Celebrating World Quality Day 2010

Aerospace is acknowledged to be among the most highly regulated industries in the world. Like other critical industries, such as nuclear, oil or pharmaceutical, it is certainly one in which recalls are not an option as any fault could be discovered too late to prevent serious repercussions.

Consequently, there is a lot of emphasis on Quality with accreditation to internationally recognized standards, such as AS9100 and Nadcap, expected of any company that has a role in the supply chain.

Who better, then, to share their quality expertise?

To celebrate World Quality Day 2010 on 11 November, PRI has contacted some of the world’s leading Quality experts to complete this sentence and explain:

“Quality is...”

We received a range of interesting responses, which are detailed on the following pages. From my own point of view, Quality is... putting the interests of the customer above the interests of the business.

The aerospace industry has done this through Nadcap, which brings together experts from all over the world to ensure the integrity of the parts that make up the aeroplane that you or I may fly in one day. Competition is put to one side because the Nadcap stakeholders recognize that it is not good for business to compete on Quality: any Quality deficiency negatively impacts the public perception of the industry, which is bad for us all. How many other industries work together in this way?

I hope you enjoy reading this compilation and find yourself, like me, nodding along in agreement.

Joe Pinto
Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
Performance Review Institute
**My working definition** of Quality has been: Products, services, and processes that are compliant to requirements (engineering, specifications, contractual requirements and regulatory requirements) as a minimum and can be consistently delivered to the customer without interruption.

Quality must meet or exceed your customers’ expectations to remain in business and those companies that truly strive to be better than their competitors have a distinct advantage if their costs remain competitive as well and the key to cost competitiveness is variation reduction and waste elimination in the value delivery process.

For many years on of my favorite quotes came from the 3rd edition of the Quality Handbook by Juran (1974 printing, so it must have been my grandfathers book) and it was a plaque that was over the front of the famous Newport News Shipbuilding & Drydock company:

“We will build good ships - at a profit if we can, at a loss if we must - but always good ships!”

To me this always signified a management commitment to doing the right thing - and Henry Ford’s definition of Quality was ‘Doing the right thing when no one was looking’.

**Quality has many meanings** and implications - there is product Quality, process Quality, procedural Quality, operational Quality and for me, the most interesting side is management Quality: good management can identify opportunities to improve the other aspects and enhance the level of other Qualities.

It is an ongoing challenge to reconcile Quality with cost: organizations must comply with all the applicable industry and customer specific requirements while remaining competitive in terms of cost in the market place. Quality shall be placed in the highest priority above all.

Reminding people of the value that Quality adds to the company, not just what it costs, is very important.

Kevin J Ward  
Goodrich Corporation  
Enterprise Quality Director  
Nadcap Special Processes

Yoshiomi Sukesada  
Asahi Kinzoku Kogyo Co. Ltd  
General Manager of Manufacturing
**It is very difficult to** define Quality.

Of course keeping the customer happy is part of it but you can keep the customer happy in the short-term with low prices: that’s not Quality and it’s not sustainable.

There are many catch phrases associated with Quality, like the one about doing it right first time, but I don’t think that’s Quality either: that’s about efficiency.

In manufacturing, Quality is mainly about conforming to the design and ensuring on-time delivery, although there are other aspects.

The bigger picture of Quality, for example when design is involved, is meeting the customer expectations and I mean that in the broadest sense. It includes all the parameters, such as performance, reliability, value, timeliness and good service.

Service shouldn’t be forgotten here: you can provide a good product with bad service and that will have an impact on your customer’s perception, so Quality applies to the service industry as much as to the design and manufacturing side.

Finally, sustainability is very important, as I alluded to earlier. Quality is a long-term commitment; it is not a short-term activity.

**In our global society,** Quality requires that customer expectations are understood and translated into effective and proactive plans that assure all performance requirements are consistently achieved through a systematic operational excellence approach that is cost effective, ethical, sustains customer confidence and employee engagement while upholding credibility of the company’s brand.

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Lloyd Barker  
Alcoa  
Director of Corporate Quality

**Especially nowadays,** where so many companies do business on a global scale, Quality and Quality management are of fundamental importance.

Since worldwide, different regions and cultures are working together a common understanding of Quality is vital.

It is an understanding of precisely what customers need and consistently delivering accurate solutions within budget, on time and as agreed upon.

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Victor Schonberger  
Israel Aircraft Industries  
Quality Director

Steven Baiker  
Metal Finishing News (MFN)  
Publisher
What is Quality? The answer is very simple. Whenever anyone asks me what Quality is, whether I’m auditing, teaching a class, or just in general conversation, I give the same response. In essence, Quality is giving the customer what he wants.

This doesn’t necessarily mean what he asked for: the two can be quite different; but the customer will judge your ability to offer a Quality product or service by your ability to meet his needs. So it’s important to read between the lines.

There should really be no question around Quality: it is simply what your customer wants; anything else is just the structure that helps you deliver that.

Quality is all about having effective communication throughout the supply chain.

I see a lot about Quality being getting things done right first time, or making your customer happy, for example, and those are obviously important, but I don’t believe either are achievable without good communication.

How can you make your customer happy without understanding what he needs? Or get the job done right first time without knowing what needs to be done?

Let me emphasize, however, that good communication does not just mean flowing down the requirements clearly; upstream communication is just as vital as it provides valuable insight from a different perspective.

So communicating is not just conveying the information, but listening to the response as well.

This kind of collaborative communication is vital to the continual improvement of Quality.

Stephane Chaumeil
Galion
Chief Executive Officer

In one sentence, Quality is the sustainable and managed development of an organization in order to exceed the customer’s expectations in a cost-effective way, where the continual improvement activities do not negatively impact on the customer’s experience with the company.

Martin Bridge
Nadcap Auditor &
eQuaLearn Instructor

Jon Bidulph
Rolls-Royce plc
Head of Non Destructive Evaluation

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