizen And Future Planning.*** These tools help grow talent to lead new product development and robust technical management systems for the future, built on existing data, documentation and service tools, synchronously.

37. ISO 9000, Quality Launch Systems: Supplier Relationships Guiding Our Synchronous Future".
38. OPCP, FMEA, QFD Synchronized As Documentation For Advanced Problem Solving.
39. Data And Documentation For Advanced Quality Planning: Emphasis On Qualification.
40. Robust Design, Reliability And New Product Development.
41. Technical Material And Process Considerations: Innovation, Change, And Applied Research.
42. Advanced SPC, Reduced Variation And DOE As An Improvement System.

## **Team Culture, Communication**

Meeting, communicating and many other associated team functions are tightly intertwined, clearly related to our ability to solve problems and make improvement happen within a context of change. Each communication and documentation opportunity, as well as each meeting, are times where teaching and learning occur. The way we understand and use this to everyone's best advantage deserves further discussion. The question of what a meeting should look like, is really nothing more than what we actually want our teams and the entire organization to look and function like. The conduct of meetings and teams is an excellent measure of the entire culture—and as we move increasingly online electronic meeting infrastructure will be even more a measure.

The tempo of meetings, discipline and demeanor, how we do agenda, ability to listen to one another without dominating, being prepared rather than un-prepared, all are cultural indicators. If we do not speak in meetings, provide healthy questions, or encourage lively discussion, it says something about our ability to trust one another and grow together. The intimate relationship inter-twined with technical problem solving requires that we communicate and grow together for everyone's benefit. Meetings represent one vehicle for this to occur—but we must work hard to facilitate this. If meetings are working, we still must push for effective communication—verbally, written, electronic and so on.

The meeting is only one element in the equation for successful communications. While it is

a vital part, it is truly the communications system more broadly where the real opportunity for improvement—and potential problems—occurs. There are some who say that most problems are related to communication issues. With the advent of computer driven communication systems, this will not become less complex—the challenges will be even greater. As we do concurrent engineering launch strategies and challenges—reducing lead times and increasing the tempo, we simply must move more quickly and effectively in communication. This is not only about traditional meetings and communications. It is about team interactions involving various global locations and sites, focused on technical problem solving for quality and productivity enhancements.

If team meetings are properly planned and conducted, the team will be more productive, and everyone gains. If the team meetings are not well designed and organized, it is quite likely that we will not only be less than productive, we will probably not accomplish our mission. Part of the way we can assist ourselves in having good meetings is to follow a basic checklist of planning for the meeting. Typical questions to raise about the meeting are shown in the "team meeting planning checklist and record". As noted in the checklist, it is simply a systematic way of looking at each activity or item included in the meeting. As we plan a meeting, we may discover it is not required. If we evaluate each item, and the overall mission, we not only help build a stronger agenda, but we better focus teams. Focused teams can better attack strategic objectives organizationally.

Documentation of team functions may be an area which, at a glance, looks like we are wasting time. But when we must discover, often months later, who was to follow through on a given issue or topic, how we were going to move forward, and fundamentally what the conduct of the meeting was, we must have a record of what was done in the meeting. These may be minutes or follow-up reports, the record, a form of documentation which we must attend to. Similar to many other forms of documentation, meeting records provide:

- Paper trail for all concerned.
- Evidence focused on issues and concerns for internal and external customers.
- Tracking mechanisms to evaluate teams.
- Systems for follow through in teams and organizational affairs.

This does not necessarily mean recording actions of team meetings is easily accomplished. A recorder must be recruited or assigned, and accurate

information placed in the record—based on an agenda. The record, following the agenda, will often be placed in a standard operating procedure form, or system, and may be projected as the form which is in the application section.

#### ***Communication For Team Meetings.***

Communication, as discussed here, is a rather basic approach, yet one which should prove useful for team applications. The sender originates a message, places it in some type code, and moves it forward. The code could be via a computer system in digital form, written by hand, verbally in words alone, or in other types of code. Once coded, and sent, the message is received and decoded by the receiver as information and understanding. Based on the information received and understood, various feedback and iterations may occur. Assuming we understood what the originator intended, as information, this could be a report, chart, manual or procedure. Several iterative "conversations" are required before actual meaningful communication has been completed. It is also significant to note that this basic communication model can help explain both human and machine communication where the code may be electronic or computer language used to digitally communicate.

***Listening skills.*** Remember that listening is required to communicate successfully, requiring much hard work. Examples of "listening" include:

- Handing off, posting, information in any written manner--was it complete and accurate?
- Standard procedure or virtually any technical communication--is it actually clear--doable?
- Presenting formally or informally--posting.
- Solving the technical problem--did we all hear the same problem, causes, effects?

How frequently have we left a meeting with different understandings or thoughts--not on the same page? How do we encourage ourselves to improve on hearing accurately? The fundamental relationship to documentation is that if it was not heard properly and accurately, it certainly will not be documented and understood. Skills we can use to listen better are:

- ***Repeating.*** Repeat, looking for indications that we were or were not understood.
- ***Questioning.*** Ask questions for clarification--"did you understand what I was trying to say?" Also termed paraphrasing, this is sensitively stating back to the originator what we think they actually said in a slightly different manner.
- ***Re-hashing.*** Ask others to re-hash what was said or presented--to listen back to what you or others

said. Re-hashing is different from questioning and repeating since we "re-hash" issues and circumstances for virtually any reason or purpose, but primarily because we want to make sure people are "listening". This includes responding in non-judgmental ways by listening--not necessarily evaluating with comments.

- ***Knowledgeable previews.*** Asking others knowledgeable to pre-review procedures and documents in written form to help assure that it works--asking others to "listen" to what we are trying to accomplish. This goes beyond proofing and is a quality reading from the customer view.
- ***Targeted message.*** Understanding the listener--do I have my message targeted adequately to meet the listener's needs--they are the customer in this case? Was the message tailored to customer needs and vocabulary?
- ***Gestures.*** The way we use body language, both when listening to other presenters, or when we are the originators of a message, can be critical. This can also be pauses, silence, and other "pace of listening" concerns such as good eye contact, facing the originator, and nodding agreement.
- ***Personal effort.*** Are we, as listeners, really working to try to understand what is being said? Do we have an open mind regarding the message? Are we trying to respond in a favorable manner? Are we discouraging interruptions? Some would call this active listening for total quality communication.

It should be obvious that the above approaches are not necessarily a linear system, or designed to be used in any single orderly manner. Approaches can be applicable in any order and circumstances. But it is also important to consider how to use these guidelines when conducting meetings online, as chats or in discussion boards. Many of the same concerns and skills can be honed for e-meetings, used to help facilitate and grow the culture for effective team problem solving and other activities.

#### ***Feedback for effective communication.***

Feedback has been mentioned several times in the previous sections, and was a pivotal part of the model for effective communication presented at the outset of the tool. Feedback, similar to other communication devices and techniques, should not only be considered as a personal conversation or traditional listening approach. Feedback to written documentation can and should be necessary for improving the overall culture. Effective feedback addresses the questions which are naturally present in any communication circumstance. These will include

evaluative issues such as "how we are doing?" and "how can I improve?" both aimed at assessing effectiveness for supportive and constructive types of reasons. Feedback requires thoughtful consideration:

- *Timing.* If we do not provide feedback when requested, this can create obvious questions on the part of the originator. Be quick with feedback--the longer this takes, the more likely we may forget or misunderstandings may arise.
- *Specificity and detailed.* The more pointed the remarks, the more likely we avoid confusion.
- *Growth and diplomacy.* Help grow all in the communication loop via positive comments.
- *Supervisory relations.* When giving feedback as a supervisor to a person or team, be careful to provide balanced and respectful information for future relationships and sensitive issues.

Feedback can be given as both the listener--presenter--originator, and as the listener--receiver, and other configurations as the iterative feedback and communications cycle evolves. Feedback is not only a perfunctory communication requirement, but it is a necessary opportunity for improving our overall communication and documentation system. Also, similar to previous comments, remember we can also do this electronically via e-meetings, in most cases.

#### ***Presentations as a communication device.***

At some point in the team process, aimed at ongoing improvements, it will be necessary for all persons to make various forms of presentations. Like all forms of communication, and team effort, the presentation represents a focused work effort by the entire team. The presentation is a clear indication of how our team is, or is not, doing. The good presentation can make a poor team look good, and the bad presentation can make a good team look bad. Presentations are the culmination of various elements of our work, a natural coming together of all that we are about at various stages of development and evolution. Consider the following presentation forms:

- Spontaneous presentations may be given on short notice to the team or individuals simply to help everyone better understand. We can do little to be prepared immediately. The way we conduct our daily affairs, particularly how we document on a regular basis, can assist in "carrying" a spontaneous presentation.
- Semi-formal short presentations could be when the team plans a 5 minute report on a project status which you have been leading or involved with. Although short and only semi-formal, this

presentation affords an opportunity to give forethought to how we put our ideas in front of recipients of our presentation.

- Semi-formal long presentations could be a 3 hour team presentation which is an update or review of findings with customers internal or external. Presenting 3 hours versus 5 minutes will need to be carefully considered.
- Group presentations could be tied to other communications approaches requiring added planning and organizing. Group presentations give a well rounded look at all persons' work--demonstrating all persons' roles, capacities.
- Formal presentations include off-site customer reviews, conference presentations, formal project reviews internally or externally, for individuals or customers, and so on, perhaps tied to a written document relative to other forms of presentation.

The presentation is a report, relying on both verbal and graphic skills for putting information in an organized and appropriate manner. The presentation is more than simply delivering information at an anointed time. It is a persuasive delivery of the information which could have been delivered in other perhaps less creative ways--likely primarily written.

When we present, we are representatives of our team and organization, and essentially "selling" our view. We need to "perform" our information and view rather than simply "present". Slides, videos, electronic and flat over heads, computer interactive, film, and other electronic audio and video methods must be understood and considered as we try to put our ideas forward in competitive ways. This requires practice and considering numerous factors, many related to reporting and documentation in writing:

- Learning to build and use good slides, and reported in ways which lend themselves to using charts and graphs, and/or bulletized information which can be converted for presentation in numerous forms? Are we placing these in forms to be readily "tuned up" for formal or semi-formal presentations?
- Building data and other systems to facilitate easy take off's of information for reporting and presenting in short notice. This is different from the previous point since we may have data or information in proper form, but not have media available or in proper form.
- Getting in the habit of routinely disciplining ourselves to lead discussions, and the group, possibly in semi-formal ways which help us learn and practice the skills before we need them.

This could include standing up and explaining who we are and explaining what we have done in some routine manner on a regular basis--possibly at regular team meetings all should do routinely.

- Disciplining our team and others in the organization to follow through with information and data, sufficient to enable putting everything together without being under duress at the last minute. Good presentations take time--we must allow sufficient time to get all information formatted, cleaned-up, proofed, and so on.
- Not only do "high end" presentations require time based on "rearranging" original technical data and information generated--but focusing on hardware and software, generic to all information, addressing various media to be used, may be a necessary consideration.

This relates to "infrastructure" of a reporting system, and must also be considered as fully electronic methods may facilitate chats, discussion boards and other non-traditional approaches.

***Organizing for presenting, communicating.***

Regardless of purpose information must be properly organized for presenting and/or communicating. Whether a team only provides information in written form rather than verbal, we still must plan the approach for reporting. The basic approach places information in a multi-part system:

- Introduction and overview.
- Body.
- Summary and conclusion.

This simple approach is nothing more than telling the audience what you are going to tell them, providing information you said you would do, and telling them what you have told them again. We must organize and follow through in a disciplined manner, done with an appropriate style and format.

The introduction and overview provides an organized discussion of the key topics of information which will be presented in the body of the presentation. It would also be wise to indicate any relevant introductory information, like team makeup and deliverables, specific team roles, related requests from management/other teams and customers, and so on. The idea is to overview important elements of the project, and drivers of the way we did our work, affecting the outcomes being reported.

The body of the report or presentation would include that which was just introduced, following through on what was overviewed. Specifically, the problem and objectives would be detailed and

explained, findings and analysis, and any detailed relevant information, would need to be provided in the body. Detailed documentation, drawings, planning information and other detailed and relevant project explanations would be provided at this point. All of this is introduced, at least in general terms, in the earlier section of the report or presentation.

The summary and conclusion of the project provides a "recapping" of all that was presented earlier. This now reflects back on what we set out to accomplish in the report or presentation, and only indicates that this is "what we did" earlier. This should be a summary of the major objectives we set out to address, as stated at the outset. We must detail any specific concluding elements of the report which were significant, from the body of the information in more extensive fashion, and now merely referred back to as the key deliverables from the project.

We should try to use our documentation and broader communication systems to capitalize on how we do our reporting and presenting. We should not have to create large amounts of information for presentations. This should be automatically available and manipulatable for final use for others. Findings and conclusions of teams will represent training materials for others, a hand off of information from one group to another, clearly affecting how we teach and learn culturally. This is where we must design our broader quality system up front, to be amenable to facilitating findings and information well beyond only one report or presentation--if the information was worth pursuing, might it have value to others?

***Standing up and leading, presenting.*** When standing up and presenting, you are essentially leading. As you lead, and communicate, you are also teaching. Virtually everyone on the team and in the organization will need to do this eventually for one reason or another. Here are pointers for presenting, based on written or other documentation:

- Give your name and role.
- Stand up straight, look the audience in the eye, and do not wiggle, waffle, or shuffle--stand firm.
- Speak clearly, enunciate carefully, louder rather than soft, authoritatively, with self confidence.
- State your role in the project and team, and indicate what your objectives for the presentation will be--do not just ramble.
- Move through your information slowly but without dragging--be purposeful.
- Work through well organized and bulletized information--use slides, outlines or flip charts which have key points only to guide.

- Slides need five or six key points, in front of the audience for 10 to 12 seconds--keep it moving.
- Have help with slides or other media, freeing you to concentrate on—presenting, persuading.
- Practice ahead of the presentation--know what to do if something goes wrong.
- Move through and work the plan, and if something goes wrong, simply keep moving.

Good presentations are almost always a healthy blend of written, graphical and spoken forms of media—increasingly to be done online and electronically.

### **Moving Projects--And Teams Forward--Start Of Suggestion System**

Perhaps one of the first areas of concern relating to team based technical problem solving is the proposal for conducting the project. This originates the idea for a project and provides the official recognition that we need to get a team pulled together. But before we form the team, the proposal should be written, and put forward for review by various persons on a central team review committee. Team review committees could consist of representatives from each of the major technical areas where problems are likely to originate.

While it is the problem itself which generally drives the formation and composition of the team, all teams will have representation from quality, engineering and manufacturing. The origination of the team will be determined based on where the problem appears to reside--if the problem is in quality, a leader in the quality group could reach out and form a team of operators, engineering and others. Proposals should have the following, in written form:

- *Problem statement and background.* What is a written description of the problem? Are there supporting drawings or data, or other background historical information, which can be useful. This is necessary information to get the team moving, and on the same "sheet of music".
- *Objectives/possible solutions to be pursued.* What are the predicted areas of solution or objectives which we think will help solve the problem? These should be categorically, and numerically listed as areas to be pursued.
- *Deliverables/measures of success.* How will we know what should be accomplished at the conclusion of various steps/stages of the project? These are part of the mechanism for evaluating our successful completion of the proposed

project, and having some reasonable sense of when we are done.

- *Timeframe for completion.* What dates are critical, and why, all related to the above listing of deliverables. If not shown in a graphic, a listing of dates and deliverables is needed.
- *Resources and budget required, likely payback.* Are any special resources required to test your predictions, or to complete the project? What budget projections are required, based on requirements identified? What is the ROI?
- *Recommended team composition.* Who should be on the team? While the proposer may not know who to suggest for optimum project completion, they should be able to recommend.
- *Rationale, and other important details and information.* What other information or details might be useful for completing this project?

Eventually, assuming the proposal becomes approved for pursuit, the proposal will likely be turned into a project plan by the team and others.

Following preparation by the initiator, the proposal could be turned over to the team review committee for consideration. Each proposal is reviewed and returned to the initiator in a brief time period. This process would also need to involve the direct line supervisor and other technical support in the organization. The initiator is notified in writing regarding the results of a proposal. Some proposals will be useful to pursue, but will require additional work to clarify details, obtain necessary information, and generally to get prepared, by the review group.

Alternatives to this could be situations where a customer driven complaint or problem has surfaced. In this case an individual or group may be assigned or formed based on their expertise and duties/functions. Or it may be that a standing technical core group remains on call for selected types of technical problems in some organizations. Various persons, based on the nature of product or service, will simply be "on call" to address problems and circumstances which require attention. Membership would be a part of the persons' regular work responsibilities, and not optional--similar to a customer service or field warranty group. Regardless of the nature of the group, or team, and what is driving them, it would typically be true that a cross functional group is most useful. This brings expertise together from various functions, enriching the overall depth and breadth for attacking a problem.

Increasingly, "best practices" and "suggestion systems" are being used for team approaches to technical problem solving. These are commonly

voluntary, with fixed periods of service, rather than being ongoing, or rather than supporting multiple teams. Commonly focused on a specific technical problem or project, and formed within the system, they also often tap into external sources of expertise which may go beyond the immediate and available sources. As with most other approaches these obviously require various management levels of support for success, often at the supervisor's level as the first line of responsibility. Typical roles and functions include levels of interaction to assure that ideas are moved forward in a timely manner for evaluation, possible funding and implementation:

- Originator (team or individual).
- Originator's supervisor.
- External suggestion coordinator.
- Implementor/originator.
- Steering committee.
- Team leaders/members.

These are addressed in greater detail in various parts of the toolkit, and as related to applications.

One additional approach for teams would be to treat them similarly to the former concept of department. Rather than becoming part of a department when joining an organization, individuals would join a team which becomes the point of their sense of being, and identity, within the organization--and certainly houses their work function. The team then becomes responsible for most worker needs, including training and education, benefits, and so on. More important, perhaps, for technical problem solving purposes, this becomes the fundamental driver of the team. Our basic purpose is to solve technical problems, and facilitate ongoing improvements in quality and productivity.

**Forming, launching, and managing team.** At some point it will be obvious that a team needs to be formed to pursue a given project or opportunity for improvement. Who should be on the team? What should be the composition of the team, and how can we make it happen? These questions relate to the formation of the technical team for pursuit of a problem. In short, the composition and formation of the team will be a function of the nature of the technical problem or project being pursued. The mechanism for helping to pull the team together will be the team review committee.

Based on the nature of the problem, recommendations by the initiator, and input from others, the review committee makes suggestions on:

- Possible team leadership.

- Makeup of the team.
- Which group should fund the project.
- Possible level of funding for the project.

The review or steering committee provides additional deliverables or inputs which can enhance the likelihood of success of the project, in consultation with the proposal initiator, and others associated.

Assuming the team review or steering committee gives the "green light", and a team leader is identified, and consents to lead the team, the team would be called together. This should be considered a semi-formal process, with the possibility of the plant manager being briefly involved, as well as others who will be affected in some pivotal manner by the process. This is done for several reasons, to assist broad communications and changes likely to occur. Leadership should know about teams being launched, as well as their overall progress over time.

At the project kick-off meeting, the technical team being launched will meet briefly with the team review committee to be guided on review dates, responsibilities and so on. For example, it would be anticipated that the team leader would be introduced, general deliverables and time frames targeted, and so on, to help all concerned move forward most efficiently. It is also clear who the key linkage is to the team review committee (likely the representative from the technical area which is funding the project) and when the review dates for the project will be.

While a general oversight function may appropriately be driven from the team review committee level, clearly, others must be involved and pivotal in the process. This involves leadership at all levels, but certainly at the highest levels of the organization. At some middle level, funding and accountability for deliverables will be important--if not critical. This may be the engineering or manufacturing group--to evaluate and put some new system in place. But if the upper and lower management are not tuned in, it should be obvious that the system simply cannot move forward

After the official "launch" of a given project the technical team would begin moving forward to address the problem. Early in the process, it is important to consider reworking the original proposal to transform it into a project plan, providing all involved the opportunity to contribute and take ownership. As well, specific responsibilities may be assigned depending on numerous circumstances and variables. A primary reason for transforming a proposal to a project plan is to provide additional focus on problem objectives. This will be done using

the cause and effect, and brainstorming tools as the basis for fine tuning what was already approved.

The team must take "ownership" of that which, at least theoretically, they have started--and must now finish. They need to further define and refine objectives, deliverables, timeframe, and so on, for the project, moving forward with steady progress. This cannot be done in a vacuum--it must be done in concert with funding group leadership, with the team review committee's general oversight and input, and with others who may have an interest in the process.

It is anticipated that specific objectives and deliverables will be identified, defined and written. These do not need to be lengthy, but they must be written and agreed upon, up front, as the measures of success upon which we will all gage our efforts. These become the points which we will look for as signs that we are on task, meeting all customer and supplier needs and demands. With the objectives clearly stated, the project plan can be rolled out, in terms of specific deliverables, or measures of success. Specific tasks are defined for each objective, persons and other resources assigned, and the activities, perhaps phased over time, and with appropriate project reviews, would begin.

**Basic Team Skills.** Several basic team skills can, and should, be practiced to enhance the likely success of the team. While some of this has become obvious throughout the current tool, and will be reinforced throughout the toolkit, it is also thought to be important to identify and explain much of this within the context of the current section. The skills identified and explained include rules, agenda, listening, and questioning. Basic rules are fundamental to the team process, requisite to success of the team. Several of the other skills identified throughout the current tool and section may indeed provide indicators of rules which a team may use to govern itself. Commonly run in a democratic and participatory manner, the team requires:

- One person speaks at a time--everyone gets a turn--but limited to 2-3 minutes.
- Regular established meeting times, daily or weekly, are scheduled, as standing meetings.
- When others speak, we listen--all persons are respected, regardless of views or ideas.
- Minutes will be taken, distributed for all, right after the meeting--done by a volunteer at a laptop computer--otherwise no one should be doing "other work" during the meeting.
- All arrive and leave on scheduled time frame.
- We will follow the agenda--typically of a standing variety, further explained below.

- Ideas to be approved and moved forward must be presented in a written proposal format.
- Team leader runs meeting (other designate).
- Guests and visitors are permitted, but require prior approval by the team leader.
- Formal presentations are limited to 10 minutes, unless prior approved.

Obviously, other rules could be added or those listed could be modified. This depends on culture, the group, nature of our product, and so on. But we must have rules to maintain a reasonable control and disciplined approach, if we wish to make progress.

Agendas will generally need to be used with the team, if we wish to maximize the process. Yet for a variety of reasons, it is also likely that building a regular weekly agenda, unique to each session, will be unrealistic (assuming the team leader is a volunteer). What is recommended is a generic "boiler plate" agenda which can be used over time--a standing agenda, something like the following:

- Opening, recognition of guests, visitors.
- Announcements.
- Updates on standing sub-committees/groups.
- Updates on standing work items, past minutes.
- Formal presentations.
- Others, as needed.

It should be widely known that the weekly meetings will be only one hour, one and one half hours, or two hours in duration, as a standing item. The limited meeting allows all persons to schedule their lives and conduct their affairs. Regular weekly meetings must be scheduled as reasonable and "doable" for all, taking into account shifts, and all responsibilities.

Active listening skills must be practiced, and taught, on a regular basis, if we wish teams to be successful. Some will argue that total quality requires total listening. Listening is required anytime you wish to communicate successfully, requiring hard work. Examples of where most can "listen" better when communicating were offered earlier in the tool. Listening skills are not easy, and they require work. Other skills such as questioning and agenda, obviously also relate to listening.

At the core of solving technical problems is the ability to ask good questions. Questioning not only indicates that we are listening, but it also indicates that we wish to move the team further in detail and focus. But questioning, like many other methods, requires skill and practice:

- If I ask my question in a less than diplomatic manner, I may offend others.
- If the individual or group being asked is not prepared, it may result in embarrassment.
- If I do not have my facts straight, or poorly present, I may embarrass my self or others.
- Questions can help others become better focused and to better understand their role and function.
- Regarding customers, we must ask good questions--but have our own "ducks in order".
- Also for customers, both internal and external, ask questions before we are asked by them.

Asking good questions, like all else having to do with making improvements, requires work and planning together. Good questions do not simply happen, they require careful investigation and detailed analysis--skills which must be learned and practiced.

## **Team Behaviors, Characteristics, General Considerations**

Several behaviors and team phases of maturation and growth are identifiable. These are important to understand since, if mishandled or not properly managed, it can have a negative impact. The negative impact can be noticed in many ways:

- Team members not cooperating.
- Team members dominating, controlling.
- Team members not doing their fair share.
- Politics being used inappropriately.

Other scenarios can be presented and discussed regarding team behaviors. The purpose is to present and discuss the typical maturation patterns teams go through. This is designed to aid team leaders, facilitators, supervisors and others in better managing the overall efforts. The phases are defined as forming, norming, storming and performing.

**Forming.** The forming stage is obviously that point in a team's existence where it is beginning. Members are rather cautiously trying to determine what their and other persons' roles are and why they were placed on the team. Boundaries of group behavior are explored, and a transition from individual to group status is occurring. Testing of people and infrastructure is part of the behavior. Lack of cooperation may occur due to feelings of excitement and anticipation, yet most will also be optimistic. People will typically be proud to have been asked to serve on the project, but there may also be fear and anxiety about the job ahead. Due to the

nature of the early stage of the team, it is difficult to be productive as a unit for this period.

**Storming.** The storming stage is a critical growth period since persons must push the leadership of the team, trying to establish their own power base, and look as if they as individuals are the more powerful and influential. Leadership must react with patience and care, recognizing the best way to behave is to have a structured and disciplined approach to all that is done. The natural infighting which occurs can be quite detrimental to the team if it is not held in check and controlled. Talents of the team will begin to be identified naturally, and they must be further groomed and directed for the collective good. This is the period where actual productive outputs can be noted based on the "leveling" of the team, and a collective vision of what we are about is emerging.

**Norming.** The norming stage provides a plateau of growth as individuals and as a team. Persons are increasingly comfortable with their roles on the team. People are beginning to feel comfortable as members of the team, and they can accept and give criticism constructively. As the team continues working out differences, the effort increasingly is moved from lack of cooperation to one of cooperation and production. The team has accepted its identity and ground rules at this point, and they are quite comfortable working together. Loyalties and responsibilities of the team are resolved, and people begin to take serious ownership in the overall design of their project.

**Performing.** The final phase of the team behavior is what is termed performing, or the productive stage of a team effort. Relationships have been settled, expectations are understood and accountability is built in. Team members are satisfied with the team, and constructive self growth and change is apparent and appropriate. The team has become a cohesive and effective unit by this stage. This will be observed because the team is able to get significant amounts of work accomplished. This has implications for how we structure and manage teams and how observe and circumvent negativity helps determine overall competitiveness.

**Defining, Doing Teams, Key Behaviors.** Group is a set of people that have not developed a common purpose, whereas a team is a group of people with shared meaning working together toward a common purpose or goal built on flexibility and morale relationships. Teamwork is an environment in the larger organization that creates and sustains relationships of trust, support, respect interdependence and collaboration. It is easy to create

teams, but sustaining an environment that will sustain teamwork is difficult.

Purpose and shared vision align all teams, but must have vision (purpose), systems and teamwork. As people are taught, vision grows clearer enthusiasm builds, shared commitment and number of people increases. Failure to prepare is not acceptable in teams. Doing successful teams requires continuous effort, and sustaining involves practicing and discipline over time. This does not mean enforce order, or punishment, it means techniques put into practice. Discipline used here is a developmental path for acquiring skills/competencies, as in the true practice of discipline is being a lifelong learner.

Teams can not learn from experiences they are not having, ideally shared in some cross functional manner, created by practice. The difference in great and mediocre teams may be how they face conflict and defensiveness, particularly in duress of decision-making. With clear purpose and methods, teams will work together for something not individually attainable. Department barriers must be reduced, and we must strive to remove isolation. Culture is created organizationally as a social entity. It is an environment for communication with a shared vision where all understand the benefits of human interaction, socialization and teamwork. Human, social and departmental interactions in the entire organization must be engaged and developed.

Businesses are people institutions, where, in today's age of ethical issues, teams perform a critical check and balance. Skills for engendering and developing harmony become extremely valuable. The key to high group learning is social harmony, all things being equal. Training is important, but harmony within the team is the key based around positive human relationships. There is strength in numbers, and teams help address personal concerns and needs in intimate and caring ways, where many would otherwise become lost in a highly competitive working environment. Particularly where and when healing of relationships is needed, teams can be key. A sense of belonging in problematic times in mature teams forms part of the answer.

The sense of social isolation, having no one to communicate with, can place workers in a precarious position. If the worker is alone, there can be no teamwork. A championship team combines good teamwork with individual skills in ways which compliment one another and the aggregate, where experience determines success. Teams become the work unit rather than the individual, as an entity, a product of our environment. Overall performance allows a group to guide its most talented and creative member's abilities. We must build team approach based on trust, where collective goals are larger than

individual goals. Independence must coexist alongside interdependence, and both must feel secure. We must recognize teams, not individuals, even though teams aren't promoted, individuals are. How will this affect overall individual/team performance? Most managers "grew up" in a system that didn't have teams, and "wrestling" with how to manage and "grow" systemically. Teamwork may be difficult under most current or existing systems--based on independent raises in pay, profit centers, own budgets, own goals, different rewards.

Teams are small groups, usually from functional areas, and voluntary or non-voluntary. Teams commonly meet on a regular basis and are self governing entities. Everyone is a member and personal development focus is key. Any incident or issue in the work environment can be addressed, with the idea being to have the incident never happen again--doing root cause analysis. We must increasingly use a company wide pool of inter company/various departmental employees, representing other smaller groups, using problem solving techniques to stabilize opportunities for improvement. It is important in the process that there be no blame, and no individual credit. This approach could eventually change the way organizations are organized and put together.

What are the main functions of teams, and why would an organization invest in them? Why would we move toward this type organizational structure, a fairly significant paradigm shift compared to a few years ago. A few reasons are identified below, and explained at least on a startup basis:

- Socialization, modify human behavior
- Provide sense of identity
- Employee development/empowerment
- Create/improve standards through small groups
- Identify/eliminate abnormalities and waste
- Shared problem solving techniques and language
- Recommendations in policy and management
- Create a learning environment
- General communications
- Stimulate creative thinking
- Risk free environment to raise questions

It is natural to adapt, and shared vision will create common purpose and shared meaning. When working in the same system people tend to begin taking on traits of the system. Social learning (perception of where we are) is mediated by the environment we live in (groups). Consensus decisions aren't unanimous decisions—we may still have different opinions or agree to disagree and we must move on and support team decision. Collaborative approaches do not assure we agree. If,

for various reasons, we can't agree, walk away and reconvene (jury), give more time (usually happens because of lack of knowledge). Team members must experience together to begin to change culture. Diversity will help solve more complicated problems, particularly the technical differences in views. The way persons from different perspectives approach problems dictates a solution to some extent.

The way we make decisions will have a large impact on the quality of the overall culture. Decisions made by consensus and built by group or team, wherever possible, will be much easier to put into motion, and to see happen. Single handed decision making vs. collective decision making, consensus building. Power, position, and influence of relationships have impact on decision makers and the way groups make decisions, and this must be factored in to the way we structure teams.

Below (or above?) team is a manager or supervisor acting as a cheerleader. Structure of teams, their meetings, how we use them, what type responsibilities they are afforded, along with authority, is key. If properly structured, teams will have enthusiasm of "crime stoppers" and they will be able to pull together a collective "team think" to address real problems and issues for improvement. But this requires care in how we structure effective decision-making and implementation.

Teams aren't responsible for quality or productivity, management is. Given that teams may be informal and voluntary (at least at the start), the extent of their ability to implement and do change may be hampered, as group activities. There should be a continual dialogue (creates meaning and shared vision) between management and employees to work/help develop, meet, and improve. Among other things, this is true since the culture is always evolving and we will want to help lead this.

Part of what must happen if teams are to succeed is that we must begin enhancing level of trust. Empowerment will begin to share the pressure traditionally felt by managers, as trust emerges in a natural and "organic" manner (cannot force or "buy" this). It is a good sign when teams (and individuals) begin to ask more questions, particularly focused around improvement. We can encourage this by asking teams to begin "what if" brainstorming sessions, leading to collective "thinking".

The only way to win is if everyone wins – not just the shareholders. Teams must increasingly work "up stream," proceeding backwards, assuming increasing amounts of management responsibility and authority. The assumption is that every activity in a process can be improved if everyone belongs to the/a team. But again, we must realize that leadership has the responsibility of addressing the evolution, design

and development of how we do teams—how we intentionally change the culture of our organization. Team learning is a process of aligning and developing team, results that the members desire, perhaps including "group think". But group knowledge will be built around a project or any focus where we agree to solve a problem or issue. Teams have to be willing to suspend assumptions about past paradigms in order to collectively move forward and positively accomplish anything value adding.

A facilitator is needed to coordinate and guide the process since habits of thought continually pull us away from our original intent. The word "teamwork" should never be interchanged with conformity, anonymity, group think or unnecessary rigid bureaucracy. Teams must not have strong pressure to conform, since the result can be too much emphasis on "group think" at the expense of individual creative thought and action for the organization, beyond the single team—the larger team.

Teams will begin to replace traditional hierarchy in organizations eventually. The teams make many of the hiring, disciplinary and firing decisions with communication for proper consistency. Values and visions are modeled daily by team leaders in decentralized, non-hierarchical ways via teams. Natural orientation toward freedom of thought and expression in responsible and innovative ways, flourish in teams. Teams can, and will continue to, transform the traditional hierarchical organization and individualistic culture. We must give the players direction, then get off the field and let them play ball. Respect each other, since no one needs to be boss, every one is their own boss, and leadership is minimized, or changed, in team approach relative to the traditional hierarchical model.

Self directed teams can be misunderstood, and we know over-empowerment can occur. Part of the reason for needing strong infrastructure in a team-oriented organization is to help guide teams who are empowered. As empowerment occurs we do not simply stay away—we lead in other ways, such as facilitating, guiding team of team leaders, and having other key communication venues, likely different and more open than traditional approaches. Teams with little or no infrastructure and systems in place will flounder and possibly go the wrong direction. Issues with security, as part of new responsibility will exist, if no new systems are put in place to take the place of the old hierarchy. We must change systems first, or concurrently with the evolution of teams, to match the new team driven organization.

**Mature Teams.** Mature teams display certain characteristics, different from new teams, assuming infrastructure is in place and systems are guiding the

teams. These are some of the characteristics of mature teams, with some description:

- Focus, objectives: team knows why it exists, it's focus, described in objectives and a problem statement, possibly other deliverables required.
- Team facilitation skills: the team has developed and knows how to use the skills of facilitation to accomplish what must be done.
- Open information: the environment encourages open access to information, free exchange, rather than "hoarding" in protectionist ways.
- Maintenance issues: team knows that it is only by maintaining it's infrastructure for the future that they will insure being part of that future.
- Excitement for learning: successful, mature teams understand that by learning, they are growing, becoming more valuable for the future.
- Team member growth: mature teams know that by growing one another, developing and mentoring each other, strengthening the team.
- Psychological success: we uplift, revere success of any type, but we are especially tuned into assuring intrinsic psychological rewards.
- Identifying with health of the system: we have matured when we understand that a healthy team assures a healthy organization, and the converse.
- Internal behaviors of group: we hold one another accountable, offering criticism, accepted and acted on positively, proactively.
- Shared leadership: it is less important to lead, for individuals, than it is to see the overall success of the team heightened, collective growth.
- Confidence in group's ability to solve problems: we know ourselves, what we are capable of, and we are not afraid to take risks to do.
- Inter-group effectiveness: the group knows how to work together to get things done, and can "backfill" for each other as may be needed.
- Sharing, interaction: There is a constant willingness to interact and share around group goals and work needing to be done.
- Self management: within guidelines of our organization, we manage our affairs, consistently meeting objectives, deliverables on schedule.
- Understand customer demands: we know our customers, our role as supplier, proactively follow through to effectively communicate same.
- Positive proactive communications: team communications are professional, effective and focused on the work needing done.

**Role of Team Facilitator.** The team facilitator is a integral part of team infrastructure, assuring the timely accomplishment of process type issues in the work of teams. The following listing and explanation

provides insights into expectations and responsibilities of the team facilitator:

- Process responsibilities understood: the facilitator knows how to do projects and what teams are supposed to do to see work get done.
- Mature leader: well trained, and seasoned, in problem-solving and communication techniques, knows what leadership means and how to do.
- Focus on goals: the facilitator understood our mission from the start, and consistently kept us "centered" to be most productive.
- Manages time, resources: facilitators will assure that we stay on budget and use our time wisely, managing all resources for productive outcomes.
- Consensus builder: encourages compromise, while maintaining integrity in system, objectively doing right, correct, ethical things.
- Remains neutral: objectivity is key, not taking sides. However, where counter-productive behaviors occur, action must be taken to correct.
- Disciplinarian: addresses disruptive behavior, knows how to effectively maintain discipline, keep the team productive and focused.

**Role of Team Leader.** The team leader, contrasted to the facilitator, is more focused on advising on a technical level and focused on the content of the teamwork. This is analogous to a "champion", someone who is passionate about the project addressing the following type issues:

- Responsible for content: the project content specialist, the what of the team, as opposed to the how, guides team technical know how.
- Initially from management: a manager who has a vested interest in project success, such as quality, accounting, or other, with knowledge in the field.
- Guides team: the how, leader is not a dictator, makes recommendations on how to address the problems, opportunities and challenges.
- Information source: steady and necessary flow of information for use in addressing the project, in a timely manner and in ways which will be useful.
- Mentor/teacher: technical leadership focus, naturally anticipates mentorship and teaching from team leader, as in coaching on technique.
- Questioning/inquiry: team leader is a "master questioner", knowing how, when, why to ask questions, keeping team growing toward resolve.
- Positive change: team leaders provide timely technical guidance to assure solutions to provide positive, value adding, strategic change.

**Team, Problem Solving Barriers?** What teams do you need, how does this fit in your current

systems, policies, procedures, business strategy and/or implementation plan? We must pay careful attention to how we put teams together, support them, what we ask them to do and so on. If we do not go about the team process in a systematic manner, we may create barriers to solving problems.

One typical barrier is the area of flexibility and change. When placed in the same system, people, no matter how different, tend to produce similar results (standards and behaviors). For one to change, the group must change--too many old mental strings can hold us back. We must not approach all problems from the same old paradigms, but we must seek and develop new approaches, more diverse as a group, using different ways of thinking and doing, and seeking better ways to do all that we do. We must be realistic, with reasonable timeframes, particularly knowing complexities of getting teams organized, maintaining, and so on. A vision of the future is important but must be realistic. Ceaseless change and adjustments can cause decline in productivity, and chaos in the team. Some try to meet any situation by reorganizing, perhaps creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization. We need a plan that balances realistic expectations with a vision of what teams can do.

It is pivotal that we have the resources required to "make the project happen", allowing our work to commence as it is deemed appropriate. Effective, mature, management by those facilitating teams will know how and what type of oversight to provide to get a reasonable output, but without "hovering over" the team and smothering creativity. Barriers are ripe for having if we do not evolve an effective plan as soon as possible. At the time of approval there should be a plan written which will likely become modified as we move forward, but which can serve to gain approval, determine who is needed on the team and why, design a budget for the team to work with, and so on. Plans change, becoming more realistic, better defined as we move forward and learn more about what we are focused on. Redesigning the team in any aspect from team membership to specific objectives and timeframe, are OK as long as we understand the implications and these are accepted by all, including the persons in charge of empowering us and paying the bills.

Working the plan is a different, but no less, important part of the necessity to have under control, else barriers can be present. The team must determine and arrive at some internal culture and management protocols which are rules to abide by. This may include when to have work completed, what the quality levels will be on work, how to access and control information, who is team leader, and so on. All of these type issues are potential barriers and we

must determine how to manage our affairs as a team if we are to avoid these.

Deciding how to assess and evaluate our performance is another potential barrier "area" in teams. This is a particularly important area since if we do not effectively address this some persons will do more and others less, have different standards than others, and so on. When things do not work out, we must be able to adjust based on feedback from one another on the team, person's we report to as a team, one another as suppliers, customers on and off team.

Understanding how we make decisions is key to diminishing barriers. If we do not systematically attack, document, and resolve issues with data, we will create a barrier. Each decision along the way toward the resolve of a problem is one additional step toward the ultimate solution. Thus, it is critical that we know our own decision-making rules ahead of time, and then stick to this in a disciplined manner. We must commit up front, as team is being initiated, to place sufficient budget in their hands. Insufficient budget will become a definite impediment to solving problems, even with the best of teams. The act of dedicating the team time alone is a major commitment, but we will ultimately need to capitalize equipment, train and retrain, make new hires and so on, requiring budget and other resources.

One key barrier, often misunderstood, is that we may not actually know the problem as a problem. We must define the problem with the utmost care in order to be able to solve the problem. We simply cannot solve that which we do not understand, and thus, part of the problem is to actually have sufficient information to be able to understand, thoroughly, what the problem is, why we consider it to be a problem, what the contributions are to it, and so on. Once we are clear on what truly is the problem, then we can begin to formulate objectives to chip away at as part of the solution strategy, and so on.

All must have appropriate and compatible systems in order for us to be an effective team, particularly in a predominantly electronic infrastructure. Hardware and software must be systemically "on the same page" if we are going to be productive. All must agree to the extent we are going to work online and then behave accordingly—in other words if we are going to be online 100% then buckle down and make the systems work for us—and follow through with effective communications.

Determining the appropriate protocols to use and follow in an electronic team, are very important. While having "rules" which define and help all "play ball" correctly, is key in the electronic team world, it is also vital in any team. This relates to how we use chats, types of information we are able to post, ethical uses of others' information, and so on.

Obviously, deviant, dishonest or unethical behaviors are only going to lead to disruptions to the work flow.

## **Change, Improvement, Leadership**

Frequently, particularly upper level managers have not understood change and improvement, let alone relationships inherent in leadership—perhaps they don't even know they have a key responsibility in this relationship. If they do understand change as an improvement, how does this play out along side leadership needs and responsibilities, all aimed at long term competition in the changing marketplace? Who has stock options and is protected no matter what happens regarding down-sizing, organizational closings and/or relocations, etc., and what does this mean alongside the workers who may be seemingly vulnerable at various levels and in various ways? What are the values which drive upper management, versus others in the organization, and how do we balance this relationally to remain vibrant, motivated and viable in a cultural and individual context?

Historically, our paradigm has said that quality has been viewed as an expensive, if not elusive entity, one that may not have traditional value-adding potentials alongside production functions where value added mentalities rose from. Inspection was traditionally seen as the key to adding value in quality, and more quality experts and inspectors can assure quality if we simply slow production down sufficiently to allow this to happen. Add to this that historically defects are caused by workers and the process (particularly manufacturing, but perhaps all processes in the future) can be optimized by outside experts. No real substantive change in actual nuts and bolts side of the system, afterward, has actually been done—at least none of lasting value—largely due to the reality that this model, or paradigm has had no input from workers. Concurrent with all of this we have believed in the myth that use of work quotas and short term goals can help achieve real and lasting productivity gains. This paradigm says fear and reward are proper ways to motivate. People can be treated like commodities—buying more when needed, laying off when needing less—and this is OK. Rewarding the best performers and punishing the worst will lead to greater productivity and creativity. The old paradigm buys on low cost, playing one supplier off against another.

The new paradigm, introduced and led by Deming and other quality leaders in the 50's and 60's, forward, identified that quality built in up front, and consistently throughout a process, leads to lower costs, and that inspection is too late—particularly on the tail end. Many have come to realize, first in manufacturing and now in all sectors and types of

economic activity, that workers can produce defect-free goods, and we can virtually eliminate inspections, and certainly inspectors in the traditional sense. Quality is made in the boardroom—starting with the significant decisions made at that level. Most defects are caused by the system, particularly by upper managers who control the downstream actions of others. We now know, by virtue of this new and only now beginning to take hold paradigm, that process is never optimized and that it can always be improved. Similarly, we now know that elimination of all work quotas is necessary, and that fear in the workplace, particularly doled out in punitive ways, only leads to disaster. People must be made to feel secure in their jobs, and the role of management is to understand at the highest level that most variation is caused by the system, and the nature of the decisions being made by management. Review systems that judge, punish, and reward above, or below average performance destroy teamwork and the company, leading to new forms of communication, assessment, and clearly models for change tied to broader quality standards and systems. Similarly, we now know that we must buy from vendors committed to quality, and that if we work with suppliers properly and develop the essential trust required as part of the broader team, even to the point that we invest time and knowledge to help suppliers improve quality and costs, all can gain. Development of long-term relationships with suppliers is key to profits generated by all as loyal customers.

The new paradigm requires that we be proactive, recognizing our individual and collective responsibility broadly and systemically. We know effective and committed management begins with the end in mind, and that we must manage all else knowing what we want to be known for as an organization and individually? We must know where we want to go, what our values are and how this all fits together to be a value-adding organization at the team or larger level. We must learn to put first things first, and to vision, prioritize, strategize, implement and become a self-organizer and manager for the good of all, beyond self-serving only. This requires thinking win/win, with the broadest of teams right on through all cross functional activities and needs based on interdependence, independence and autonomy collaboratively tied to the collective good. This new paradigm demands that we seek first to understand, then to be understood, realizing empathy is key to communication. We know that in order to synergize trust, cooperation is key, foundational to bringing it all together for the win/win collectively as we change and grow together, improve. We can't talk ourselves out of problems we behaved ourselves into. The paradigm for our future calls us to:

- Understand the individual
- Keep commitments
- Clarify expectations
- Show personal integrity
- Apologize when we goof

At the root level, we must better understand the causes of the problem, and the purpose of change, prior to diving in to the gimmick of the month club. We must mature ourselves as individuals, and collectively develop and continue to change toward a more disciplined system which can more quickly and with integrity respond and change as improvements.

***Still more on leadership.*** Leadership is presented here as a “learned art”, a transforming process which is relational to all else, inclusive of individual and group. While it may be true there are some “born” leaders, most of us can and must learn to do this better. Leadership requires self-understanding, as an expression of intentional courage which is generally situational. While leadership is definitely risky, it includes identifiable and teachable skills. Leadership serves the good of all, and is clearly needed for social change, but simultaneously not sufficient for cultural change. It is essential for human progress, leading to action which can promote social justice. Consider:

1. As they learn new ways, leaders must be patient with themselves and others, persistent, and humble, and allowing all to be inelegant.
2. We are moving from unconscious incompetence to conscious incompetence, a very difficult transition over several years--then to conscious competence and into unconscious competence.
3. We must know the organization *systemically*, including the purpose of any undertaking, and interactions and interdependencies between parts that result either in achievement or failure.
4. All *outputs*, desired or undesired, is the result of systemic interactions (including people, and total process inadequacies).
5. Leaders must understand what is going on, they must understand the larger system of which any effort is part and with which it interacts, and how the interaction occurs.
6. Changing systems will change what we do. Changing what we do may not change systems.
7. All the teamed-up, accountable, empowered, incentivized, motivated, and paid-for-performance people you can muster cannot compensate for a dysfunctional system.
8. Leaders must understand differences in common and special cause variation in order to be able to reduce variation effectively.

9. Leaders need to see themselves less as directors and controllers and more as the leaders of learning and experimentation.
10. Recognize differences in necessary and unnecessary change, and change and improvement, knowing how to assure change is improvement. Change requires knowledge, and improvement, profound knowledge.
11. Leaders understand motivation, the difference between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, that they cannot motivate, and that attempts to do so will probably make things worse. We need to understand that they can *demotivate* people.
12. Leaders understand participation and involvement when solving problems and planning change. Participation results in better decisions, solutions, and improvements. Excluding people and stealthful or coercive approaches to change does great harm.
13. Leaders may well seek to discover what their organization’s culture is, keeping in mind that they are the people least likely to understand it.
14. Leaders create and foster networks of personal relationships within and between the organization and those on the outside.
15. The organization must focus its efforts so that it does a few things thoroughly rather than many things inadequately.
16. Leaders develop clarity and consistency in organizational purpose, continually reminding all of the purpose.
17. Leaders use feedback as a key for improvement, with ongoing feedback loops from the customer.
18. Leaders need a strong sense of Gemba (work flow going directly to the outside customer), understanding this important daily customer-oriented work, giving priority and support.
19. We must promote standardization of recurring processes and an understanding of how each person’s standardized processes of work fit with other processes and within the larger systems.
20. Leaders must understand, embrace approaches to standardization such as ISO 9000 and other systemic, holistic, integrated approaches.
21. Leaders must not succumb to the latest fads.
22. Remove barriers, break them down and create interactive systems and processes for collaboration, cooperation, interdependence.
23. Leaders need the ability to lead the planning and action necessary for breakthrough improvement and large systems change.
24. Leaders must lead the creation of purpose, mission, vision, and values, statements that are unique rather than generic, statements that are from the heart, not empty writing exercises.

25. We must lead to establish systems and processes for routinely collecting and analyzing data that indicate our well being, needs and opportunities.
26. Planning is not only identifying goals and priorities but also specifying the methods and activities necessary and sufficient to do the plan.
27. Leaders need to lead not only the *planning* process – the establishment of priorities and the methods needed to accomplish them – but also the *review* process. Leaders ask good questions and offer challenge and support.
28. Leaders need to understand and appreciate the importance of clear, workable operational definitions, specific customer characteristics.
29. Leaders need a reflex for smart measurement, not simplistic, conventional, and unuseful measurement. All must know *what, how, why* it is important to measure it, *how to interpret* and *react* to whatever the data indicate.
30. Leaders need to appreciate the importance of good questions and develop an instinct for asking good questions, as well as what good listening is and how to practice it.
31. A leader is always full of praise, using the phrases “thank you” and “please” consistently.
32. A leader is growing, a dreamer, unafraid to launch forth before success is certain.
33. A leader is not afraid of confrontation, but understands the risks in doing this.
34. A leader is quick to praise and encourage the smallest amount of improvement—always interested in finding things “right” in others.
35. A leader is genuinely interested in others, taking them up to the top with themselves.
36. A leader responds to their failures, before others discover and reveal them—never talking about others’ failures.
37. A leader is specific in what is expected, and they hold accountable those who work for them.
38. A leader does what is right rather than what is popular—to build integrity and trust, a good name, based on honesty, to make other’s better.
39. Leader’s are servants who go well beyond what must be done to rise to a level of rightness—and represent the trust of others in balanced ways.
40. Leader determination and self-confidence provide inspiration to others, by commitment and example, more than by directive.
41. Leaders are able to explain the complex issues related to change and improvement, and place them in an appropriate context for moving forward—and for others to follow.
42. Leaders know when to advance and pause, when to criticize and praise, how to encourage others to excel. A leader’s reserves of energy and optimism bring strength to others.

43. Several fundamental competencies of leadership rise up as a base for all else that has been stated:

- Systems thinking
- Understanding the variability of work
- Understanding how we learn, develop, improve
- Understanding people, human behavior
- Vision, meaning, direction, and focus
- Understanding interactions in all, above

While there are no doubt other key leadership issues, this listing provides some indications of what must be done by us as leaders. It is incumbent upon us as leaders to strive to pursue these type challenges for change and improvement for the future.

### **Supervisor Leader: Manager, Team Facilitator, Champion, Mentor**

One of the most important leadership people in the technological organization is the supervisor--significant because they are frequently among the closest manager to the reality of producing product. This is possibly one of the most complex managers because the supervisor must understand and manage both people and technology in a "firing line" manner, and interpret company policy and philosophy, from upper management downward, for workers at various levels. This implies the supervisor has traditionally been a "buffer" between management and labor, again pointing to the significance of their role. The supervisor is management, although remember that management is changing due to empowerment, the quality movement and other factors.

The information in this section is designed to help provide insights into the personal attributes desirable for supervisors as leaders to cultivate related to change at the team and broader organizational level. Each attribute is explored and presented from the vantage point that the supervisor is a key manager and leader in the team and the broader organization. It is assumed that as one of the key change agents, the supervisor’s position and role is changing, and that most technologists will be involved in several different types of supervisory leadership positions in their leadership careers.

***Mental energy, alert.*** Supervisors must be high energy, mentally alert, individuals--not lethargic and complacent, having no sense of intelligent direction or knowledgeable bearing, how can we expect others to be any different? The supervisor, as leader, must be able to plow through mountains of information and "stuff", and quickly draw conclusions which frequently relate to complex

circumstances. The leader will evidence mental energy by studying, reading, writing and staying mentally active through other activities. Engaging and stimulating discussions, questioning behaviors, always seeking to learn more when others become less easily satisfied, are key attributes and signals which show energy levels and mental directions of the supervisor as a leader.

**Action oriented attitude.** The supervisor-leader for change must have an attitude which is action oriented, positive, optimistic and self-confident. Supervisors, as leaders, will be placed in many situations where others will expect less-than-optimistic actions and behaviors. It will often be important to those around the supervisor for the supervisor to appear (and actually be) confident and positive, even in the face of gloom and doom. The supervisor must project the attitude that "we can accomplish" or "we can improve". Supervisors in the organization play a significant role in developing the general attitude for the entire organization. Technological organizations, both now and in the future, will succeed or fail, in large part based on the attitude of supervisors. Supervisors must engender the attitude of success, all based around positive and proactive actions. This is also consistent with the reality that technology is inherently dynamic.

**Patience and composure.** Many circumstances will cause supervisors to need patience and maintain composure under pressure. Among these are people who are learning to be productive but not yet at a necessary level; production schedules to be met but can't; people being depended upon but who are not sufficiently dependable; equipment which is not as capable as it must be; cost over-runs and insufficient budgets. Without patience these circumstances can cause the supervisor to behave in a less-than-desirable manner, possibly causing organizational harm. When all systems cave in, and they will sooner or later, supervisors must maintain personal composure that people will expect in a leader, rather than caving-in with the system. People at all levels will watch supervisors for various reasons. Behavior of those around the supervisor will be affected, at least in part, by how well the composure is kept.

**Model and mentor.** Supervisors are leader models, mentors, to others in the organization. It is very natural for people to want, need and even require someone as a leader and model. Without leaders and models organizations simply do not function. This need is met, increasingly, by supervisors. The key is to have sufficient numbers of leaders in positions of appropriate supervision roles, with a clear understanding of their function. Leaders

aid in giving direction, providing impetus to get projects completed and products out the door, and aid in solving the multitude of technical and people problems which arise daily--all about change.

**Responsibility.** Responsibility will be sought out by the leader as a supervisor. If it is difficult to accept responsibility, it is quite unlikely that a person can be a good supervisor. The leader will naturally gravitate toward responsibility, and they will figure out ways to handle responsibilities thrust at them. As a supervisor increasingly grows in leadership abilities, they will also increase levels and capacities related to responsibility. This relates to expanding and changing span of control, increasingly challenging assignments and functions, enhanced trust and expectations up and down stream, and so on. Another signal in supervisors as leaders is the noticeable physical presence they will achieve and command. Leaders are not satisfied out of the limelight or stuck in a side show component of the operation--they must be in the center.

**Respectability and pride.** Supervisors must possess respectability, first and foremost, as self respect. Without sufficient self respect, others will have difficulty respecting the supervisor. Individual self respect comes in part from one's own maturity and acceptance of self. This assists in the supervisor's ability to gain the respect of those around them, leading to increased effectiveness within the organization. Persons upstream and down must have respect for the supervisor as the leader. This is key to building trust and communication at all levels, essential for synchronous operations for the future. Respect must transcend individual, transferred to the team to build pride in work and general activity overall. Effective leaders must feel good about themselves, what they do, those around them, and so on, passing this along in the culture.

**Operations and management.** Keeping the operation going in a well managed manner is pivotal for the organization. Supervisors must juggle numerous balls simultaneously, carrying on several activities and operations at various times and in a synchronized manner. Effective supervisors, as leaders and managers in competitive organizations, can do many different things at once, all at a high level of both quality and productivity. This involves financial, human relations, and certainly technical aspects. Supervisors can absorb another activity or responsibility even though they thought there was already too much to do--and look forward to this as a sign of their management and leadership capability. Continually absorbing responsibilities and balls to juggle, the effective supervisor will accomplish this

without sacrificing positive thinking, patience, appropriate attitude, composure, and other leadership and change capabilities.

**Flexibility and agility.** Among other things, the effective supervisor will remain flexible and agile. Circumstances will require flexibility in order to meet daily and long-term demands placed on supervisors. People and technology behaviors in the technological environment simply can't be predicted 100% of the time. Supervisors must respond in a flexible manner. Less flexible people will have increased difficulty with changes and "punches" to be "rolled" with. Leaders can not be flexible and agile in only a reactive way. It is important that supervisors be involved in planning and controlling, directions we take, facilitating changes at appropriate levels. This is surely a key reason for the continued and essential existence of supervisors as a key leader. The supervisor of the future must lead in the synchronization of multiple functions, all aimed at getting the product out the door as well as planning, controlling and changing for the future.

**Decision-making capability.** Decisions must be made and problems must be solved. Some issues will deal primarily with people while others relate to technical circumstances. The supervisor must lead by making effective decisions, often under pressures of insufficient resources, and generally without the luxury of knowing precisely what the impact of the decision will be on other variables associated. Due to the broad-based nature of the supervisor's leadership responsibility, it is extremely difficult for any one person to be able to see all facets of issues and circumstances related to the immediate decision being considered. Yet, decisions must be made in a timely, synchronized and holistic manner.

**Support the company.** While many will immediately reject that they should "support the company", particularly the supervisor is placed in this often awkward position. All should support company policy, but supervisors, as visible managers, must provide positive linkage via workers and company policy. If supervisors do not understand company policy, or choose to not support it, how can others be expected to be on the "company wavelength"?

**Feedback for improvement.** Perhaps things are not perfect in the organization, and it really is difficult to support some of what is happening. The supervisor is in a key role, as a first line manager, to influence toward change and improvement. Because supervisors can enjoy good relations with workers, it can be an important link to upper management, providing a conduit for improving the organization.

**Discipline and control.** Being productive and competitive, over the long or short term, requires reasonable levels of discipline and control. Much the same as an individual can get out of control and be detrimental to the organization it is also true that the larger organization and its sub components can lose control. What if people are stealing raw materials, working less than the full shift, hiding in the restroom for longer than is necessary and doing other things which are not in the best interest of the organization? Or what if people in the organization wish to control the organization? This may not be all bad, and some organizations may work better with worker ownership and control. Regardless, front line supervisors are critical managers for maintaining proper discipline and control in the organization.

**Understand organizational capabilities.** Supervisors as leaders must understand what the organization can and can not do effectively. If managers are not familiar with capabilities, they will either overwork or underwork their resources. Either way, insufficient understanding brings reduced productivity. Once capabilities are understood, we must push the envelope on resources. As we know resource capability, we should be better able to build expectations for what we can do. We must also remember the adage, "people will only do what they are asked to do". If supervisors do not push--and lead--the capability of resources, who will?

**Resolving grievances and problems.** Another critical role of the supervisor as leader is assisting in resolving grievances and issues between workers and others. Supervisors often know all sides of the issue, and must represent company policy responsibly. Many personal attributes identified earlier will be called to task when people challenge company policy, or when company policy is indeed counter productive and must be altered--changed.

**Know the technical field.** One reason technology people make good supervisors is because of "people" talents, but also their technical talents. Although supervisors are not technicians, a general knowledge of materials, processes, design, maintenance, quality, safety, materials handling, automation, and other technical areas can save dollars. Technical fields in the organization should be well understood by the supervisor to enable effective technical and non-technical communications and decision making. The better we understand process and product, the more likely we are of saving dollars.

**Know the big picture.** Related to several previous points, supervisors should be knowledgeable of all organizational areas. Recognizing all have limitations, and recognizing a

supervisors' role is demanding due to its breadth, the fact remains that supervisors need to know the big picture. Supervisors need an understanding of accounting, marketing, inventory, procurement and other non-technical areas, to aid in seeing big picture issues in the organization.

**Use the forms.** Most organizations have an abundance of forms, often seeming to be a burden. While they may appear to increase workload, forms should be used due to the need for communications and documentation. We know effective written communication is necessary for the organization to function, but there will be some attempts to avoid them. Immediate, short-range communication is necessary, but perhaps equally as important is documentation for the longer term. Examples include safety data and accident investigation, quality and statistical process data, maintenance information, and so on. Documentation is a basis for change and improvement, analyzing, understanding information.

**Motivational skills.** Supervisors must motivate those around them. Many situations require an extra effort on the part of the supervisor to assist people in getting the job done. For various reasons it may be helpful for people to be motivated, and the supervisor often is the best one to do this in technological circumstances, and issues.

**Do what you expect others to do.** Some may say that nothing pleases workers as much as seeing the boss get out of the office and do work like others do. People will be more likely to cooperate and produce for you if they know you are not afraid to get your hands dirty, take your tie off, dive in, and show workers that you have not lost touch with their reality. Do not expect others to do activities if you are not willing to do the same. This is the way supervisors (and others) gain credibility with workers--by showing them that you value their work. There will be situations where the supervisor must take an unpopular position, requiring the supervisor to have reasonable "professional distance".

**Know people/human relations.** Supervisors "know" people, and they are better able to:

- Predict behavior.
- Plan strategies for addressing issues.
- Investigate problems.
- Manipulate to best advantage the organization.
- Alter people's behaviors.

We can not mistakenly think that knowledge of people can be studied and learned in "several easy lessons" from a textbook. A thorough understanding of sociology of behavior, psychology, management

principles, and so on, will be helpful and necessary. But the only way to really learn about people is to work with them in a variety of circumstances, sometimes called "the school of hard knocks".

## **Rewarding, Recognizing, Redirecting: Growing And Handling Leaders**

Ongoing improvement, while possibly buried as a collective act in teams, must ultimately come down to the individual actions of each team member. And if one person does not pull their weight, it will be noted by all--and made up for by others. The reason this is presented as related to evaluation is that it is most likely this is where the rubber will hit the road--when people do not perform--someone must do something about it. This is another aspect of the leader's role--and not an easy one. This is also about good supervision since the task will likely fall to the supervisor to implement or perform. Three parts of the work by individuals are presented here, reward, recognition and redirection.

**Reward.** Reward is an important element in the mix of what makes people tick, given as material form recognition, usually for significant and/or sustained achievement. The reward can be monetary or other tangible forms such as a day off, plaques, or a meal function. Consider the following points:

- Once started, reward systems must continue
- Rewards are not equally regarded by all
- Withholding extinguishes desired behaviors
- Reward systems are difficult to administer
- Rewards will be "unfair" by non-winners
- Rewards are not a quick fix or fix all
- Rewards become "built in", and expected
- Rewards are truly, beyond the "call of duty"

Rewards are not without problems. Yet, when trying to get improvements to happen, sometimes a bit of encouragement is desired--or needed.

**Recognition.** This means notice and acknowledge in some definite way, behaviors of others--generally in positive ways. This should be an ongoing function which is genuine and heart-felt. It should be a day-to-day, non-patronizing, "valued" and "appreciated" consideration given where warranted. Some ways recognition can be given are verbal, over coffee or lunch, certificates, job enrichment, and so on. Some considerations follow:

- We all need recognition
- Recognition must be genuine

- This is one of the true keys to motivation
- Recognition properly handled leads to trust
- Recognition works all ways, up and down
- Recognition should not be over done
- Recognize that which should be copied
- Some recognition needs job responsibility
- Annual review, recognition can be articulated

While possibly less costly than a formal reward program, recognition and reward should both be a formal system and guidelines for administering provided. General oversight will be best done with all levels of personnel involved, and represented.

**Redirection.** Because occasionally rewards and recognition do not work, it may be important to help redirect an individual's effort. This becomes more formalized in the personal evaluation mode than either reward or recognition, and must be handled very carefully. This may be, or appear to be, punitive--or misunderstood in other ways. Some points to consider regarding redirection are:

- Redirection is tied to organizational goals
- Punishment is of little value--we all lose
- Personal goals linked to broader direction
- Know direction before we can redirect
- Must agree with individual redirection
- Management may re-evaluate expectations

The most effective motivators are achievement, advancement, recognition, responsibility and interesting work--with personal growth over time.

**Growing and handling leaders.** As we evaluate and grow talent as a supervisor, we will be in a good position to nurture leaders in our team and other ways. We will want, and need, to, replace ourselves one day, a key reason for growing and nurturing new talent. How can we grow new talent?

- Give up some responsibility to challenge others to do some of what must be done.
- Rotate responsibilities, giving different tasks to various persons, cross functionally to grow leaders.
- Provide knowledge and pass it off when required to help others grow.
- Teams should use mature leaders, with others at varying stages of development.
- In "fail safe ways" we must let people fall and pick themselves up if they are to learn to lead.
- Structure tasks and activities as experiences which help them grow over time.
- Proclaim an assistant with properly structured tasks and responsibilities.

Specific groups and organizations will grow talent in their own ways. But it is important to "make this happen" rather than not building it into the system. This assumes that talent and new leaders are grown rather than simply happening by chance.

## **Consensus Building: Leader As Communicator**

There is nothing simple or easy about evaluating ourselves and others in the organization. Even with solid documentation systems, the task is not necessarily straight forward. Part of the reason for the difficulty, and possible unpleasantness, is also part of the reason for the team in the first place--creativity and dynamic outcomes which far surpass what most of us as individuals can do. Still, evaluation will be difficult--and compounded by the group process inherent in the team. Several approaches are presented to assist--group skills, story boarding and consensus building--all designed to help us evaluate ourselves. One final area included for obvious reasons is negotiation.

**Group process skills.** The group processes are basically personal communication skills. For example lacking discussion ability will surely hamper abilities to work in the team. This includes knowing when and how to ask questions, seek information and opinions, clarify or elaborate, and so on. This also relates to the ability to summarize and wrap up at the right time, helping to keep a group on task and on time with deliverables, diplomatically and efficiently.

Good speaking skills are essential in the group process. Clarity and directness, without rambling or wandering, and actually saying what was intended are all critical. Listening carefully when others speak, exploring rather than negatively debating, and not interrupting--or talking--during the meeting are all important if we are going to make progress. Accepting critique when it is offered or given, and to provide this to others, are necessary skills for the team--and understanding how to act on all of this.

**Story boarding.** It is important to create a report from the meeting, documenting and demonstrating progress--story boarding can help. We must afford everyone the opportunity to respond effectively--again story boarding can assist. At the same time this approach can help us move further toward getting to the root cause of various issues and circumstances--and it is done in a more graphic manner than some other approaches.

The process for story boarding is related to brainstorming and cause and effect. In this case, it is

intended to provoke all persons to communicate better, and to help develop leadership. As well a record is created with the cards being generated--telling the story. The process can go as follows:

- Identify a leader/facilitator who then identifies a medium—electronic or traditional board.
- A brief purpose statement is posted--focusing the group--by the facilitator.
- All generate topical idea (s) related to a general purpose--posted around the purpose statement.
- All present their topical idea--lead--one at a time--in turn--guiding the group.
- As each person leads, other sub-topics are generated--posted, around previous topics.

The idea is to generate and build on new ideas, and to stretch the group toward enhanced communication and group process skills. Reports and documentation could be provided, to be followed up on in various ways. Story boarding could also be enhanced by building a cause and effect diagram along with or as a function of information being flushed out.

**Consensus.** Another important approach in the group process is consensus building. This also is designed to be used on gaining decisions. It is not necessary that we will all agree on any given point or issue--but it is important that we achieve consensus and agree sufficiently to move forward on the important work of ongoing improvement.

**Negotiation.** One of the single most significant actions of the supervisor as leader is negotiation. Whether done to keep peace on the line, job site, or the team, or for union or other contracts, negotiation is essential. Also known as consensus management, this still relies on basic negotiation skills:

- Doing the homework. We must know our business, moving quickly without needing to stop and go gather more information or data.
- Understand the opponent. Understand who we are dealing with, their motivation, how their world works, their "ego boundaries", and so on.
- Know what you need to win. Be clear on what you are after, and must get--and what is less important. What can you give up?
- Final decisions. It is important to defer, indicating you wish to confer with others, giving an opportunity to "walk away".
- Work on small parts. Do not let discussion become personal--keep the issues smaller rather than giving away the "kitchen sink".

- Work with facts and trusted persons. Only facts and persons established by all parties should be involved in the process.
- Strive for informal flexibility. Reconciliatory persons are oriented to being informal and flexible evidenced by "winning" solutions.
- Strive to communicate long term and "failure" oriented problems--shared to resolve together.

Perhaps most important, we must keep talking. If various parties do not "stay at the table", we may lose the entire situation. We lose much more by "throwing in the towel" immediately rather than maintaining openness to possible reconciliation.

**Supervising, managing and leading information, communications.** This is increasingly important because as organizations and technologies change they must have pivotal individuals as information disseminators. This is the supervisor of the future--manipulating information from upper management to line workers and others in key positions throughout the organization. While always a role of the supervisor, it is increasingly important due to the quickening pace of change in the workplace. With change comes the need for control. With controlled change will be the increasingly critical need to have accurate information and data for creative teams. Information systems are a key service area, critical for competitiveness in the future. This is further developed as part of innovative management and relationships inherent in the role of the supervisor. As technology and related information systems continue to evolve, one test for supervisors of the future will be adaptability and flexibility along side the new systems. There is little question that more and more functions will be done electronically, and thus, the ability to respond to the changes is pivotal. As we strive to change and improve, what level and type supervision is needed?

Information technology changes suggest that it is imperative for supervisors to be computer-literate and comfortable with "high tech" tools and systems. Being able to control and apply the hardware and software today and in the future means that we are able to use and apply those tools which our organization values in ways which add value to the organization. We must be fairly disciplined as individuals, and then also engage with others of like mind to grow and maintain a culture which is disciplined as well. Dealing with day-to-day issues of how to move information, and solving technically related problems and issues related demands that we be self-disciplined, and that we work in an environment which is highly disciplined as well.

Capacity to juggle multiple change and improvement initiatives has always been important to supervision—the difference is that now this must be done increasingly at the computer in the future.

The supervisor is a service worker, facilitating production and related functions at various levels and ways. The main service being performed, in addition to production, is change functions. This may include quality management systems, information technology changes, downsizing or “right sizing” for the lean environment, six sigma type statistical problem solving and improvement opportunities, or others. But the mix is sure to involve being proficient in the e-commerce venue. The ability to do various types of work at the web, using the internet to enhance and add value to other types of work, is critical to the future. But since this new technology is moving so quickly and evolving and defining itself as it is being built, it is fairly difficult to come to grips with.

## **Removing Barriers To Improvement, Management Versus Leadership**

Management is planning and budgeting, establishing detailed steps and timetables for achieving needed results, then allocating the resources necessary to make it happen. This requires organizing and staffing, establishing a structure for accomplishing plan requirements, staffing that structure with individuals, delegating responsibility and authority for carrying out the plan, providing policies and procedures to help guide people, and creating methods systems to monitor implementation. Controlling and problem solving are requisites, monitoring results, identifying deviations from plan, then planning and organizing to solve these problems, reducing variation in all we do. Systems established by management produce a measurable degree of predictability and order with the potential to consistently produce short-term results expected by various stakeholders (e.g., for customers, always being on time: for stockholders, being on budget).

Leadership means establishing direction, and developing a vision of the future – often the distant future – and strategies for producing the changes needed to achieve that vision. Based on the vision we must align people, communicating direction in words and deeds to all those whose cooperation may be needed to influence the creation of teams and coalitions that understand the vision and strategies and that accept their validity. Leaders motivate and inspire, energizing people to overcome major political, bureaucratic, and resource barriers to change by satisfying basic, but often unfulfilled, human needs. Leadership produces change, often to a

dramatic degree, having the potential to produce extremely useful change (new products that customers want, or perhaps new approaches to labor relations that help make us more competitive)

**Organizational/technical support.** If the organization is too lean, or perhaps there has been too much unplanned or planned change. We simply have not kept the support systems tuned to critical needs for growing and sustaining next generation talent. Critical areas will likely be information technology and engineering and/or technical support. This may also be a general lack of financial support, and/or mentoring support, among others.

**Lack of knowledge.** Due to base education, deficiencies, lack of specific training, and perhaps other factors, but for whatever reasons, simply lacking knowledge, and being out of step with the times, internally and externally can be major impediments to change and improvement. While this may commonly be technical knowledge, it may also be deficiencies in understanding people and how to motivate, what makes them tick, why they behave the way they do, and so on. Issues with how to get additional information, knowledge, or a lack of desire to do the same are commonly impediments in this area. Consider, if we don’t know there is a better way, or we don’t know what we don’t know.....

**Time crunch.** Lack of sufficient time to develop, teach and sustain is a key factor in change, known as mentoring. The learning curve is too great, we were caught off guard, the competition moved more quickly or was better positioned in the market.

**Commitment.** Commitment cannot be purchased or transferred in—particularly for change. Part of the reason to pay close attention to core leaders and other persons in the organization, in major changes, is to help assure we do not lose people, and that we have sincere commitment.

**Attitude.** Poor attitude, for any number of reasons, can be a key factor in change and improvement. If I was passed over for the promotion, may be having personal issues at home, resent my fellow workers, have developed new external priorities, and so on, these may work against necessary commitment to change and improve. Attitudinal issues range anywhere from discomfort with the workplace to being downright vengeful, leading to doing harm to others in the workplace as the stresses associated with change are brought about.

**Attention to detail.** The work pace has increased and we have more work to do—how can we keep up, let alone pay attention to the details that are key to our success? Particularly from the technological systems perspective, lack of attention to details can be our downfall.

**Assessment/reflection.** Depending on how sophisticated our reporting, documentation and general communication systems may be, as well as how and where we are located regarding leadership, it may be fairly difficult to have the necessary information for assessment of what is needing to be done, how and so on. If I am always under the gun to produce, and/or am not well equipped with the tools and information requisite for change, how can I be expected to improve? Particularly lack of reflection, can lead to a burned out, empty sense of accomplishment since we may not be able to bring the overall perspective to decision-making and adjustments in vision and direction needed at an individual level, let alone to lead a group. We must step back, pause, assess what has and perhaps not been accomplished, and why.

**Systemic perspective, the big picture.** If we are not systemic in our thinking, not able to understand the cause and effect relationships at various levels and ways, within the broadest of perspectives, we will increase difficulties in our abilities to change and improve. The vision we are striving for is essentially a “big picture” or panoramic view which all must share in and be part of if we are to support and move it forward. This requires attending to many of the pieces alluded to elsewhere in this section, and generally adjustments to the same in management style, culture, organization and so on.

Quality issues are technical dysfunctions at a sub-system level, but they also are management issues far beyond raw leadership. Symptoms of poor management, clearly related to leadership, include:

- Lack trust, teamwork, inability to empower--can only minimize creativity and innovation.
- Emphasis on “quick fixes”, easy way out, brushing realities under the rug, short term, ego fights.
- Paralyzing bureaucracy, political “blame game”, protectionism, not total system, disparate agendas.
- Perception of powerless, cannot change, improve—victims rather than taking responsibility for actions.
- Supervisors not managing, using old foreman ways, needing to become managers in true sense.
- Management functions, responsibilities unclear, not understood, ill defined, power struggles.
- Unbalanced responsibility, requiring organizational adjustment, better cross functionality, flexibility.
- Infrastructure unbalanced with management—need tools to communicate, manage, make decisions.
- Resistance to change, threatened, hostility and bitterness surfacing, as in terrorism potentials.
- Communication issues, some have information, others do not, management out of touch.
- Lack of planning, let alone lacking new products or launches being conceived.

- Vision, systems for moving forward inconsistent with specific plans and actions at various levels.
- Budgeting, financial information out of sync with real issues and needs to do change, improvement.
- No budget for training, education, lack of learning environment consistent with change, improvement.
- Increasing results expected with decreasing budget.
- Problem solving tools non-existent or inconsistent with nature of problems facing organization.
- Data and documentation, key information for change and improvement, not available.
- Firefighting mentality, batch as opposed to larger lots, not seeking more efficient approaches.
- Capacity, systems out of sync with customer demands, unclear, unstable, future cyclical.
- People masking real systemic, relational problems requiring attention, covering up.
- We assume a reality, rather than using facts, dealing straight ahead, in a confrontational way.
- Customer expectations are unclear or foggy and we then are confused on actual outcomes, deliverables.
- Measurement, rewards supporting old behaviors—rewarding wrong behaviors, blocking changes.
- Not understanding where we fit in the organization, our role, why we are here, who we report to.
- Unbalanced competition internal—different vision where, how we are going, why we are doing it.
- Inability to replace or change people—stuck in place systemically--unable to change structures.
- Organization vision, development inconsistent with a person’s “job”, perception of work to be done.

## Leading Change, Strategic Planning

Change in organization requires leadership at various levels possessing key attributes, all tuned and orchestrated simultaneously, in non-trivial ways:

- Personal charisma, in multiple individuals
- Longtime experience
- Respect and trust, internal and external
- Intelligence and knowledge
- Clarity of vision
- Persistence and commitment
- Access to information
- Access to influential groups (formal and informal)
- A plan, with contingencies pre-thought out
- Lead team able to organize and manage
- Financial and personnel resources to do the job

We must have clear core values, vision and goals, or nothing will fall into place. Come up with a better way, and then step back and see what is going on— with some perspective on healthy change.

At any phase, or time, being uninformed will lead to resentment, similar to the inability to get

to influential groups with key information and influence. Coercion needs a way to exist with those who lose, and it is bound to lead to grudges, demotivation, distrust, adversarial relationships. Dealing honestly, openly, and “up front” in all we do is key to successful long term change. Planning change involves difficult and complex decisions and strategies. Among other things, depending on whether the leaders are explorers-pioneers or stragglers (risk takers) or if they need security and comfort, can be significant. Leadership committed to change is key to the process, requiring attributes identified previously—if these are not present—it is critical that we consider not moving forward. Change requires knowledge, improvement and wisdom, and the ability to change as individuals. Mastering systems of improvement prepares us for change to happen organically as we improve.

Successful organizations regard all person’s as both followers and as leaders. The core of leadership is integrity and courage – characteristics which we should seek in all. These shared values describe how we must lead and work together. We must hire and reward only the highest quality talent, and encourage each person’s development. Leaders recognize differences in people and look for the diverse ways they can contribute to the success of all. Treat each individual with respect and dignity, and this will be returned—but also expect all to lead and follow respective levels of change management.

Communicate and then obtain alignment to strategy and goals. Set aggressive, ever-increasing performance standards and hold people accountable for meeting them. Put the vision out there, and articulate it to all. Tell the truth, even when it appears to be discouraged, and expect nothing less in others. Face the facts, admit mistakes, accept criticism, learn from it and improve. Admit you don’t have all the answers, learn from anyone, any place. Be intolerant of arrogance—always with respect for where we have been—built on higher standards and expectations.

Build teams and play whatever role in your broader team, and perhaps others’ as time permits, a necessary part of getting the job done. Share information openly, up, down, and across the company to help others. Help others succeed even at some cost to yourself—never being afraid to hand off and empower others—growing their talents. Forcefully resist adding layers, procedures and bureaucracy. Trust people with wide latitude and discretion. Break down barriers - eliminate boundary conflicts between departments, functions, and staff (functional vs. value-stream). A well organized system where components work in support of each other can and must help create harmony within the

dynamic and synergy of change. Assume your position responsibilities are a starting point, not a limitation. Take initiative and have self-confidence required to reach goals. Strive for speed and quality in all. Weigh risks carefully but do not hesitate to innovate or encourage and reward innovation and initiative. Accept that innovation does not always succeed. Don’t shrink from unpopular positions if you have passion for them. We need strong commitment to the goal, effective leadership, shared vision, and an action plan, at every phase. Influencing behavior of someone engages an act of leadership—we must be prepared for all contingencies—things seldom come out exactly as planned.

**Getting their attention.** Examine the market and competitive realities, while concurrently identifying and discussing crises, potential crisis, or major opportunities. The key is to remove complacency – no comfort zone should be unscathed. Status quo must be assessed and viewed as unacceptable. Transformational agents, champions with charisma, and appropriate competency sets should be sought out and put to work as champions. What other preparations must be made organizationally and particularly with individuals at this early stage? Information must be prepared and organized, and personal concerns attended to.

**Steering committee.** Create a guiding coalition, formal titles, information, expertise, reputation and relationships. Guiding coalitions talk the talk but teams have to be developed with upper level responsibility, leadership, membership. Putting together a group with enough power to lead the change is critical. Getting the group to work together like a team is a challenge, but possible, realizing that upper management will be strong-willed. As the steering group is formed, step back and see what is going on, and be in touch with the organization in all aspects. Now step even closer and begin examining your organization’s current systems and capabilities. We must be realistic and detailed in our initial, as well as, ongoing assessments. Working with the steering coalition, describe the future, define the vision, but in doable, manageable, steps and phases. Identify the actions, plan, prioritize and phase the work in over a reasonable and responsible timeframe. Mobilize resources, taking into account real needs, changes be difficult to predict, flexibility required.

**Vision and strategy.** Creating a vision and strategy to help direct the change effort is another key area of change. Developing strategies for achieving that vision, along with getting to know the culture and key players, will be pivotal, all as part of a larger plan. Developing vision and strategy, concurrent with the sense of urgency, a need to change and be competitive, will be part of the vision and strategy.

Sensible steps taken to guide, align, inspire, and grow and groom others to be part of the visionary team creates necessary direction. All on the team must be able to describe simply, and articulate the plan for change, as the fundamental strategy. All of this is aligned with core values and elements of the culture, well understood, but known as needing changed.

**Communicate the change plan, vision and strategy, aggressively.** The best laid plans, not communicated, will go no where. Once the plan is beginning to be formulated in ways that it can be shared in positive ways, it will be important to do so, with care and sensitivity. Having a guiding coalition role model, as leader, the behavior expected of employees can be communicated as part of the broader strategy. Do this by sitting in meetings, eye ball to eyeball – everyone may be surprised initially – but this goes away as we get increasingly into the thick of things. Executive speeches given will likely initially elicit much direct comment – no response – no feedback – but this too will go away. Over time, comments in the halls will come back through the process and we must be prepared to address concerns and issues which rise up, and to possibly modify the plan as may be needed without straying too far from the course. Spend time at all levels to assess the pace of change, how we proceed, and so on, not wavering from the plan overall. Using every vehicle possible to constantly communicate the new vision and strategy is critical (newsletters, meetings, teams, events, etc.).

**Preparing for, empowering action.** As the culture is becoming better understood, and increasing numbers of people are “buying in”, strategically and tactically, leadership must be creating trial teams and groups who will demonstrate the strategy and plan in action. To do this we must empower, get rid of obstacles or barriers wherever possible. Whenever smart, motivated people avoid confronting obstacles, they work against empowerment and avoid change, and this causes us to lose ground. Leaders must encourage risk taking and nontraditional ideas, activities, and actions in the trial groups, grooming them for change in a direct teaching and learning mode. We must understand and change systems or structures that undermine the change vision, cultural aspects and attributes which are resistant to change and improvement. This will include organization structure; self-interest individuals, groups or departments, both internal and external; and, supervisors and old style management personnel as key to the process—needing to change and improve.

**Showing progress is important.** Planning for visible improvements in performance, or “wins” is an important part of change and improvement, getting people on board in positive and proactive ways. Creating those wins, or positive learning

examples can be done through Kaizen blitzes, longer term trials with teams, customer formed supplier improvement teams, and so on. These should be well documented and the successful persons who have participated can help communicate the story to others. Visibly recognizing, rewarding people who made the wins possible will be of vital importance.

**Regroup to do more.** We know we must be flexible as we move forward with change. Based on modest gains, and using increased credibility to change all systems, structures, and policies that don’t fit together and don’t fit the transformation vision, we must regroup. Creating better performance through customer-oriented behavior, more and better leadership, and more effective management becoming increasingly apparent based on successes, is key. We must reinvigorate the process with new projects, themes, and change agents.

**Rebuilding culture with new approaches.** Systematically and systemically, assuming we are diligent, disciplined, well organized and simply stay the course as laid out (with minor changes and adjustments along the way), we will begin to gradually see the plan being implemented. Obviously, it is important not to declare victory too soon (or at all) different from celebration – will sink in culture. This will create self-service change resistors, bringing about past bad behaviors which are engrained in social norms and values—all which is part of what we are striving to change. Change must have helped for long term future growth—if we are successful. Over time, hiring, promoting, and developing people who can implement the change vision, increasingly articulating the connections between new behaviors and organizational success will be seen as depth into and across teams and workgroups is achieved. Developing the means to ensure leadership development and succession, as part of the change process is key to assuring the long term implementation for competitive change.

**Implementation, assessment and revising the plan, long term sustainability.** Damage and discouragement, real or perceived, is upon us, implementation has occurred, and impacts and concerns must be addressed. Real changes would need to be dealt with, addressed at this point, as potential improvements, if dealt with properly at a necessary leadership level. Adopting and refining empowerment, collaboration and refinement concerns at the team level, assuring that teams work, will be key to sustainability across the systems. Late adaptors and/or adopters will only now be asking the right questions, and this could likely be a large segment of the actual organization. Information concerns will become increasingly significant since this is anticipated to be a basic change area as all

become proficient with e-commerce tools and systems, infrastructurally. Many will ask what is wrong with the way things are now? Why is change happening? Many need understanding as seemingly innocent bystanders of the change process—but to a large measure it will be their own “late arrival” to the process that has caused their own dismay.

There will be real and significant personal concerns – how will this impact me? Do I have the skills? Will I win or lose (be left out). Late adopters will feel the impact and be asking is this worth it? What is the payoff? Still others will now be starting to see the benefits of collaboration and team work, and begin asking who else is involved? How do we communicate and how can we make the systems even better? Refinement through assessment and continuous improvement strategies underscores that we definitely can improve the original idea, and we must. As we hold to change—stay the course for improvement—we will refine our broader plans, to move into other phases for broader change with customers, suppliers, internal/external. Over time in the process, leaders shift from planners to reviewers, from decision makers to teachers. Leaders must be flexible and mature in their stance to accommodate all of these roles. At every stage of assessment we must consider what the future is, what it looks like, and what should it be to accommodate our vision?

It is clear that we must view change as an opportunity, not a threat, challenging as this is. Accept change as the challenge it is, recognizing the need for flexibility in our leadership. Always be comfortable with ambiguity. Shift focus and priority with unwavering intensity and commitment—but be disciplined in making shifts. Take action to accomplish transformation--management must be committed and able to communicate all of this well. All must have a desire to transform their style of management. Simultaneously, serve and defend with equal energy our customers’, our employees’ and our shareholders’ interests. The primary measure of our success as an organization is the value we create with our products, and our ability to communicate this to other--focus on process, methods, systems and quality. We must improve, constantly, systems of production and service—and this is all about change.

On a more personal level, an important aspect of the broader organizational mission statement is the ability to visualize your future as an individual in the broader group. A personal mission statement may seek answers to questions like these:

- What do I want from my life?
- What do I value, and why?
- What are my talents, how should I use them?
- What do I want to accomplish in my life?

- How does my work contribute to my mission?
- What do I expect work to do for me?
- How can I integrate personal goals with all else?

Writing a mission and vision statement is adventure in self-discovery. We write statements to uncover talents and interests—and to help ourselves move forward. The value of a mission statement is that it forces you to think deeply, clarifying your purpose. It helps you identify what is really important to you.

We can clarify our personal mission by dividing it into roles. A role is a function that we serve in life, such as; wife, mother, professional, etc. Roles are one of the key ways to create balance in our life. Goals define what we want to achieve within each role. Goals can be lifelong, intermediate, or short term, but again, your personal goals are key to a balanced life since aspirations motivate us day to day to improve and to become what we must be. Integrating your personal mission statement into your weekly and quarterly, year by year planning gives you a way to keep that vision constantly before you, and to evolve systematically toward what you must be. This, then, helps us understand better that the final test of the value and effectiveness of a mission statement is: does this statement inspire me?

#### ***Leadership, Change, Servicing Others.***

Change is essential to any organization wishing to remain competitive in the future. This is true since on-going improvements necessary for effective quality systems are knowledge based, and tied to technology and service functions. Implementation of change requires leadership at various levels. Although top leadership is critical, this will not see the change through. Assuming the vision is in place, the most important leader is thought to be the supervisor since the supervisor becomes the translator of policy and strategy into action. Not only will the supervisor be the translator-leader, but they will also be the person who will gain the buy-in of workers. The desire to change must be most evident at the front line in the form of the supervisor. The supervisor is the essential leader--necessary for nurturing and training all others on an on-going basis, growing together in a synchronized manner. If the supervisor is not up to speed or "bought in", line workers and operators simply will not be brought along in a positive manner. This clearly points to the supervisor becoming a manager--a shift from the traditions of old style supervisors. The mission of any organization can only become reality if supervisor's are true manager's of their work area--bringing others along as team, moving together with others to meet the competitive forces of the future.

***Getting focused.*** Organizations which are

going to become and remain competitive must have strategic plans which become translated into actual objectives. The strategic plan must be "owned" by all persons in the organization, even to the extent that they will actually sign off on all or part of it. Specifically focused on quality systems and services, it is critical that organizations embrace the reality that they must be the very best at doing what they do. Change requires a focused organization, and a philosophy evidenced in a strategic plan that is articulated to all persons within the organization. The strategic plan is generally based on an operating philosophy which reflects the nature of the product, the customer, and the overall approach to producing quality at minimum cost. The philosophy is sufficiently broad to facilitate on-going changes in objectives for ups and downs in the marketplace as well as other factors in technological organizations.

*The mission, philosophy.* A philosophy and mission, in essence, becomes pivotal to all else. If we cannot place our work, all efforts, next to the "yardstick" of a mission statement, and have work stack up as relevant and meaningful toward accomplishing mission, then we must question our effort. As managers--leaders we must question, in healthy ways, the work of others who report to us--this is the context of evaluation. But what is the mission, and what does this have to do with attaining and maintaining a competitive position? We need shared vision, identified as the mission:

**"Our mission is to be the leading producer of \_\_\_\_\_ products. Our focus is customer satisfaction and continuous improvement, emphasizing quality products, services, leading-edge technologies, timely deliveries and cost competitiveness".**

Note that the mission clearly underscores the emphasis on customers and achieving their desired quality levels, as well as on-going improvement to meet their needs well into the future. Also note the emphasis on being the leader--the best at what we do. The extent to which all persons understand this mission statement, adhere to it, and practice it daily in all that they do will help determine, to a great extent, the reality of our progress toward achieving and maintaining the quality systems. The mission statement must form the basis for all else we do, both day to day in a focused manner, and in the longer run.

*Our objectives, further focus.* This should be particularly noted in the objectives of the organization--at various levels and ways, by persons as individuals. Various work groups within our organizations should have their own objectives which

help achieve the broader corporate mission. While various groups and departments have different objectives reflective of their specific responsibilities and focus, all should be related toward the same general mission. When objectives are established, careful consideration must be given to their priority, timing and overall impact on the organization. Organizations must determine which objectives are primary and which are secondary with the key differences being that primary objectives are the central emphases while secondary objectives provide directives to all involved. When structuring objectives, management must distinguish between employee personal objectives and organization objectives. Objectives should be measurable, with unity and continuity through strategic planning for the future, all pivotal to the long term mission. Objectives generally are derived from problems and/or opportunities for improvement.

*Evaluation for improvement.* Measuring ourselves requires strong and workable documentation systems. Assuming we have a shared vision based on our mission, and our objectives are uniformly derived in a disciplined manner, then it becomes extremely important to be able to determine degree of success toward accomplishing our objectives at every level. This also relates to setting baselines for objectives, striving to meet the baselines in the short term, and measuring against baselines for accomplishment or adjustment in the longer term. One of the true indicators of leadership must be the ability to not only undertake strategic planning, but to follow through and adjust objectives and resources to meet objectives. Part of the responsibility of leading is being able to judge when and where to put resources and efforts. The ability to juggle, shift and redirect resources, particularly personnel, is key. This relates to change, and is pivotal to leading effectively toward accomplishment of objectives and fulfilling organizational mission.