

Quality Management System as a Tool for Corporate Development and Competitiveness Increase

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Abstract. The purpose of the article is to evaluate and develop four main business process management spheres: recourse management, document management, determination of management competence, efficiency and improvement management. The main emphasis of this research is on the process analysis, measurement and development, thereby optimising processes and reducing resource consumption in a company. In this research, graphical, analyses and comparative research methods have been used. Conclusions are made about the quality management system implementation, as an effective management tool, as well as a factor for competitiveness increase.

Keywords: quality, management, efficiency and competitiveness.

INTRODUCTION

In the modern globalizing world, understanding of quality and quality management has become an integral part of the business world. Models and standards have different evaluation criteria and principles, but they have a common objective – to support a competitive, balanced and sustainable corporate development.

Methodological basis of the study includes works of foreign and Latvian scientists, works of contemporary authors and publications in periodicals, which represent the latest information on trends in the field of quality management system and inform of the innovations in quality management, data and reports published by the Latvian Quality Association, as well as statistical and research carried by the International Standardization.

The quality management system is focused on effective use of resources and increase of productivity per every invested unit. Elements of the system never are the finished process, but a tool for corporate development. In the modern business environment, there is no single standard or model, which assures development and effective use of the available resources. The world uses a variety of standards for corporate management support.

The goal of this article is to assess the benefits from implementation of the quality management model in companies as an effective management tool for increasing productivity and competitiveness, financial and human resources optimization, and rational use of existing corporate resources. Challenges of the objective:

- to analyse the quality management elements and implementation potential in the company;
- to establish the quality management system requirements and benefits from implementation by the companies.

The authors conclude, if business activities are based on the quality management system principles, this ensures sustainable operation and results in a quality product or service. It is important for the current approaches of quality models not to depart from the objective of introducing a quality management system in a company as an effective management tool for productivity increase.

JUSTIFICATION OF THE NEED IN QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Quality assurance in all circumstances is linked to the process of optimization – a positive ratio of investments and the results. If it is the point of view of the company's senior management, there are a number of tools, which could reduce the use of the resources without sacrificing quality (see Fig.1). If characterising each of the quality assurance tools, we must mention the term "efficiency". This means that in these circumstances, efficiency is the ability to use the maximum available resources to satisfy customers and get earnings for the company. It is possible to review again the corporate objectives and targets to achieve those. Optimization processes, investment and output planning may be possible. In assessing the theoretical approaches, we may distinguish the current business processes and measurement criteria of the company.

TABLE 2
QUALITY ASSURANCE TOOLS

Quality assurance tools:	Certification
	Project-focused company
	Quality policy
	Process management
	Data processing
	Corporate social responsibility

Quality management models can be divided into the following groups:

- Internationally recognized models, which are used in business, government and non-governmental sector, such as ISO 9001:2000 (ISO - International Organization for Standardization), EFQM Excellence Model (European Foundation for Quality Management Excellence Model);
- Internationally recognized models, which are used in public administration, such as the CAF (CAF - Common Assessment Framework)
- Developed by individual countries and tested models, such as KVIK (Kvalitetsværktøj til udvikling af

Innovation og Kompetence – a Quality tool for innovation and competence development), customer charter (Netherlands);

- Models developed for specific areas, such as LVS EN ISO/IEC 17025;

It is important for the current approaches of quality models not to depart from the objective of introducing a quality management system in a company as an effective management tool for productivity increase. To conclude in general, there is no need to certify according to any of the systems, but to use the quality management system methodology, based on elements and requirements developed by the Comprehensive quality system.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM COSTS

The largest quantity of registered ISO certificates is in ten countries: China, Italy, Japan, Spain, UK, USA, Germany, India, France and Australia.

The founder of the quality management system of Japanese origin J.M. Juran sees improvement processes of the system through the prism of the corporate costs. One of his ideas was to define quality as "fitness for use", which expresses how well the product meets the consumer's actual needs [1]. Based on this assumption, there was a study of trends for corporate costs reduction designed, introducing a quality management system (see Figure No. 1).

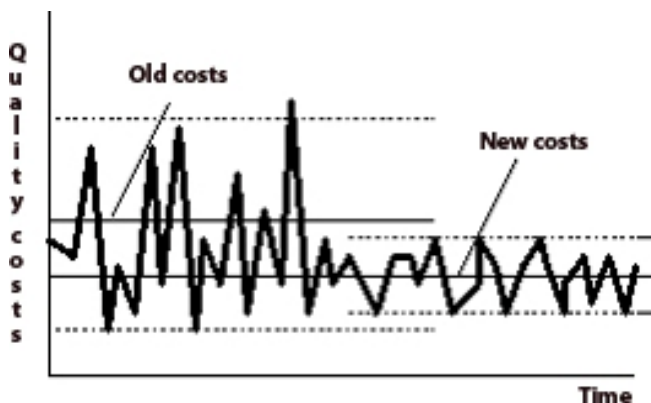


Fig. 1. Quality costs as an indicator of quality management [5].

It is important for every company to stay in its intended zone for carrying out systematic, well-prepared and planned measures to narrow down the zone.

So, analysing the costs trends, the authors conclude that, within the relevant time period after introduction of the system, costs reduce provided that a system is not a bureaucratic process, but the internal processes organizer. The methodological justification of the Quality Management System is based on the total quality management model (TQM).

The strategic development stages of the quality science in literature are divided as follows:

- Individual production of separate units. The manufacturer shall make the final test of the manufacturing product;

- Labour division, provision of substitution of individual ingredients of a product in the technical field;
- Implementation of statistical testing methods in production;
- Introduction of an integrated quality assurance system;
- Quality management as a comprehensive strategy of company.

Analysing the quality management system development dynamics, the authors conclude that Latvian businesses need to go through these stages of development and implement these strategies step by step.

TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT MODEL (TQM)

Quality in today's understanding means all forms of quality manifestation and it is used to call it the total quality. Customer satisfaction becomes the most important quality indicator, and today no one doubts that the quality is the basis for healthy competition. The TQM principles were developed 50 years ago. In the modern intense competitive environment and economic and social depression conditions, the potential of small and medium-sized businesses to survive decreases. This means that focus should be made on adjustment of internal processes, optimization of operations, generally defined as the increase of efficiency. The efficiency is: "The degree to which a system or its components carry out its functions with minimum resources consumption"[2].

TQM offers management elements that are incorporated into various quality management systems and standards. But before introducing any of the management systems, companies should undergo self-assessment. Japan was the first who showed the world what can be achieved in a relatively short period of time using TQM in business for all processes regulation. Many industries left behind the world's leading companies, encouraging them to implement quality systems in their companies. So, the quality status is determined by the clients' and customers' attitude to things and services offered. The world still continues discussions about the quality concept, its fulfilment and potential of implementation in companies. The concept and understanding of quality at the management level in Latvia is unclear and ambiguously evaluated.

Assessing the theoretical formulations, the Total Quality Management is the corporate culture, characterised by the following principles:

- Senior management interest in achievement of the required quality level;
- Focusing of business activities on the outside and domestic customers;
- Conscious participation of the staff in the quality continuous improvement;
- Staff training;
- Approach to processes – process control based on the operating facts;
- Fact-based decision making.

The authors conclude, if the corporate activities are based on the above-outlined principles, this ensures high

performance and produces the effectiveness of any business processes thereby increasing productivity.

The TQM model improved by quality analysts John Oakland and Les Porter integrates all aspects of quality. Processes in the TQM model are the key link between all elements of the business, from planning promoters (Guidelines for the management, strategic partnerships and resource availability) up to the staff working on production of the end product result or service provision [3]. Four elements – staff, performance, process and planning are essential to create a quality product and provide a service, and are based on the improved structure of the TQM model. "Planning – establishment and development of policies and strategies, establishment of appropriate cooperation and planning of necessary resources as well as quality assurance of the design process, performance – establishment of the performance measurement structure – conduct of the self-assessment studies, internal audits, surveys, and benchmarking, process – understanding, management, design and redesign, quality management system and continuous improvement, staff – human resources management, change of internal culture, teamwork, mutual communication, innovation and training. "Linkage of all these elements together, as well as the successful introduction, of course, depends on effective management and strict commitments". TQM model is based on strengthening the commitment to meet customers' demands, clarification and communication of new strategies as well as change of the company's internal culture for achievement of the total quality.

Today, the total quality management system has become the philosophy; the motto of this system is the quality of each operation. Use of TQM evidences the corporate development, the awareness of quality management and the level of corporate culture. The roots of this quality philosophy shall be sought in Japan, which believes that one of the foundations of quality is education. The motto of the TQM philosophy is "Before we start to make things, we build people". TQM is mainly focused on outside customers, domestic customers, as well as balancing of the corporate needs and management of the processes involving appropriate personnel in order to achieve the desired result. The total quality characteristics indicate what can be expected when implementing the total quality model in business. J. Juran lists the TQM characteristics: "proper course of action for the first time, consistent focusing non a client, shared vision supported by all the staff (the vision shall mean a statement to be made by company about the desired status the company seeks to achieve); continuous improvement, focusing on sustainable operation; trust in employees and their empowerment in decision making, support for innovations"[1].

Based on the total quality management principles, the world has developed a number of quality management models and standards aimed at excellence in performance. Models of excellence and quality standards are designed as practical tools to help businesses to approach the excellent level of business, a comprehensive assessment of the actual situation, identifying weaknesses and strengths and promoting

improvement and development. In its turn, quality plays an important role in quality assurance and competitiveness. Competition for the Quality Award is announced in Latvia every year, but this award has not yet became popular.

DYNAMICS OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT AND COMPETITIVENESS OF BUSINESSES

The Quality management system includes four main business areas, which would be comparable to effective business management:

1. Management of resources.
2. Management of documents.
3. Senior management responsibilities.
4. Corporate control and improvement methods.

The above areas have been incorporated into ISO Standard as requirements for a company and are based on the Total Quality Management model principles.

TQM principles were developed 50 years ago. In the modern intense competitive environment and economic and social depression conditions, the potential of small and medium-sized businesses to survive decreases. This means that a focus should be made on adjustment of internal processes and optimization of the operations. Must remember that in the public sector it is necessary to establish a unified management system. TQM offers management elements that are incorporated into various quality management systems and standards. But before introducing any of the management systems, a business has to undergo self-assessment. Japan was the first who showed the world what can be achieved in a relatively short period of time by using TQM in business for regulation of all processes. Many industries left behind the world's leading companies, encouraging them to implement quality systems in their companies. So, the quality status is determined by the clients' and customers' attitude to things and services offered. The world still continues discussions about the quality concept, its fulfilment and potential for implementation in companies.

Publication of U.S. military standards (MIL-Q-9858) in 1959 can be considered as the beginning of ISO 9000 standards development. These standards have been already used during the war, but were published after the military industry completed its task. Following the publication of the standards, other industries began to implement them. Standards of the British Standardisation Institute were published in 1979 in three parts (BS 5750 PARTS 1,2,3), on the basis of which the first edition of ISO 9000 standards was developed and published in 1987.

Since 1996, different Quality Management Systems were introduced in Latvia, the most popular of which are provided in Table 2.

TABLE 2
QMS, FY 1995-2010 [2]

ISO 9001:2000	Quality Management System
ISO 14001:2004	Environmental Management System
OHSAS 18001:1999	Occupational Health and Working Environment Management System
ISO 22000:2005	Food Safety Assurance System

According to the Latvian Quality Association, as of 2010, 709 companies in total are certified in Latvia, and most of the companies are certified by the ISO 9001:2000 quality management system standard (80% of all certified companies).

Increasingly, companies choose to implement the integrated management system – the system that incorporates requirements of two or more systems.

As evidenced by the actual economic processes, markets and competition are the key mechanism for today's economic development. Efficiency of the market's functioning is higher when competition is more active and there are more favourable conditions for its manifestation. Competition is a contest between producers and sellers of goods or services operating on the market under such product manufacturing, goods sales, and service provision conditions, which ensure sustainable, profit earning. At the same time, competition is a mechanism that regulates the proportion in production.

Similarly, competition is the economic contest between market participants competing in production or distribution of the same or substitutable goods. It is a battle for customers, the key role in the market or market share. Competition is an integral part of the market economy, a major incentive to develop production and services, to operate effectively.

Victory in competition is survival of a subject of the market, the profit increase or conditions for profit gaining, in general. Competition is free from administrative restrictions and detailed prescriptions. But this does not mean that competition can ignore national laws, mandatory national rules of the game and, first of all, the competition laws.

Introduction of standards will ensure the increase of business competitiveness in foreign markets, because the ISO 9000 standard and certificate are internationally known and recognized in any country and give a greater assurance of the product quality or the service stability. The state should encourage business certification according to the ISO 9000 standards, primarily by publishing the content of the required legal documents, as well as defining it as one of the most important criteria in regulations on public tenders.

In order to promote the customer satisfaction, this International Standard recommends using the process approach for quality management system development, implementation and effective improvement. The Standard gives a detailed definition of the 'process' concept, considers its identification and related activities, as well as explains the interaction.

International standard is focused on the process approach. It is recommended to apply the process approach for the quality management system development, implementation and effective improvement. The process approach provides interaction and cooperation of individual processes or, by applying the Deming cycle methodology - plan-do-check-act. The key objective of the ISO 9001 international standards is not to specify the quality of services but to ensure the quality management system for any business. The standards specify the manner in which entrepreneurs can establish, document,

maintain and improve their quality management systems, and even to demonstrate to customers that they are able to provide the quality of a product or service, as well as to take responsibility for it. The key principle of the standards is its primary objective – attaining the customers' expectations and requirements.

The ISO 9001 standards require the continuous improvement of management systems and achieving complete customers' satisfaction. In order to achieve this, a company must develop its own internal culture. An important aspect for introduction of an effective quality management system in any company is the managerial support. The company's management must be prepared to:

- Support the stated objectives;
- Provide business with the necessary resources;
- Transform the company's internal culture;
- Monitor the progress of the project and highlight it as the top priority;
- Committed to fulfil all the promises.

A system certified according to the ISO 9001 standards evidences a certain development level of the company. Successful companies unwittingly follow most of the standards. A standard is nothing else but a summary of the minimum requirements for the company to be successful. A large number of different companies around the world and in Latvia have appreciated the benefits of ISO 9001 as a real aid for the quality management improvement.

METHODOLOGY OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The quality management system in companies is an effective control tool. To ensure the sustainable operation of a company, the authors conclude that there is no need to be necessarily certified according to one of the standards systems (eg ISO). In order to ensure efficiency, it is possible to use the quality management system methodology, which would include the following elements:

The optimal use of information technology focuses on use and improvement of the available resources.

Staff competence development, evaluation, and development of the personnel management audit. According to some opinions, competence is the human capacity, knowledge and skills, which in turn are divided into main groups consisting of more defined constructs or characteristics. A model of competences is a list of competences corresponding to a particular position or a group of positions – generally, the accepted knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviour patterns and qualities that will help every staff member to do his/her job in the best way possible on the basis of the individual assessment and development. In turn, the managerial competence includes development of the staff evaluation and audit, based on measurements off each employee's productivity.

Process Management. It shows how a company identifies, manages and improves its key processes that are focused on performance of its functions. The key aspect is the process management to implement the strategies and policies, which

fully meet the needs of customers and other interested parties and generate the additional value. This criterion focuses on innovation and modernisation. The key words of this criterion are the processes and customer-focused services.

Mutual management of the processes is important in fulfilment of these criteria, it should be noted that the process requires the following things:

- The process of the company's operation needs to have a designer and a developer to be monitored, reviewed, measured, implemented and understood, to make contributions to this goal, which indicates that the process which is documented but impracticable, is irrelevant, because there should be understanding of the process and the system.
- Manager as a leader of the company to increase its productivity. This criterion makes it clear that the manager of a company has to be a leader who formulates and implements the mission, vision and values necessary for the sustainable corporate development. He/she is also the leader who provides a link between the company and the public. This criterion is the one to look at the manager's activities from two dimensions – the internal dimension is focused on the establishment of the corporate management systems and staff motivation, while the external dimension relates to the manager's responsibilities to cooperate with the interested parties.

The authors conclude that, if the mentioned principles are observed and the quality management system methodology is used, the company can increase productivity and raise its competitiveness.

Establishment of the uniform methodology for the Quality Management System is as follows:

- Active participation and interests of the senior management. The management encourages expression of opinions and criticism by employees and perceives it as logical, but establishes reasonable limits for focusing one's work on reality, rather than subjective judgments. In order to promote empathy, which is based on the situation assessment, it is necessary to carry out regular surveys of employees' satisfaction.
- Project implementation and establishment of monitoring teams. The Companies set up working groups to analyse regularly the quality management system implementation process.
- Assessment of the current system. Companies can undergo a more detailed self-assessment by using the Excellence Model or Pareto principle, which states that 80% of the consequences arise from 20% of causes. With these principles, it is possible to identify which processes or their stages in particular bring dissatisfaction, financial loss or other deviations from the desired objectives to the customers.
- Preparation and documentation of the implementation plan. The quality management system implementation plan includes four categories: key directions of the process and activities for their implementation,

information and facts about these (schemes and control mechanisms), the planned date of the process implementation, the relevant operator and a person responsible for the procedure, comments on the particular process.

- Staff training. The staff needs to acquire special knowledge associated with implementation of QMS, this condition is mandatory for the company's Quality Manager.
- Documents development. The quality management system records opinions of the management, carried out studies, statement of corrective and preventive actions, progress reports, etc., the compulsory quality system documentation – job descriptions, the competence delegation documents, customers' registers, business partners' registers, documented corporate goals, plans and objectives, orders, as well as samples of the key documents, procedural documents – descriptions and explanations of the quality management system process, interaction schemes and description of the overall management system, the quality manual – the documented policy of the corporate quality, objectives and all the above mentioned documents.
- Implementation of the quality management system and progress monitoring. A company introduces a methodology that provides four directions of the method - documents and process control, managerial responsibilities and quality policy, personnel management, monitoring and improvement. The progress monitoring is carried out through control mechanisms RADAR and PCDA (Deming cycle) in order to determine whether the introduced access is operating or not, and carries out the company's self-assessments from time to time, identifying how the approach works.
- Internal audit. Audit identifies and documents gaps in processes, documentation, resource management and other factors, reports on the conducted audit is prepared. Management's Report. The Management's Report summarises the company's management procedures in implementation of the QMS methodology, makes judgments and documents it.

Quality assurance and costs assessment, accounting and management are one of the most important processes in establishment of the corporate goals and policies, because the potential for reducing quality costs makes it possible to reduce the price and get additional profits at the expense of savings.

CONCLUSIONS

Summarising the results of the study, the following findings and recommendations can be made:

- 1) Quality awareness is essential for increasing competitiveness of the private sector businesses;
- 2) In order to ensure the continuous development, companies need to undergo self-assessment by using the TQM philosophy;

- 3) The authors believe that quality assurance is one of the most important factors in the crisis situation and promotion of economic growth;
- 4) The number of companies that implement various quality management systems grows in the world; however, this trend in Latvia is slow. As an example of effective ensuring of the production, we may mention 10 countries which have the highest number of quality management system certificates. This means that a properly implemented system works effectively and ensures sustainable development;
- 5) Whereas Latvia has a large share of small and medium-sized businesses in the total number of enterprises, it is necessary to focus on self-efficacy and promote implementation of the quality management system methodology to businesses;
- 6) By ensuring the total quality management in the Latvian business environment, the common understanding of the corporate objectives is achieved - it promotes the national competitiveness in the international environment and increases productivity.

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Zane Driņķe, Valdis Janovs. Kvalitātes vadības sistēma kā organizāciju attīstības un konkurētspējas paaugstināšanas instruments.

Mūsdienu globalizācijas apstākļos kvalitātes izpratne un kvalitātes vadība ir kļuvusi par neatņemamu biznesa pasaules sastāvdaļu. Produktivitātes un kvalitātes modeļiem un standartiem ir dažādi vērtēšanas kritēriji un principi, taču tiem ir vienots mērķis – atbalstīt konkurētspējīgu, sabalansētu un ilgtspējīgu organizācijas attīstību. Darba mērķis ir izvērtēt kvalitātes vadības modeļa pielietojuma priekšrocības organizācijās, kā efektīvu vadības instrumentu produktivitātes un konkurētspējas palielināšanai, finanšu un personāla resursu optimizācijai, racionāli izmantojot esošos organizācijas resursus. Materiāli un metodes: rakstā tiek izmantota zinātniskās teorijas analīzes metode, grafiskā, analīzes, aprakstošā, salīdzinošā pētījuma metodes. Rezultāti: nodrošinot kopējo produktivitātes un kvalitātes vadību Latvijas organizācijās, tiek palielināta to efektivitāte, kas savukārt veicina valsts konkurētspēju starptautiskajā vidē. Secinājumi: kvalitātes vadības sistēmas ieviešana organizācijās ir efektīgas vadības nodrošināšanas instrumentu, kā arī konkurētspējas palielināšanas ietekmējošs faktors, produktivitātes kāpināšanai. Mūsdienu izpratni par kvalitāti nosaka visas kvalitātes izpausmes formas un to pieņemts saukt par visaptverošu kvalitāti. Klientu vēlmju apmierināšana kļūst par pašu svarīgāko kvalitātes rādītāju, un šodien neviens vairs neapšauba, ka kvalitāte ir veselīgas konkurences pamatā. Lai nodrošinātu ilgtspējīgu organizācijas darbību, autori secina, ka nav nepieciešams obligāti sertificēties pēc kādas no standartu sistēmām (piemēram, ISO). Efektivitātes nodrošināšanai ir iespējams izmantot kvalitātes pārvaldības sistēmas metodoloģiju, kurā būtu ietverti visaptverošās kvalitātes pārvaldības elementi.

Zane Driņķe, Valdis Janovs. Система менеджмента качества как инструмент развития организации и повышения конкурентоспособности.

В современных условиях глобализации понимание качества и управление качеством стали неотъемлемой составной частью делового мира. Модели и стандарты производительности и качества имеют различные критерии и принципы оценки, но они имеют общую цель - поддержать конкурентоспособное, сбалансированное и устойчивое развитие организации. Цель работы - оценить преимущества применения модели управления качеством в организации как эффективного инструмента управления для повышения производительности и конкурентоспособности, оптимизации финансовых и человеческих ресурсов, рационально используя имеющиеся ресурсы организации. Материалы и методы: в статье используется метод анализа научной теории, методы графического, аналитического, описательного, сравнительного исследования. Результаты: обеспечение общего управления производительностью и качеством в латвийских организациях повышает их эффективность, что, в свою очередь, способствует конкурентоспособности страны в международной среде. Выводы: внедрение системы управления качеством в организациях является эффективным инструментом обеспечения управления, а также фактором, влияющим на повышение конкурентоспособности для роста производительности труда. Современное понимание качества определяет все формы выражения качества, и его принято называть всеобъемлющим качеством. Удовлетворение потребностей клиентов становится наиболее важным показателем качества, и сегодня никто больше не сомневается в том, что качество лежит в основе здоровой конкуренции. Для обеспечения устойчивой работы организации, авторы приходят к выводу, что нет необходимости в обязательной сертификации по любой из систем стандартов (например, ISO). Для обеспечения эффективности можно использовать методологию системы управления качеством, в которую были бы включены элементы всеобъемлющего управления качеством.