TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

Total Quality Management (TQM) is recognized as an important management philosophy and is widely used in US industry. It has been used very successfully in the development and acquisition of systems such as satellites and aircraft to preparing officer performance reports. Over the last few years, TQM has been applied in the education. In this paper, the 14 Points of Dr. W. Edwards Deming, which form a framework for the implementation of the TQM in Teacher Education.

DEMING'S 14 POINTS

The 14 points of Dr. W. Edwards Deming form a framework for the implementation of TQM.

1. Create constancy of purpose

Develop a mission statement as your corporate purpose or aim. For example, the mission statement for a university might be, `To develop the skills, attitudes, and motivation in our students so they will become responsible citizens and be capable of making positive contributions to society.' The mission statement for a college of engineering might be, `To develop the skills, attitudes, and motivation in our students so they will perform in a technically competent, socially Applying Total Quality Management to the Educational Process 25 responsible, and ethical manner as engineers entrusted with the safety and comfort of their clients.' Developing a mission statement is not a trivial task; it requires a real understanding of just why the organization exists.

2. Adopt a new philosophy

Insist on quality in everything classroom instruction, bookstore service, campus policing, restroom cleaning, interactions with the legislature everything. To achieve this quality, an atmosphere of cooperation as opposed to competition must be instilled. This is particularly

true in the classroom; management must ensure that the processes put in force encourage cooperation at every level student to student and faculty to student.

3. Cease dependence on mass inspection

Focus on the product or service process. Don't depend on audits, tests, or inspections to build quality. Inspections will only keep bad products from hitting the market, but there are large costs incurred with each bad piece. The analogy in education is that the failed student is scrap that must be either reworked or discarded. We need to develop processes in which there is less testing but more focus on progress in learning. For example, ask yourself why you are giving a particular test. If the answer is to evaluate your students, then ask yourself if you need this extra piece of evaluative information.

4. End the practice of conducting business on cost alone

The lowest bid usually does not result in the lowest life-cycle cost. In all our processes, we need to focus on long-term costs and benefits. That may mean that the trendy new course not be offered if it means the failure of a course with more long-term value. Awarding the printing contract to an off campus vendor may have lower first cost, but the inability to get adequate turn-around time or poorer quality may make the overall cost of that decision very high. University professors often complain about the poor job the high schools are doing in preparing students for college. The long term costs of supplying educated people to society may be less if some of the resources of the university were spent on improving high and junior high schools.

5. Constantly improve processes

Are your customers (the students and their future employers) more satisfied than they were last semester? Are the faculty members happier? Are the secretaries happier? Are the suppliers of the University happier? If the answer to a question is no, find out why and fix the situation immediately. If the answer is yes, determine what it was in the process that made it so. In any case, analyse the process to determine what changes can be made to make it better. Incremental improvements must be made every semester. This is essentially the Kaizen philosophy encourages innovation, but insists upon incremental improvements, especially after the innovation. The phrase, `if it's not broke, don't fix it,' does not apply. To help decide where to look for things to improve, use course grades, student performance on `anchor' problems, student critiques, faculty and staff Organizational climate surveys, inputs to suggestion boxes, summaries of complaints, etc. Carefully designed questions on anonymous surveys can be very valuable, but talking directly to the customer is still the best way to find

out what the barriers are. There is a side benefit to talking directly to the students about their problems they appreciate it and make the `us versus them' attitude much less likely.

6. Institute training

Everyone needs to know their job. The faculty is certainly well educated in their disciplines but maybe not in the art of teaching. Faculty development programs help teachers know their jobs. Word processing classes help secretaries do their job better. Money spent on faculty and staff training has long-term payback. In addition, you should teach TQM to everyone faculty, staff, and especially students. The more everyone knows about the management principles used on a daily basis, the easier it is for everyone to buy into the idea.

7. Institute leadership

Emphasize leadership instead of management. Everyone at the university has a leadership role of some sort. Each person in a supervisory role (including the faculty) should try to be a coach and 26 R. C. Winn and R. S. Green teacher, not a judge and overseer. As put by Senge, the leader should be a designer, a creator of an environment. Effective leaders will search for barriers to communication and productivity and remove them. A poorly lit classroom can have a significant effect on student performance. A teacher who is an effective leader will see to it that the lighting problems are fixed. A teacher, who will adjust the due date on a project based on special student situations, will probably increase the learning of his students.

8. Drive out fear

In the academic setting, fear is often a big factor in student and faculty performance. For students, any steps that can be taken to reduce the fear involved in taking a test will pay large benefits in student performance and attitude. Allowing for a make-up exam, points for reworking missed problems on an exam, and dropping a low grade are examples of little things that can be done to reduce student fear. Teachers must balance their roles as educators versus evaluators. When asked, most professors will readily say that their job is to educate their students; however, the amount of time they spend on evaluation tends to contradict this view. On the faculty and staff side, fear can also play an important role. If a high price must be paid for failure, few people will be willing to risk experimenting with a promising new innovation, thus keeping a process improvement out of the system. If a teacher would like to try an innovative teaching technique, the effort should be applauded even if it is a failure. Certainly something of value will have come from the experiment. Researchers must have the opportunity to fail without the fear of demotion or lack of promotion opportunity. Fear is a powerful emotion and can have very negative effects on the performance of an organization.

9. Break down barriers

Encourage cooperation, not competition. Encourage the forming of cross-function teams to address problems and process improvements. A team made up of faculty, staff, and students (perhaps from more than one department) will have a broader perspective in addressing issues than a more narrowly composed committee. When addressing a problem in the registration process, address it with a team consisting of representatives from every involved organization faculty, advisors, students, registrar, computer services, etc. A solution devised by only one organization will usually have a negative impact on some other organizations. Bringing everyone in on the decision process will usually result in a better solution, and certainly one that is easier to accept.

10. Avoid obsession with goals and slogans

Just telling someone to do good is meaningless without the means to achieve that goal. Management must improve the processes so that the goals can be achieved. Stating that 80% is the minimum acceptable score on an exam will not by itself achieve that goal. Stating that goal and then providing excellent instruction, arranging for study teams, giving extra help where needed, etc., will give the students a much better chance for success.

11. Eliminate numerical quotas

It is often said that numbers are the crutches of poor supervision. On the assembly line, this principle is easy to see; in the academic setting, it is not as obvious but just as true. If there are quotas established for `x' number of papers per year or `y' number of majors enrolled, quality will decrease. The number one priority should be quality. Only after the process is designed so that quality is assured should the questions of quantity be addressed.

12. Remove barriers to pride of workmanship

Pride is a strong motivator. In the academic setting, pride certainly flows from personal and group achievements, but there is also a good deal of pride in the institution as well. Often this institutional pride is a result of having survived the program, but it can also stem from having had a part in the development of that program. If the students are included in some of the decision making processes, they will develop a strong pride of ownership that can have a significant impact on their attitudes. A step as simple as talking to student representatives about their concerns can change an antagonistic faculty/student relationship into a cooperative one. Using some of the elements of cooperative learning also empowers the students by sharing some of the teaching role with the faculty. A secretary who is allowed to choose how the work is to be done and has a voice in some of the administrative decisions that affect secretarial work will be a much more productive and happy worker. Barriers

between departments and colleges should be dismantled; each professor can learn a lot by studying the operation of another department.

13. Organization-wide involvement

Everyone in the institution must be included in the education process and be aware of and concerned for their immediate `customer'. Lab technicians who sit in on the courses that they support will have a much better idea of how their work contributes to the mission. Secretaries who learn about new techniques and technologies for use in the office are much more likely to suggest improvements to the processes they are exposed to. Professors should audit courses in other departments, particularly those courses that are prerequisites for their own courses. Faculty members who learn about TQM are much more likely to endorse the concept and to suggest new ways to implement TQM in their jobs. One cannot predict just what Applying Total Quality Management to the Educational Process 27 piece of knowledge will spark the idea that will lead to a significant process improvement.

14. Define management's responsibilities to make it happen

Management, at every level but particularly at the very top, must take and show pride in adopting the TQM philosophy. The meaning of each of the 14 points as related to the mission must be clear to all involved. This is not a trivial process; a good deal of time must be spent in analysing the various processes and discussing how the 14 points relate to those processes. The time spent in this effort forms the foundation for all of the TQM implementation.

IMPLICATION OF THE 14 POINTS

The above 14 points are very general. When TQM is successfully applied, it is a result of a careful study of each point and a clear determination of how each applies to the situation at hand. No two applications of TQM will be the same. The form that a particular implementation takes is dependent on many factors such as the size of the institution, whether the institution is private or public, and the strengths of the people involved, but the most important variables are the maturity of the students and the involvement of the employer. Careful consideration of all aspects of the educational system will help determine just how the TQM implementation will ultimately look.

The principles of TQM can also be applied to high school, middle school, and elementary school educational processes as well as to training situations. The principle differences in the implementation of TQM will be the result of the relative weight assigned to each of the customers at the different levels of education. The weighting that is applied is primarily the result of the maturity of the students, but there are other considerations as well. For example, in elementary schools the most important customers, listed in order of importance, are the

parents of the students, the students themselves, and the middle school to which the students are headed. As the maturity of the students increases, the students replace the parents as the most important customer. In a training situation, the most important customer is the organization that needs the individuals trained. Regardless who your primary customer is, it is essential that the students be included in the list of customers. Figure 1 shows a qualitative assessment of the relative importance of various customers in different educational environments. Please keep in mind that only a few of the potential customers have been presented, but students must be considered in each case.

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