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## TOP MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT FOR TQM - A PROCESS MODEL

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# IMPACT OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE ON TQM PROGRAMS

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## ABSTRACT

Top management commitment plays a vital role for implementing a quality management system. Perhaps the most obvious similarity among the various quality advocates and their programs is the consistent insistence that management be actively involved with and committed to improving quality within the corporation. Merely stating that quality is important is not sufficient. One thing is common in all philosophies that top management commitment is required but there is less consideration on the topic how one can get the top management commitment. One needs to have a complete process of getting, executing, measuring, meeting the management commitment. At a glance one can translate Top as Time, Management as Money and Commitment as Concerns. Top management is always concerned with time and money factor.

The strongest continuous improvement processes like Total Quality Management (TQM) are the ones that begin with and have genuine involvement of top-level management. The implementation of TQM process begins with an awaking. Individuals throughout the corporation begin to realize that quality needs to become an integral part of doing business. TQM process should be aligned with management strategic business so that it can assure top management commitment.

## INTRODUCTION

It has been well established in the literature that senior management commitment is required for any initiative to be successful. Total Quality Management process also considers the top management commitment as a backbone for successful implementation. All quality gurus put much focus on top management commitment in their theories respectively. In spite of the agreed importance about the need for management commitment there still does not exist a clear understanding in the TQM community about the actual construction and the meaning of management commitment in the context of TQM Implementation.

Commitment is a great social value, everyone top to bottom, wants to have this value. Commitment can be viewed as a state of attachment that defines the relationship between an actor and an Entity. The actor may be a single individual, a group of persons (e.g. project team) or an organization. Unfortunately, commitment is not a tangible item, so make it certain, one must have strong procedures.

This paper introduces a new model to study the evolvement of commitment through commitment process. It concentrates on the "How" aspect of top management commitment for TQM process implementation. To enhance commitment visibility in TQM process is not an easy Job. Quality philosophies about commitment are easy to preach but difficult to implement.

This paper is organized in five sections. Followed by introduction the second section briefly defines the Total Quality Management process. The third section explores briefly the related literature on the concept of commitment and its types. Fourth section makes a relation between TQM and Management Commitment under quality standards and Quality guru(s) theories umbrella. The fifth section, the core of this paper, defines a process model to get the Top Management Commitment for TQM implementation. Finally, there is conclusion, Acknowledgment and references.

## TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT

Total quality management (TQM) is the management process used to make continuous improvements to all functions. These improvements result in increased satisfaction and delight for both internal and external customer. The keywords to note in this definition are "continuous" and "process". TQM represents an ongoing, continuous commitment to improvement. Because the quest for continuous improvements has no end, only new directions in which to head, TQM is process.

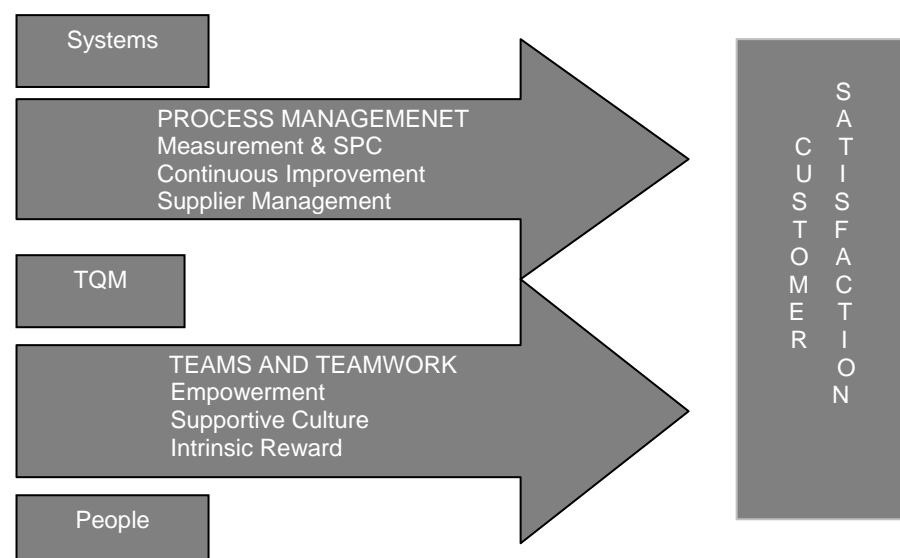
The Total in the total quality indicates a concern for quality in broadest sense—what has come to be known as "Big Q". Big Q refers to quality of products, services, people, processes, and environments. Correspondingly, "Little Q" refers to a narrower concern that focuses on the quality of one of these elements or individual quality criteria within an individual element.

### Key Elements of Total Quality

The total quality has two components: what and the how total quality. What distinguishes total quality from other approaches to doing business is the how component of the definition. This component has eleven critical elements. These elements are as under:

- 1: Strategically Based
- 2: Customer Focus
- 3: Obsession with Quality
- 4: Scientific Approach
- 5: Long-Term Commitment
- 6: Teamwork
- 7: Continual Process Improvement
- 8: Education and Training
- 9: Freedom through Control
- 10: Unity of Purpose
- 11: Employee Involvement and Empowerment

Systems and people are major focus of TQM. Following diagrams depicts People and System function under total quality management process.



## COMMITMENT: A SOCIAL VALUE

Commitment is a word with rich semantics. It is closely related to speech act theory. In this theory, when people say (i.e., speech) something, they are "committed" to take certain actions (i.e., act) in the future. As a result,

commitment can be used in the personal, social and business settings. Commitment is more than just good talk. It's much more than that. It is a great social value. Everyone want to be committed, it is the core attribute of a good human.

### Top Management Commitment

Management commitment is not a gift. It is earned and maintained through hard work, loyalty, communication and good staff work. Commitment from top management may be the most critical factor in the success of any programs. Senior management commitment is essential to help get started with a TQM program. Often, the first step is to convince senior managers of the financial and wider benefits and overcome any barriers that they may have. One of the best ways to do this is to identify obvious areas of cost reduction and environmental improvement and where to make immediate savings through no-cost or low-cost measures.

This core element in Total Quality Management system model addresses management commitment. Management commitment must be driven by a strong desire to improve the quality all business of a company. Top management must not only give a lead to the rest of the company but also ensure that the necessary decisions and actions are taken. Only top management has the motivation and the power to effect changes. Whereas many of the factors concerned with successful TQM involve management lead and follow-up with others carrying out the actions, top management must be fully involved in managing process.

### Commitment of Management "New Thinking"

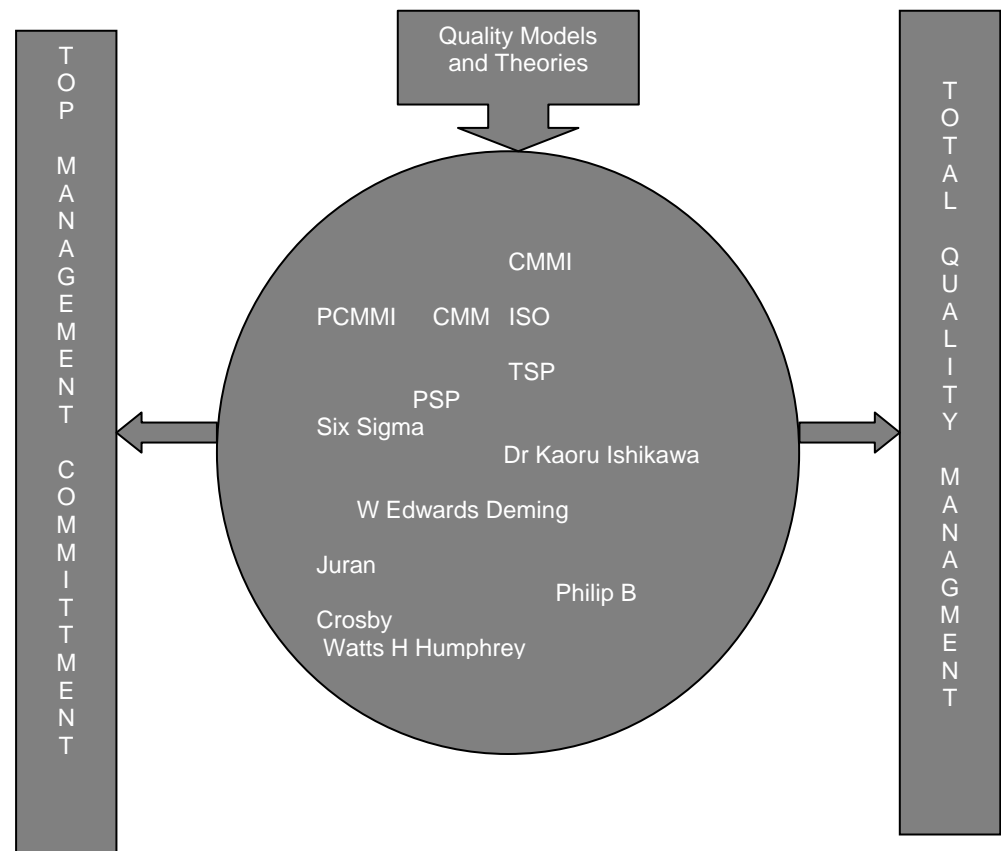
Ernst &Young (Huge 1990) explore the concept of management commitment in the context of customer oriented quality thinking. They suggest that commitment moves sequentially through several stages in a causal fashion. Steps are as under:

- Step1: Enough commitment to sponsor New Activities i.e. management is personally involved and expects the significant short term results
- Step 2: Commitment of time to gain an understanding 1.e. management is personally involved and expects the significant short tem results with the passage of time
- Step3: Intellectual understanding i.e. No real desire to work for quality issues. Need short-term benefit to justify further investment
- Step4: Willingness to work on critical issues and to increase personal involvement i.e. No desire to change own behavior
- Step 5: Desire to change one's own behavior i.e. management doesn't need short-term benefits to justify the investment in time and effort. Puts quality ahead of quantity
- Step 6: Completely internalized i.e. Behavior reflects new thinking

Above mentioned six steps show a process how commitment is evolved in management behavior. In start management just want to look short-term benefits and then think for long-term. TQM is a long-term process so to get management commitment one needs to breakdown it into small goals; it will create visibility and enforce management to be commitment to provide resources, time, and money for TQM process.

## PHILOSOPHIES, TQM, AND TOP MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

common slogans for quality in models and theories like, Quality is everyone's responsibility, Quality comes from Top, Quality is a way of life etc. To implement all these theories management commitment is an integral part. Following figure shows famous quality models and theories that have concept of TQM and TMC.



ISO, CMM, CMMI, PCMMI, PSP, and TSP all have much focus on continuous improvement philosophy. Continuous improvement is heart of total quality management process. It needs a very close involvement of top management.

Quality gurus, Deming, Crosby, Ishikawa, Humphrey have put much focus on management involvement and quality management. Everyone has different theories that can be implemented to have a sustainable quality system

## PROCESS MODEL

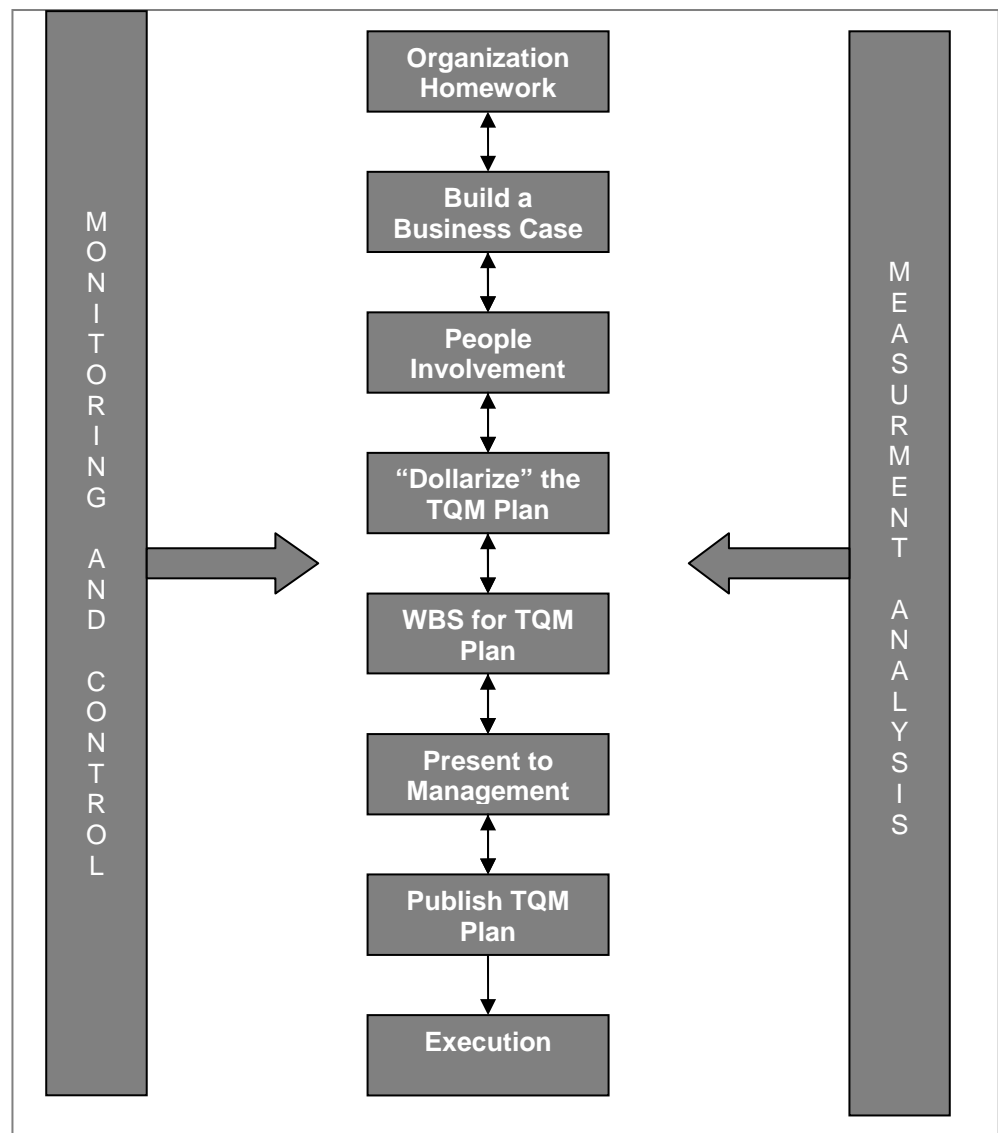
Processes play a vital role for institutionalizing any change. An organization is as good as good processes it has. Here we are going to define a process for getting top management commitment.

### Overview

A process is required to make sure Top Management Commitment for TQM. TQM may take long time to have actual benefits so there is strong need to make this to visible to the Management to get their appropriate involvement. This process shows a complete way to get TMC with appropriate input, out put, tasks, roles responsibilities etc.

### Diagram representation

Following is a pictorial view of whole process:



### Entry Criteria

One has strong knowledge of Total Quality Management. There is a need to implement the TQM process in the organization.

### Inputs

Following is the input for this process:

- 1: TQM study plan is completed
- 2: Issues without TQM are identified

### Tasks

Following are the task to be performed in this process

- **Organization Homework**

Organizational home work is the first step to get management commitment for TQM. No two situations are the same - Be wary of off the shelf solutions that do not take the personalities of your principals and the culture of the organization into account. carefully study what happened before you took over. Pay particular attention to the manner in which it was done. Sometimes people have the right ideas but the manner in which they carry them out hinders their success. At a minimum, review historical documents e.g.,

previous evaluation reports, case files and statistics to identify inhibitors to the organization's success. Don't forget to interview full time and part-time quality officials, personnel officials, budget staffs, and past and present line and staff managers.

- **Build a Business Plan for TQM**

Management always thinks in the business lines so they will like only that ideas which align with company strategy. Every aspect of TQM must align with company strategic priorities. Make a business case that provides management specific, readable charts and graphs on areas that address the bottom line. Go beyond static work force profiles. Consider providing information on complaint trends, high dollar lawsuits, demographic trends, future skill requirements, recruitment results, referral rates, retention concerns, and work force inclusion in career development & training programs.

- **People Involvement**

Talk to as many employees as possible about their opinions about TQM. You'll be able to assess their knowledge level and what bugs them about the initiatives they have seen in the past. Ask what would help them be more involved and supportive of your programs. TQM process covers the whole organization so all people will feel their ownership in this case.

- **"Dollarize" the TQM Plan**

The commonly accepted gold standard argument for a quality idea is its economic benefit. Specifically, if you can quantify a benefit in dollars (or more precisely, the dollars gained in excess of dollars cost), you are making a strong case. After all, money is the language of business. But if this is true, why doesn't everybody do it automatically? First, it is difficult. We in the quality profession are not necessarily skilled in ascribing dollar values to proposed changes, nor are we perceived as having this ability. And even financial professionals are challenged here, because this requires complex analyses of the current situation and then of the conditions after the idea is implemented. It also requires judgments, estimates, probabilistic assessments—and guesses.

Most of us prefer to deal with topics of greater certainty. Also, the assumptions and judgments you make in the course of dollarizing your idea are subject to challenge. An unfriendly audience can undercut your estimates from the start by challenging your assumptions as overly optimistic. This is yet more evidence the people aspects of selling an idea are at least as important as the analytical aspects. Given these difficulties, how do we put a dollar value to a quality idea? Here's a suggestion: Get help from your CFO, treasurer, controller or other financial professional to get sound estimates. Your peers in finance have experience doing this sort of modeling, such as when supporting mergers and acquisitions, buying a new facility or making rent vs. buy decisions. Besides bringing the necessary skills to bear, financial professionals have earned a reputation for caution and prudence. If you make a presentation in which your CFO delivers the cost-benefit analysis, you have gained certain credibility. After all, if both finance and quality back an idea, it must have been well evaluated.

- **WBS for TQM Plan**

TQM is a long term process. To get top management commitment there is need to make the process visible. As we have discussed in above pages that top management require the short-term goals results to do invest for long term. This is the procedure which divides the long-term TQM plan small goals.



- **Present to Management**

Present to management the TQM idea. It is the critical part of whole process. Many people have lacking to present properly. You need a minute to minute plan your presentation so that they get involved in presentation and ultimately for the presentation purpose. Highlight the benefits of TQM and the issues that will solve by having TQM in organization. Most senior managers do not understand the true value, impact and consequences of a TQM programs. This is due to the high demands on their time, energy and attention. Remember that you are not the only person/program competing for attention and resources. You must actively help management discover and rediscover the value of TQM and Diversity.

- **Publish TQM Plan**

After management presentation there is need to publish the TQM plan. Publishing is a very important phase of TQM process. TQM plan must have all the aspects of completeness like it should have short-Term goals start and end dates with suitable resources and it must contain the value addition visibility that will get by achieving short-term goal. Plan should be publish to all departments like finance, HR, development, Sale etc so that everyone can take part in the TQM initiative. Top Management commitment with the published plan will verify by providing proper resources, money, and infrastructure.

- **Execution**

Top-level management begins the process by creating a mission statement that sets the stage for improvements by making a strong statement of corporation's goal. The mission statement should be short enough for its essence to be remembered by everyone, but it should also be complete. Execution start with mission statement and then it followed the TQM plan. Execution is closely monitored and controlled and corrective actions are performed if there is any discrepancy.

- **Measurement Analysis**

The purposes of Measurement Analysis process is to have a single coherent process for the measurements related to process & product and build an understanding of following the measurement program collecting both process and product related measurements at Project as well as organization level.

The purpose of Measurement and Analysis is to develop and sustain a measurement capability that is used to support management information needs. It is a continuous activity that will perform throughout the TQM implementation program.

- **Monitoring and Control**

The purpose of Monitoring and Control is to provide an understanding of the TQM program progress so that appropriate corrective actions can be taken when the program performance deviates significantly from defined threshold value from the plan. A documented plan is the basis for monitoring activities, communicating status, and taking appropriate actions when required. Like measurement analysis it is a continuous activity that will perform throughout the TQM implementation program.

- **Output**

Output of this process is visibility of top management commitment. Following are the indicators which will verify that management is committed.

1. There is a written TQM policy.
2. Managers attend TQM meetings.
3. There are written TQM goals and objectives.
4. Managers participate in executing TQM plans.
5. Managers monitor and periodically evaluate the TQM program.
6. Managers regularly attend TQM activities outside the company.
7. Managers provide TQM budgets, staffing, and facilities for meetings.
8. Managers and supervisors are held accountable for TQM performance.
9. Top managers receive and respond to TQM committee recommendations.
10. Supervisors and managers personally conduct TQM audits and inspections.
11. Management representatives are members of the TQM committee/Team.
12. Written strategies and tactics (plans) for achieving TQM objectives are in place.

- **Exit Criteria**

TQM plan is published. Measurement Analysis and Monitoring and Control will be considered as an on going activity.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion on above pages one can conclude that for successful Total Quality Management process there is a strong need of Top Management Commitment. Top Management commitment is not a gift. It is earned and maintained through smart work, loyalty, communication and passion. The first demonstration of commitment would be the resources; you would get money, time and effort so that you could get your things in public. You would get input, contacts. There is continues need to monitor and control the top management commitment, take the corrective actions, if you see something is going wrong, or not on track. Measurement analysis work in coordination with monitoring and control process to make sure that management is getting value addition with the implementation of TQM Process.

This paper has provided researchers and practitioners a different look into the management commitment for Total Quality Management. The "How" process presented in this paper is based on the practical experience in eWorx International. I have presented an initial thought more research is required to improve the top management commitment "How" aspect for continuous improvement and ultimately TQM.

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