The Changing Role of the Quality Professional
Are you a Guru or a Go-To?

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“Guru” or “Go To”

How are you viewed in your organization?
Study background

- Research Focus:
  - What are key changes you see in business in next 10 years?
  - What are the current skill gaps in the current Quality Professional?
  - What skills do they need to meet business needs in the next 10-15 years?

- Partnership study among ASQ, APQC, and International Academy for Quality (IAQ).

- Focus groups and surveys. 48% of surveys were from outside the US.
Demographics

- Expert Panel – 50 participants
  North America
  South America
  Europe
  Asia
  New Zealand

- Survey Participants – 222
  48% outside North America
  12.5% participation
Key Business Changes

- Acquisition, Analysis, and Use of Data
- Approaches for Sustainable Business
- Changing Demographics and People Management
- Factors Affecting Globalization
- Impact of IT/Internet/Technology
- Impacts on Quality Management Systems
- Increasing Focus on Social Responsibility
- Increasing Pace of Change
- Market and Customer Considerations
Selected comments from survey

- Swimming in a sea of data, don’t know how to make sense of it
- Disruptors will continue to restate businesses and introduce new ways of delivering value
- Baby boomers almost dinosaurs, rethink development of new talent
- Leaders will emerge faster with less experience
- Local products will gradually be valued more
- Artificial intelligence will play a greater role
- Quality management will struggle for resources
Skill Gaps in Quality Professionals

- Business Acumen and Leadership
- Critical Thinking and Analysis
- Employee Performance and Cultural Change
- Process Management, Improvement, Tools
- Quality Profession
- Value of Quality
- One-off areas
Future skills needed by Quality Professionals

Management/Leadership

- Vision and strategic plan development
- Communication skills
- Accounting/finance Marketing
Future skills needed by Quality Professionals

Technical

- Integration, knowledge management
- Critical thinking and analysis
- Failure analysis, root cause, and preventive action
Future skills needed by Quality Professionals

People

• Culture development and adaptation
• Change management, employee development, and coaching
My summary of these findings?

- We need to be sure we are positioning ourselves as “go-tos” rather than as gurus.
- We need to get out of the quality world and understand the business we’re in:
  - How do we make money?
  - What do our customers want?
  - How do we engage employees?
- How do I as a quality professional help with those accomplishing those things?
Moving from *compliance* to *excellence*...
Compliance vs excellence

Compliance – regulatory requirements

Quality required to be “in the game”

Progress toward competitive advantage and best-in-class performance

Baldrige – EFQM – PDSA – Six Sigma – etc.
Discussion questions

1. How do we as quality professionals prepare for this changing future?
2. How do we as quality professionals demonstrate value of our work?
3. What skills would a quality professional need to be able to be CEO of an organization? What keeps that from happening?
1. How do we as quality professionals prepare for this changing future?

- Be open to change
- Be a mentor!
- Travel/network and talk
- Good communication skills
- Good people skills
- Big data analysis
- Understand value streams
- Breadth over depth
- Industry knowledge vs. technical knowledge
- Learn from the past
- Engage a mentor
- Quality shower (reset your leadership team to understand quality and align)
- Listen to your VOC
- Keep learning/avoid stagnation
- Changing mindset – Everyone is a quality professional
1. How do we as quality professionals prepare for this changing future?

- Keep innovating
- Partnering across generations
- Get motivated
- Keep engaged
- Care and try!
- Keeping pace or exceeding competitors
- Consider how far retirement is out and what is in your future
- Raise a greater awareness of quality and management
- Be flexible/adaptable
- Visualize data into information
- Leverage ASQ Resources, certifications and conferences
- Challenge people to think how they can produce product faster, better, cheaper
- Willingness to learn new things, be active and participate
- Generational awareness
- Be open to change
- Keep learning
2. How do we as quality professional demonstrate value of our work?

- Translate quality into financial measures
- Getting Lean systems in place and follow them
- Working towards zero defects
- Increase yield and reduce scrap and get to six sigma quality level
- Solving customer problems and improving products
- Focus on customer
- Understand customer requirements (show employees what customers want and show customers what employees can do)
- Understand value streams
- Develop operations to be agile with faster cycle times (fail fast)
- All metrics roll up to NPS
- Focus on global quality – meeting global regulatory requirements (develop necessary skill sets)
- Focus on data analytics, machine learning, predictive analytics
- Being ethical
- Customer satisfaction
2. How do we as quality professional demonstrate value of our work?

- ROI
- Data, trending, KPI
- Engaging front line staff – quality driven by everybody
- Change management
- SMART Goals
- Speak the language of management ($)
- Engagement in other areas – selling ourselves
- Communication, including process, the why and improvement
- Cost of poor quality – Rework and $’s
- Results of internal/external audits and improvement metrics
- Attention to detail
- Meet your customer’s requirements
- Understand your audience’s language ($, units, sold, etc.)
3. What skills would a quality professional need to be able to be CEO of an organization? What keeps that from happening?

- Connections
- Strong financial acumen
- Understand cost of quality
- View of the big picture
- Desire of analytical vs. big picture
- Consensus builder
- Broader view/cultural diversity understanding
- Reputation in company/marketplace
- Interest in career flexibility (work outside quality)
- Need to market ourselves
- Strong communication skills
- Understanding needs of stakeholders
- Keeping current on methodologies – e.g. Millennial thinking
- Navigate analytical vs. political
- Team building skills
3. What skills would a quality professional need to be able to be CEO of an organization? What keeps that from happening?

- Understand behind the scene of business functions
- Presentation skills
- Broad communication
- Direct, open and honest
- Understand the market, competition and global culture
- Be a motivator (inspirational source)
- Leadership skills
- Ability to juggle needs of various stakeholders
- Focus on goals and have fun, along with allowing others to have fun
- Keep promises
- Strong Vision
- Understand and manage risk
- Believe in product/service/people
- Get out of comfort zone
- Delegate
- Trust and subordinate
- Identify talent and identify at least some talent in every person
What are we working toward?

“Perfection is unattainable, but if we chase it, we can catch Excellence.”

Vince Lombardi
Thank you for your commitment to performance excellence!

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