MAKING THE "SHIFT" HAPPEN IN YOUR ORGANIZATION

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Changes have been underfoot in the quality movement for several years. But the magnitude of these changes are just now starting to make themselves known. What do they result from? From initiatives that have gone awry, expectations that have not been met, and a business climate that is more demanding than ever. Forces that are impacting our workplaces—employees acting like "free agents," the move for organizations to be socially responsible citizens, the aging of baby boomers and the like are also contributors.

These challenges and the shift they require within organizations from the work of internal/ external consultants and quality professionals were highlighted in the talk, "Improving Organizational Performance in the Workplace of the Future," presented at The Hunter Conference last May. This talk was based on the research findings presented in the 1999 book, *Critical SHIFT: The Future of Quality in Organizational Performance*, authored by Lori Silverman with Annabeth Propst. Quality is no longer the objective of a business. Creating value is. Value is much more than an economic calculation. It is the perception that the resources one receives in an marketplace exchange are greater than those that are given up when compared to an alternate choice. These resources may be easily measurable and come in the form of money, information, or time; they can also encompass intangibles such as love, status, and sensory gratification.

Once an organization is clear on its mission and vision, its task is to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage based on them. In order to do so they must create ever-increasing value simultaneously for four constituents—employees, consumers, shareholders (stakeholders) and society at large. Improving quality is necessary but not a sufficient means for creating value. Today, organizations must continually improve their overall performance and the concepts, tools, and methods of quality are but one approach for doing so. In the process, the "Q" has lost its tail—total quality management has become total organizational management.

What organizations need is "a systems approach to change and improving performance" according to Bill Anderson, Training Specialist for the Kohler Co. He goes on to say "the basics—such as quality assurance—are as important as work in alignment and integration and attending to human/spiritual needs." Karen Bennett, Training Manager for Discover Color,

elaborates on this. "a piecemeal approach is easy—and it fails often. We need to have a more complete picture of what is needed to improve performance. As Tedd Snyder, C.Q.E., formerly of Florida Power & Light and now with the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership states, "we need to take companies from being tactically successful to being strategically strong. …To do so quality professionals, as change agents, must see the entirety of improving the quality of management. Early on we were focused on the content [of quality]—now we need to [talk about] how to enable organizations to do these things. The challenge for American firms is that they are not improving fast enough."

The Starburst Model™, the centerpiece of *Critical SHIFT*, is a comprehensive framework for improving organizational performance that ultimately helps organizations to create value. It synthesizes traditional quality practices with other tools and methods that promote enterprise-wide performance improvement based on their overarching purpose. It presents five fields of performance practice—quality assurance, problem resolution, alignment and integration, consumer obsession, and spiritual awakening (see Table 1). No field is sufficient in and of itself—all are necessary if organizations expect to survive into the future.

Element Field of Practice	Purpose	Underlying Concepts	Commonly Used Tools and Methods
Quality Assurance	■ To ensure customers receive what they contract to receive	■ Quality assurance ■ Customer responsiveness ■ Process-oriented thinking ■ SDCA Cycle ■ Discipline	■ Quality system ■ Standardization ■ Basic tools of quality ■ The 5S's
Problem Resolution	■ To improve bottom-line performance and customer satisfaction	■ PDCA Cycle ■ Customer focus ■ Variation ■ Teamwork	■ Process management ■ Constraint management tools ■ Advanced tools ■ Creativity tools
Alignment and Integration	■ To ensure all organizational work contributes to achieving the organization's mission, vision, and plans	■ Alignment ■ Integration ■ Organization as system ■ Transformation ■ Large-scale organizational change ■ Self-management	■ Organizational architecture ■ Organizational partnerships ■ Managing the organization as a system ■ Large group interventions ■ Strategic planning ■ 7 Management and Planning Tools ■ Project management
Consumer Obsession	■ To promote long-term survival of the organization	■ Value creation ■ Organizational renewal ■ Mass customization ■ Lifetime relationships with consumers	■ Innovation ■ Competitive intelligence ■ Relationship marketing ■ Brand management ■ Non-traditional market research techniques
Spiritual Awakening	■ To serve society	■ Spirituality ■ Organization as community ■ Social responsibility and accountability	■ New social contract for employment ■ Community building ■ Social responsibility audits ■ Zero-emissions systems

Table 1: Five Fields of Performance Practice

According to Anderson, the benefit of The Starburst Model^{TM} is that it "keeps people focused on the whole while they are fixing the parts, it does not ignore the people aspect of change, and helps people to expect and plan for the unexpected." Rod Draheim, Transition Advocate in the engineering group at the Kewaunee Nuclear Plant, concurs. "More people are beginning to understand the breadth of the system that is needed [to move organizations forward]. They recognize that the integration of various tools, methods, and concepts is not an either/or choice." He goes on to say that a systems perspective "must be maintained in any type of change."

The challenge for quality professionals and internal consultants, as seen by Bennett, is one of perspective. "I need to learn and understand the perspective of senior management and not be inconsistent with the company's vision." For her it is knowing "which tool or practice needs to be added to the toolkit based on what we need to achieve now and where we need to go in the future." Draheim echoes this. "leaders often get overwhelmed with what needs to be done before they can see the whole picture. We [as change agents] need to understand the whole system and how to make it tangible to management. In addition, we need to be able to spell out the steps for creating a learning organization or doing culture change."

The objective of organizations has shifted. It has shifted from improving quality to creating value. In the process, the Q has lost its tail—total quality management has given way to total organizational management. Quality concepts, tools, and methods are an important part, but not the only means for creating value for long-term competitive advantage and survival. Using a framework such as The Starburst Model^{TM} can help you bring a systems-based approach to change and performance improvement into your organization.

For more information on total organizational management, read *Critical SHIFT: The Future of Quality in Organizational Performance* by Lori L. Silverman with Annabeth L. Propst, published by ASQ Quality Press. To order, call 800.248.1946. You can also purchase the book directly from the author (www.partnersforprogress.com) or through www.Amazon.com.

Article appeared in the Fall, 1999 issue of *Learning at Work*. All uses, including reprints, require advance permission from the author.