

## Quality Standards and Management

In this recording we summarise the content of chapter 29 Quality Standards and Management. Studying this chapter should help you review what is meant by quality and quality management; define the key concepts associated with quality; discuss the importance of quality to contemporary organizations; Identify key quality standards and frameworks and discuss their benefits; list the eight quality management principles defined in ISO 9000; .

Introducing the chapter, the authors start with 1. Customers, wherever they are, want satisfaction. If they are buying a product they obviously want it to be fit for its purpose, safe, reliable, probably durable too and they are influenced by price. For example, most people want a car, but not everyone wants a top-of-the-range or an expensive executive model. They are quite happy with a standard middle-range vehicle, but they want it to be reliable, safe and economical. In the past many manufacturers were unable even to guarantee these three features. Nowadays, all manufacturers have to provide these, and many other standard features, in order to maintain their sales against the competition. In the case of a service, people are looking for factors such as availability, reliability, effectiveness (fitness for purpose) and courtesy. They may also be influenced by price. In summary we are discussing quality – from the customer's perspective.

2. The subject of quality has been referred to throughout this book and in the previous chapter where we focussed on control, and is further mentioned in the chapters on Marketing and Production in part three. The concept of quality is omnipresent throughout management theory and practice. Indeed quality is a matter of concern for everybody from the Board of Directors down to the humblest employee. We therefore start this chapter by explaining key terms and concepts associated with quality and consider why quality is so important (rationale) to every organisation today. Evans (2011) argues that many quality principles are based on management theories that are familiar to students and we will make links with strategy, organisation design, leadership, marketing, production, organization behaviour, culture, decision making, information systems, business processes and continuous improvement. From the outset we recognise quality to be a complex construct, used to describe inputs (raw materials), processes and transformational resources and outputs. It is relevant to value creation through the organisation's value chain and its value system. It is a stakeholder perception and may therefore be defined in many ways. Having considered what is meant by the term quality and why it is so important, we then focus on the management of quality in organizations, considering basic principles and methods and then quality standards..

The key concepts discussed within this chapter are:

Quality assurance - The specific actions firms take to ensure that their products, services, and processes meet the quality requirements of their customers; quality management - Refers to systematic policies, methods, and procedures used to ensure that goods and services are produced with appropriate levels of quality to meet the needs of customers; Quality management system (QMS) - A systematic approach to proactively managing quality based on documented standards and operating procedures. The best known QMSs are those based on the ISO9000 series of quality standards; quality standard - a framework for achieving a recognized level of quality within an organization. Achievement of a quality standard demonstrates that an organization has met the requirements laid out by a certifying body.; Total Quality Management (TQM) - A quality approach that emphasises a continuous process of improvement, through the involvement of people; Value perspective - A quality perspective that holds that quality must be judged, in part, by how well the characteristics of a particular product or service align with the needs of a specific user. Value is often described in terms of quality and cost i.e. value = higher quality for lower cost (price); .

Other terms discussed include:

European Quality Award (EQA); quality; .

Summarising and concluding, the author(s) make the following comments - 24. Quality is an

extremely important omnipresent strategic, tactical and operational management concept, associated both with differentiation and cost reduction strategies. It focuses on effectiveness and efficiency. Quality management typically begins with a consideration of customers, be they internal employees, other businesses or members of the public. Their wants and needs must be translated into specifications of one kind or another. These specifications need to be developed and tested. Resources and operational plans have to be drawn up. Then production (or delivery, if a service) can begin. The process of production (or delivery of a service) must be assessed and monitored at every stage in order to see where improvements could be made and ensure that the outputs meet customer needs. Once the customer has received the goods or service, procedures need to be in place to deal with after-sales problems or queries, and to assess the level of customer satisfaction. Then the quality process can begin all over again – in a total quality management system it is a cyclical process which never stops. Organisations may use standards to help them develop their quality management systems. Certification of compliance with a standard such as ISO 9001:2008 can bring many benefits and may help a company win business..

We have now reached the end of the chapter 'Quality Standards and Management'.

There are a number of references for this chapter where further reading opportunities are identified for you.

Additionally, there are questions or activities to help develop and test your understanding of this chapter