



'3 DIMENSIONAL QUALITY,' COMPANYS' TOP LEADERS MUST LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Memo: Quality of Work

Edition: Final

Quality is the powerful competitive weapon African companies need today. Increasingly, quality is playing a dominant role in the world market and will continue in the years to come.

Evidence has proved that there is a strong correlation between quality and profitability: Quality greatly affects both the revenue and cost elements of the profit equation.

To remain competitive and to survive, every company in Nigeria has to promote quality processes persistently and relentlessly until quality completely permeates their operations.

Being a leader is tough. However, only quality leadership will enable Nigerian companies to achieve their corporate goals, maintain a competitive edge and become world-class quality role models. Leadership is the backbone of Total Quality Management.

Full commitment to exceptional quality in any organization starts in the boardroom and with executive management. Decisions made in the boardroom determine the character, direction and environment of organizations.

Executive management must adopt this "new philosophy" of doing business in order to maintain a competitive edge. Along with this "new philosophy" will be resistance, which is normal. But a true leader has the vision to see what is really important and transmit a sense of mission to others. He or she must explain how the company will work after quality improvement thinking is in place and how it will get done.

A good leader stands up for unpopular ideas, faces confrontations, will act independently and does the right thing in spite of personal hardship or sacrifice. Communicating the vision, involving employees and showing they are valued will instill a sense of commitment to the organization's purpose.

Leaders must insist on and persist in reducing the commonly accepted levels of delays, breakdowns, mistakes and defects. They must be continually obsessed with high-quality achievement and adopt the philosophy of attacking quality problems before they occur.

Executive managers must lead their companies by example to what will amount to a cultural transformation. Leadership for such a change cannot be delegated. A top manager sets the tone for the organization.

When a leader is sufficiently committed, the values and principles of quality improvement are totally internalized so that his or her behavior reflects these values.

Effective leaders have wisdom; communicate and inspire, and, most importantly, empower others.



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