

# Leadership for a Successful Quality Journey

Dr. Omer El Tigani

Received: 28 February 2012 Accepted: 26 March 2012 Published: 6 April 2012

4

---

## Abstract

The need for leaders arises for the critical roles that they play in leading people groups, without leadership a group of human beings quickly degenerates into arguments and conflicts, because humans see things in different ways and lean toward different solutions. Leadership is a skill needed to influence others' thoughts, attitudes and behaviors. Leadership is an important skill not only for people in higher positions, but also for so other people in different organizational levels. Leaders set directions to others and help them to clearly visualize the goals that they are targeting. Moreover, leaders encourage, motivate and inspire others to achieve the desired results.

14

---

15 **Index terms**— organizational, leaders encourage, motivate and inspire.

## 1 Introduction

16 The need for leaders arises for the critical roles that they play in leading people groups, without leadership a group of human beings quickly degenerates into arguments and conflicts, because humans see things in different ways and lean toward different solutions. Leadership is a skill needed to influence others' thoughts, attitudes and behaviors. Leadership is an important skill not only for people in higher positions, but also for so other people in different organizational levels. Leaders set directions to others and help them to clearly visualize the goals that they are targeting. Moreover, leaders encourage, motivate and inspire others to achieve the desired results.

23 A person can be a manager and a person can be a leader; but the successful person who is both leader and manager. The organization shall concentrate on the leadership process to be included in the managerial role because it will add other values to its managers and even the rest of staff. Values include motivating other people, fostering innovation, creativity and finding better ways to achieve goals.

## 2 II.

## 28 3 Leaders In Quality Management

29 Leaders in Quality Management System refer to all senior management team within the organization and all levels of managers and/or anyone has a responsibility for managing staff and/or making organizational decision. As 30 stated by the (International Organization for Standardization "ISO", 2009), "Leaders establish unity of purpose 31 and direction of the organization. They should create and maintain the internal environment in which people 32 can become fully involved in achieving the organization's objectives".

34 Leaders in Quality Management Journey provide the organization with a clear Vision. In the light of 35 Vision, Quality Policy and Quality Objectives for the organization shall be set. The proper communication 36 and having people understand the organization's Vision, Quality Policy and Objectives is a big challenge for the 37 top management or organization leaders, as they have to be careful in using the communication media that suits 38 the certain organizational culture in general and individuals' cultures in particular; aiming to reduce resistance 39 and involve everybody to support the Quality Journey. Moreover, organization's leaders must ensure Author 40 : Quality Manager, Tanween Co. Doha Qatar. E-mail : omeraaaziz@hotmail.com the availability of resources 41 needed for achieving the quality objectives and pursuing the organization's vision.

42 Top management commitment is the principal pillar of the success of every desired organizational change. 43 The most three essential key success factors for any quality management system are: 1) The top management 44 commitment, 2) The top management commitment, and finally 3) The top management commitment !!! Leaders

## 5 IV. EFFECTS OF POOR QMS LEADERSHIP IN PRACTICE

---

45 or organization top management is one of the important areas that the ISO 9001:2008 Standard focus on. A  
46 complete and big clause is allocated to describe what is required from the organization's top management to  
47 embark and succeed in its quality journey. For instance, Clause 5.6 requires the organization's top management  
48 to systematically review the adequacy, effectiveness and performance of the quality management system.

### 49 4 III. Causes Of poor Qms Leadership

50 There is a famous say "If you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it". This means only managers with  
51 technical backgrounds related to the scope of the jobs or business will be successful managers. Is this statement  
52 correct? To what level do managers need to hold the technical know-how to succeed as leaders? What bout  
53 engineers who led financial organizations to succeed? These questions are provided to say that the foresaid  
54 statement is not absolutely correct. For instance, do all core business's technical personnel are capable to lead  
55 their organizations? Unfortunately, this happens in so many organizations where we find leaders or managers  
56 appointed according to their years of experiences in the technical field!! For example, top management members  
57 of some engineering organizations are selected ONLY because of their long experience in the engineering works;  
58 ignoring the importance of the other managerial or leadership skills (e.g. interpersonal skills) which are essential  
59 for successful leaders.

60 Nowadays leadership and management methodologies and principles become an enormous science with  
61 uncountable number of theories and tools that managers and leaders need, not only to apply, but also to  
62 implement in a proper and effective way in their day-to-day tasks. Therefore, balance between technical and  
63 leadership skills is crucial, as using leaders who do not possess leadership skills will definitely lead to wrong  
64 decisions with significant consequences resulted from the narrow visioning, poor planning, bad management to  
65 company resources and so many others. Though April they are busy with loaded time schedule every day, but  
66 it's crucial for leaders to always update themselves with regards to the latest management tools and theories  
67 that educate them on how to deal with their employees, how to maintain a healthy work environment in the  
68 workplace, how to continually improve the final product/service, how to attract more customers, and the like.

### 69 5 IV. Effects Of Poor QMS Leadership In Practice

70 The successful Quality Journey must involve everyone in the organization. People's commitment to the new  
71 Quality Management System should start by the top management, then, to be cascaded down to lower levels  
72 of the organization structure. As mentioned earlier, good leadership is the backbone of any successful QMS of  
73 every organization, but by the same way, poor leadership has very damaging impacts upon the performance of the  
74 organization. For instance, effects of some wrong decisions -when converted into money -cost the organization lots  
75 of Dollars. In the following part, the Author will discuss some of the examples and cases in which poor leadership  
76 negatively impacts the QMS performance and the success of the quality journey within the organization:

77 ? As we all know, production is the main business function affecting the company's products, in which  
78 the organization gathers all efforts, spends time and money striving to always improve to levels higher than  
79 competitors in the marketplace .But unfortunately, poor leadership hinders the organization to achieve the  
80 optimum production that it deserves or plans to hit. The organization may survive with the poor leadership,  
81 but definitely, it cannot make the optimum use of the available resources to reach the optimum production, as  
82 lots of time and efforts are lost in re-working, double working and/or misuse of organization human or other  
83 resources. ? Communication is one of the most important key success factors for every Quality Management  
84 System. It's important that the top management of the organization to clearly explain to their employees where  
85 the organization is going, what are the customer requirements, what are the around business opportunities, and so  
86 on. If the organization's vision, mission and strategic goals are properly communicated, employees will consider  
87 themselves as part of the organization and they will strongly believe that organization's success is theirs. For  
88 instance, leaders must take the responsibility of preparing, reviewing and monitoring the policy and ensures that  
89 it's understood at all levels of the organization. On the other hand, poor communication among organization's  
90 employees, management and external customers is an indication for a poor leadership, which affects all aspects  
91 of a company's business. Therefore, if management is not on top, they will experience decreased profits, wasted  
92 time and employees that do not take the business out to their lives. ? Narrow vision of some leaders, when  
93 they limit their ultimate goals to only obtaining quality accreditation, certification or just targeting immediate  
94 results. The right understandingis that the Quality Management System (QMS) is not a project with defined  
95 ends; it's an ongoing process.

96 Yes, there may be lots of rest stops and many opportunities for settling down for a while; but there is no  
97 end. Therefore, the essential concept that everybody in the organization must know by heart is that Quality  
98 Management System is a Change that takes its time to happen. Such limited visions from top management  
99 (i.e. leaders) will deteriorate the crucial top management commitment to the minimum and make it limited  
100 only for short-term achievements. For instance, Top management may give excessive attention to certification  
101 auditors in order to obtain the ISO 9001:2008 Certificate; providing low concentration to the quality of the works  
102 itself. After certification, the commitment of the top management significantly decreases, thus, ineffective and  
103 dull documentation and paper works will be placed over the other workers' heads. Moreover, when the ISO  
104 9000 certificate is the destination and the only final target of the organization, the significant decrease of top

105 management commitment is an expected result. According to that, the ISO 9000 Quality Management System  
106 will dramatically loose its value and the organization's workers will feel that the implementation of the ISO 9000  
107 QMS has no added value to their works and to their organization, thus, they will view the requirements of ISO  
108 9000 Standard as dull and very heavy load of works over their heads that they should do anyway!!! ? Poor  
109 leadership always treats the Quality Management System as a second priority. This is reflected into so many  
110 cases. For example, the Management Representative (MR) is not positioned as part of the top management team  
111 in so many organizations. This creates a gap between the business and quality, which must both be speaking the  
112 same language, as mentioned earlier.

113 Furthermore, the Quality Department will not possess the necessary influence or power to govern the  
114 organization from a quality point of view. ? Some leaders do not provide workers with the suitable environment  
115 in the workplace that enables them perform well. This comes as a result of how leaders/managers treat their  
116 teams. In some having the same educational and experience qualifications. Furthermore, job security is absent  
117 in so many organizations, because of which loyalty and morality significantly decrease among employees, as every  
118 employee works for his own objective and goals to survive; personal objectives are most probably not in line with  
119 the organization's ones. Such work environments demotivate employees from working hard and working faithfully  
120 for the organization's benefits, as they feel that they are not part of the organization and they will leave it at  
121 any time depending on their superior management's tempers or personal desires.

122 V.

123 Be The Right QMS Leader

124 In the following part and from the practical experience in the Quality Management and Business Excellence's  
125 field, the Author will list down some tips for the leaders of the organizations to follow while driving their quality  
126 journey: ? Be Convinced by the Correct Understanding :

127 Leaders are the most important party who must be knowledgeable and fully aware of that the establishment,  
128 implementation, maintenance and continually improving an effective Quality Management System is a large  
129 change management process that takes the organization into an endless journey of continual improvement and  
130 requires long-term and constant commitment from everybody. Leaders must understand by heart and be fully  
131 convinced with the importance, benefits and advantages that the new Quality Management System guarantees to  
132 the organization. But, when the ISO 9000 certificate is the destination and the only final goal of the organization,  
133 the significant decrease of leaders' commitment is an expected result.

134 ? Be Committed : As discussed earlier, commitment of the top management is crucial for the success of  
135 every Quality Management System. Therefore, good leaders should reveal a commitment to the establishment,  
136 implementation, maintenance and continual improvement of the strong Quality Management System. Leaders  
137 must continuously review the adequacy of the quality management system and ensure the availability of resources  
138 needed for achieving the organization's goals. Thus, the ISO 9001:2008 Certificate will be obtained as a result of  
139 the effectively working Quality Management System.

## 140 6 ? Make it Step by

141 Step : As any other change, people of the organization should be taken to the desired Quality Management System  
142 gradually, particularly, if the employees' backgrounds and the dominating cultures of the organization are not  
143 familiar with the requirements of the new QMS. For instance, some organizational cultures depend totally on the  
144 experience of their staff to complete the required deliverables; giving minimal attention to having a documented  
145 procedure to follow or making the necessary documentation while doing the job. To make the change slowly but  
146 surely in such cultures, leaders have to ask the employees to establish their procedures by writing what they  
147 usually used to do to perform each task/activity. Hence, by-time procedures will be refined and improved to  
148 the desired levels of quality to achieve business excellence. Thus, the organization become able to gain the real  
149 benefits out of the QMS in terms of reducing process cycle-time, cost saving, increasing revenues. Similarly,  
150 leaders must be careful and realistic while setting the organizational goals for the achievement of the desired  
151 QMS. Yes, leaders have to set challenging goals for the organization, but they have to be realistic!! Unrealistic  
152 goals that organization cannot achieve can lead to failure. Wise leaders who have the ability to match between  
153 the vision and the organization's capabilities.

154 ? Communication Is The Key : Communicate, communicate, and communicate to the team. Communication  
155 is crucial to the success of every organization, importance of communication increase in case of introducing  
156 new systems, such as QMS. Leaders must always preserve effective communication channels among top  
157 management, employees, and customers. Communication is not a one activity, action or even event. For  
158 effective communication, leaders must deal with it as a longterm process that requires constant repetition. From  
159 experience, setting a speech, issuing a memo and/or sending a series of emails are not enough to underpina new  
160 idea or a concept to reach all employees; but it needs constant repetition in every interaction with the employees.  
161 Furthermore, interview with media or presentation to external parties can be also used as a communication to  
162 organization's employees. A question for organizations that are not familiar with 'quality', how much time do  
163 you think leaders may need to spread out among employees that quality is everyone's concern??!! ? Rely on  
164 The Team : Employees are the backbone for every successful organization. Do you think that the unmotivated  
165 employees are part of this statement?? The answer is of course 'NO'. Good leaders who have the ability to keep  
166 their employees motivated all the timeby always providing them with new challenges, as most of people need to

## 8 CONCLUSIONS

---

167 be excited by new things to grant their bests for the work. One of the good ideas to keep people motivated to  
168 the Quality Management System is to make people rewarded or punished according to their commitment and  
169 contribution to the QMS success. Also, leaders need to empower their people and give them the autonomy, as  
170 employees want to find satisfaction and meaning of their works. Leaders must collaborate with their teams, with  
171 smart and close monitoring.

172 ? Keep the Right Balance : The challenge for the nowadays' leaders is how to get closer to their employees  
173 while maintaining the hierarchy of the organizational structure. Some management scholars describe this in terms  
174 of distance and closeness of the leaders to their employees. Leaders need to be close to their team to possess some  
175 understanding on how subordinates perform the job and what exact resources, efforts and time they require.  
176 Besides, such positive closeness from leaders indicates special care and appreciation for what people doing for  
177 the company and they are essence for every company success. But at the same time, leaders should keep some  
178 distance from the process details to see the bigger picture of the whole organization and the organization's  
179 position among other competitors in the marketplace. Therefore, achieving the right balance is the key skill for  
180 the modern leaders' success.

## 181 7 VI.

## 182 8 Conclusions

183 Existence of good leadership becomes essential for nowadays organizations to have a successful Quality  
184 Management System that grants the organization and employees tremendous benefits for both internal and  
185 external customers. But similarly, absence of modern leadership significantly impacts the overall performance of  
186 the organization and its reputation in the marketplace as well. <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Global Journal of Management and Business Research Volume XII Issue VII Version I © 2012 Global Journals Inc. (US)

<sup>2</sup>AprilLeadership for a Successful Quality Journey

---

187 [International Organization for Standardization ()] *International Organization for Standardization*, 2009. Qual-  
188 ity Management Principles.