

Editorial

Over the past few years Total Quality Management (TQM) in business has generated a great deal of controversy. On the one hand, TQM has clear, well defined objectives of producing higher quality products and services that respond faster to the needs of the customer. On the other hand it is viewed as a management fashion that will be soon replaced by another, with more compelling rhetoric. In spite of differing views on the subject, the core ideas articulated by Deming and Juran have resulted in large scale organizational restructuring; and its impact is now felt even in health care organizations, public bureaucracies, nonprofit organizations, small business enterprises and educational institutions. It has become a watchword with trainers and consultants. Institutions specifically chartered to promote TQM are in business today.

One of the most widely used practices in TQM is benchmarking which is described as the continuous process of measuring a company's products, services, and practices against the world's toughest competitors to identify areas for improvement. The impact and worth of these tools and processes have been tested in various organizations with differing conclusions. Many questions still need to be answered before a final conclusion can be drawn.

It is with the intention of seeking answers from practitioners and academicians that the present issue of Rajagiri Management Journal has focused on the topic *Quality Management and Competitive Benchmarking Issues*. Rajagiri School of Management held this year's National Conference on the same topic, and this provided a platform for the oral exchange of ideas on this highly relevant issue. In an attempt to develop these ideas further, the subject was thrown open to an even wider authorship. The articles in the journal throw light on the issue from different perspectives and present a great learning experience.

Statistical quality and process control techniques are a part of many of the more sophisticated large scale manufacturing units and these concepts are fast percolating into the less organized business sectors. Professor M. Bhasi scrutinizes the efforts of job shops in the area of quality process implementation and discusses the difficulties arising out of the nature of the work done in this sector.

TQM is a timely tool which can assist educational institutions to manage change and provide focus for education and society. Professor Neetha Eappen discusses some of the issues relating to transformation and restructuring of the education sector through quality management.

Dr K. Sasi discusses some of the concepts related to Total Quality Management and the need to apply international quality systems and standards to remain competitive and productive.

Successful implementation of any programme to improve quality will necessarily depend on the attention given to the development of human resource and their work commitment and capability. Professor Francis Jose brings some of these issues to the forefront and recommends an HR model that depends on enlightened leadership which reframes business objectives in a broader perspective

International business experienced some of the more unseemly effects of globalization in the form of corporate misgovernance at the highest levels. The post Enron era struggled with the discrepancies arising from differing accounting standards in different countries. Dr James Manalel and Mr P.D. Vincent give us an overview of the evolution of these accounting procedures and point out some of the areas that continue to cause concern for business.

The basic tenets of quality management demand continuous improvement in performance strategies that are in tune with a changing environment dictated by process innovations and customer needs. At best, the task of change management in an organization is a daunting one. Professor Jose Mathew looks at the various models of Change Management and explains the relevance of a new model that builds on the MBO model to successfully effect change in the organization.

On behalf of the Editorial Committee of Rajagiri Management Journal, I invite all our readers to join us in this process of knowledge dissemination and lay a strong foundation for future business and management.

Prof. Rosemary Varghese
Editor

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