QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN TOYOTA

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1 Introduction

Due to the increased competition between businesses, organizations are nowadays under increased pressure to produce quality products and services in order to have a wide clientele base. According to Lutchman (2011), the two main factors that can be used to determine whether an organization is sustainable or not are the consumers and the rival organizations that a particular company competes with in a particular industry. Organizations thus have to produce products that customers deem to match their needs and most probably exceed them in order to convince the customers to buy them. The increased competition on the other hand means that organizations have to produce good that are of high quality in order to compete with similar products in the markets. This in turn calls for effective management approaches that enhance that quality products which give organizations competitive advantages are adopted.

This report aims at reviewing and developing a recommendation for Quality Management System by adopting a Total Quality Management (TQM) approach, with the implementation of a Quality Management Plan in Toyota Company according to the ISO 9000-2000+ Quality Management Standard series.

The need for this review and recommendation arises due to the fact that even though Toyota has managed to stay ahead of the other competitors who are usually automobile manufacturers as discussed by Strategic Direction (2005), it is important that Toyota does not become a victim to self-satisfaction since it is required that the organization keeps reviewing its quality management system in place in order to ensure that the products that it is supplying to the markets are of high quality which will in turn give the company a competitive advantage over its competitors. In addition, the fact that Toyota has been recalling some models to be taken back to the factory due to some general problems as reported by Reuters (2012) justifies the need for this report since such situations would be avoided if Toyota was to adopt the recommendations of this report.
2 Scope of the report

Toyota Motor Corporation or TMC as the company is widely referred to is a Japanese company that manufactures cars and sells them in various countries in the world. The company was founded in 1937 by its founder Akio Toyota who had conducted research on the company’s offering before its commencement of operations. By the year 1950, the company had manufactured more than 100,000 cars. The 1950s saw Toyota start exporting its car to USA which resulted to expansion of the company's operations with the 1960s witnessing the company manufacturing more than one million vehicles (Toyota, 2012).

Currently, Toyota's headquarters are located in Toyota City, Aichi. Apart from manufacturing vehicles, Toyota also provides financial services via the company’s financial services division (Toyota, 2012). According to Wikipedia (2012), in the year 2010, Toyota was ranked first in terms of units of vehicles produced during that year and had a market share of 11% though was closely followed by General Motors and Volkswagen. However, Toyotas performance has dropped since then as noted by Wikipedia (2012) that during the first half of 2011, the company had lost its market leadership position and was actually trailing General Motors and Volkswagen companies that it were leading the previous year.

In perspective of the organization’s dismal performance in 2011, this report aims at recommending the essential requirements for developing a quality management system by adopting a Total Quality Management approach that will help restore the company back to its market leader position. In order to arrive at the recommendation, Toyotas core operations will be initially analyzed in order to establish the existing set up. There after, Quality Management concepts and theories will be used to recommend how the company should go about in developing a Quality Management Plan that once implemented will be effective to the operations of Toyota.
3  Elements of Quality in Toyota

A product can be said to be of good quality if it has some features or capabilities that are positively different while compared to other products in the markets. Quality management on the other hand as explained by Srdoc, Sluga & Bratko (2005) is an approach adopted by organizations with the sole aim of understanding customer needs and then aiming to constantly deliver the customers’ needs without any shortcomings. According to Behara & Gundersen (2001), quality management also entails determining all elements of quality, evaluating the performance of a particular organization’s product or services and providing the product or service to the end user.

According to Lakhal, Pasin & Limam (2006), quality management in an organization does not only help the organization create value for the stakeholders but also helps to sustain the organization operations. An efficient quality management system in any organization as discussed by Srdoc, Sluga & Bratko (2005) would ensure that an organization always provides products and services that meet and probably exceed customer needs which in turn results to developed customer loyalty, efficiency in operations of the organizations meaning that no available resources go to waste and improvement of operational process to ensure that the company is always ahead of its competitors.

Quality in any organization as discussed by Lakhal, Pasin & Limam (2006) plays a very big role in the existence of an organization meaning that elements of quality in organization cannot just be taken for granted. Lakhal, Pasin & Limam (2006) contends that in order for organization to make sure that they get their quality right, they hire quality professionals who are charged with developing policies that will ensure that the companies operations are adherence to the set quality policies.

In reference to Toyota, the company can be argued to have three main elements of quality namely the customers of the organization, management team involved with development of
policies followed by the company and innovative approach adapted to makes sure that the company introduces models that are latest in the market and as well as have the least impact to the environment (Toyota, 2012).

Toyota Employees at work in an assembly Plant in Japan

3.1.1 Customers

A customer as discussed by Kotler (2011) is the receiver of products or services from a manufacturer, seller or even distributor in exchange for money. A customer is also referred to as a purchaser, buyer or client. Kotler (2011) noted that there are two types of customers namely the intermediate customer and the ultimate customer. Intermediate customers are customers who buy products or services with the sole aim of selling them again and are often referred to as trade customer where as an ultimate customer is the end user of the products and is not involved in re-selling the products again once he buys them.

Toyota puts too much emphasis on customers. This can be argued to be the case due to the fact that if no customers were buying Toyota’s cars, the company should have ceased operations many years ago since there would be no sales meaning the business would not be sustainable. In order to make sure that the company’s customers are satisfied, Toyota puts much emphasis on customer satisfaction, customer needs, collecting customer feedbacks, produces different
models for different types of customers and always have in place quality assurance and control policies (Toyota, 2012).

3.1.2 Customer needs

Toyota puts too much emphasis on customer needs. The company knows that it can only be successful if it meets its customer needs. In order to ensure that the customer needs are met, the company spends a lot of money on Research and Development in order to ensure that the vehicles sold meets and even exceeds customer needs (Toyota UK, 2012).

3.1.3 Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is at the heart of all Toyotas operations. Toyota UK (2012) states that in order for the company to satisfy customers, all members are included in quality control activities. A company wide approach that involves every one from Research and development, manufacturing, retailing and servicing is involved in the quality control to make sure that the customers are satisfied. In addition, Toyota collects feedback from customers in order to make sure that the company listens to various customers’ views and suggestions (Toyota, 2012).
3.1.4 Different models for different types of customers

Since different customers have different needs, the company manufactures various models that appeal to various groups of customers. While Hybrid models are target for customers who are conscious about their impact on the environmental, other models like Toyota Prado are meant for individuals who are not really concerned about the environment. The table below gives an overview of some models manufactured by Toyota for various types of customers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MODEL</th>
<th>TARGET GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hybrid Models e.g. Toyota</td>
<td>Customers who are conscious about the environment and are ready to pay higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pius</td>
<td>selling prices that the cars are priced at.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gas Guzzling models e.g.</td>
<td>Customers who are well of and can afford to pay the higher sales prices and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyota Land Cruser, Toyota</td>
<td>as well afford</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Prado
- to fuel the car since this model consumes a lot of fuel

### Economy class modes e.g.
- Toyota Vits, Toyota Yaris, Toyota Corolla
- Car models in this category do not consume a lot of fuel and are intended for customers who might be concerned with fuel consumption levels of the car they drive.

#### 3.1.5 Quality assurance and control policies

Toyota UK (2012) states that each and every member involved in the manufacturing of the vehicles are usually involved in the total quality control. The company uses standardized work approaches that involve visual control which helps to spot any problems or unusual situations as they occur during the manufacturing process. Once the vehicle have been manufactured, rigorous scrutiny of key elements and functions of each vehicle helps to confirm the quality and stability of the production process meaning that vehicles sold to customers have to meet certain standards. In addition, Toyota offers warranty periods for all new vehicles sold (Toyota, 2012)

#### 3.2 Toyota Employees

Since the employees are the ones who make sure that Toyota’s operations are successful, the company offers opportunities and incentives to the employees to focus their skills and knowhow in customer satisfaction. Toyota conducts various training for the employees in order to ensure that they attain customer satisfaction. Every employee is responsible for quality implying that every employee is usually involved in the quality control process (Toyota, 2012).

#### 3.3 Innovation

Toyota spends a lot of money on Research and Developments of vehicles. The research and development usually involves review of the products life cycle in reference to the customer
needs which usually results in introduction of new models and phasing out of older models after producing the car for few years.

The key elements of quality that Toyota should be concerned with should be the seven elements proposed by Flynn et al (1994) which includes, customer involvement, supplier involvement, management of workforce, process management, product design, leadership management and quality information systems.

4 Key requirements for developing Quality Management Systems in Toyota

Park (2004) discusses that any successful Quality Management System must be involved in developing and conversing a customer oriented undertaking that demands the organization to be attentive and urgently respond to customer expectations while at the same time motivating employees to continue improving and increasing customer satisfaction. The key requirements discussed in this section are based on internationally recognized concepts that are applied in various industries and include the principles and standards outlined by ISO (2012).

In order for Toyota to have an effective Quality management System in place, the company should focus on developing strategies that are customer focused and achievable by listening and responding to a particular organization customers while at the same time motivating employees to continue improving the manufacturing process while analyzing key performance indicators. The quality management system developed must thus:-

i. Put much emphasis on quality of the final product
ii. Continuously conduct customer satisfaction surveys and act upon the suggestions
iii. Analyze performance level of the organization on frequent basis
iv. Carry out employee satisfaction surveys
v. Aim at continuously improving the manufacturing processes
4.1 Mission Statement

Toyota’s mission statement should focus on customer satisfaction. In addition the company’s mission statement should also focus on other stakeholders interests. As discussed by Talbot (2003), successful mission statements usually the main reason of an organization's existence as well as the guiding principles that states how the organization aims at conducting its business at all times. Toyota’s mission statement as stated in the company's official webpage is to create a more prosperous society through automotive manufacturing. The mission statement of the organization is simple and can be communicated through various means to make sure that it is embedded in the entire organization (Toyota, 2012). A closer look at the mission statement shows that the statement does not only focus on customer satisfaction but also includes other stakeholders.
4.2 Conducting Customer surveys

Customers will always judge Toyota's performance according to their expectations. Since customers perspective are very important when it comes to any changes to be made of the products, Toyota should always conduct surveys in order to get customer views on products offered in the market. Some of the approaches that can be used to conduct customer surveys as discussed by Salant & Dillman (1994) could include sending questionnaires through postage paid envelopes to the customers, sending customer satisfaction surveys through emails and conducting random surveys to specific customers during various times.

4.3 Analyzing performance levels of the organization

Analysis of performance levels should be used to illustrate the value of Toyota to the company’s stakeholders. If Toyota continuously analyzed the performance levels, the results of the analysis could help the company identify departments that are performing better, help identify matters that require immediate attention, help avert major problems in early stages and help focus improvements on areas where performance levels are low.

4.4 Conducting employees satisfaction surveys

In order to attain high quality levels, Toyota has to address the needs and wants of its employees. Toyota needs to have in place processes that measure employee satisfaction in their workplace. Satisfied employees will produce high quality products where as unsatisfied employees will produce low quality products. Effective employee satisfaction surveys in Toyota can be conducted by encouraging all the employees to participate in various surveys, posting survey results and informing the employees of the planned actions and making respondents anonymous so that they respond to the survey without any fears.
4.5 Continuously improving the manufacturing process

Any Quality Management System adapted by Toyota must aim at continuous improvement of the current processes and organizational performance. The continuous improvement on the other hand will usually result in a Continuous Quality Improvement in the organization that might include clear definition of quality improvement roles and responsibilities within the organization, implementation of processes that would be beneficial to the organization, systematic measurement as well as monitoring of key process and outcomes through the use of quality assurance tools such as checklists to establish key customers and quick identification of outputs that fail to meet the expected standards.

![Toyota assembly plant in UK Burnaston near Derby](image)

5 Development and implementation of Quality Management Plan (QMP)

A quality management plan as explained by Zaval & Wagner (2011) is simply a type of document that explains the quality system in a particular organization. Among others, the QMP outlines every single aspect of the specific organization. Some of the elements of the QMP include policies and procedures, the organization structure and roles and responsibilities of each department. Most of the QMP documents contain four sections that include the
introduction, quality management responsibilities, quality management approach and quality records and reports.

5.1 Purpose, Scope and Related Documentation in QMP

5.1.1 Purpose of QMP

The purpose of the QMP in Toyota’s case is to ascertain the aims, processes and responsibilities needed to execute successful quality management functions. Quality Management Plan would ensure that key Toyota operations are accomplished in accordance with the approved techniques guaranteeing that the final products which in case of Toyota are vehicles confirm to the applicable requirements.

5.1.2 Scope of QMP

Toyota’s Quality Management Plan should involve all operations on the organization. The plan should entail subcontractors and should cover all applicable work life cycle phases. The document should be developed with the intended use of all involved parties. In order for the Quality Management Plan to be successful, the implementation responsibility of the document should be shared between all employees of Toyota.

5.1.3 References and Related Documentation in QMP

In case of Toyota, management policies and procedures in place should be used to draw up policies to be followed in the Quality Management Plan. Some of the documents that should be referred to when coming up with the QMP are documents that contains information of process assurance cycle procedures, maintenance procedures, operation procedures, quality management waiver requests, quality management process audits and corrective and preventive actions.
Once the Quality Management Plan has been developed, it must be reviewed and approved through independent review by Toyota’s project management team, Toyota’s production team and an external quality consultant. In addition, any changes made to the document must be submitted to Toyota’s quality manager for the purpose of authorization and approval. The following tables contain templates of quality management plan, implementation manual and maintenance schedule and procedures of machines at Toyota that could be used in implementation of the proposed Quality Management Plan

5.1.3.1 Project Quality Management Plan

This document should be used to make available information pertaining the development and distribution of the plan till the last point where the plan is approved. The proposed template can be used to provide the version, the employee implementing it, date of implementation, name of the person who approved the implementation and the date of the approval as well as the rationale for approval.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version NO.</th>
<th>Employee Implementing</th>
<th>Date of Revision</th>
<th>Person Approving</th>
<th>Date of Approval</th>
<th>Reason for approval</th>
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5.1.3.2 Implementation Manual

The proposed Implementation manual that has been adopted from CDC (2012) can be found on the appendices.
5.1.3.3 Equipment Maintenance Plan

The Equipment Maintenance Plan which is usually abbreviated as EMP usually comes in a table format and is used in development of chores that are mandatory in maintenance of a company’s equipments. The document usually assists the person in charge of maintenance to make sure that the all the company equipments are maintained according to the company's regulations. The following is a proposed EMP that can be applied by TOYOTA in maintaining the company's equipments and machines.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM #</th>
<th>Maintenance Task Description</th>
<th>Frequency Per Month</th>
<th>Condition of Equipment</th>
<th>Date Maintained</th>
<th>Maintenance Person Name</th>
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5.2 Quality Objectives, Quality management functions and responsibilities

5.2.1 Quality Objective

In order for the Quality Management Plan to be effective, the quality objectives have to support Toyota’s organizational goals as well as the objectives. In addition, the document has to establish a framework for planning and performing quality management activities contained in the QMP.

Among others, Toyota’s quality objectives should include manufacturing vehicles that surpass customer expectations; motivating employees to be responsible for the quality of the manufactured vehicles, solving any issues might affect manufacturing of the vehicles and promoting continuous improvement in the manufacturing processes that will in turn result to improved quality, timeliness and cost effectiveness.

5.2.2 Quality Management Department

The quality management department should be independent from any operations of Toyota. Members of the department should be vetted by various key personnel and should come from various departments of Toyota. The role of this department should be to make sure that all the employees of Toyota are aware that they are responsible for the quality of their work which implies that the every employee should be help responsible for the quality of the vehicles manufactured.

This department should thus be responsible for monitoring the implementation of quality policies with Toyota by supporting all levels of management. The department should thus review all of Toyotas operations to ensure that the set quality standards are met.

5.3 Quality Management methods and activities
The developed Quality Management Plan has to adhere with set industry quality standards and have to include the best practices in the automobile industry. Toyota has to regularly review quality management activities in order to facilitate modification and revision of work in acknowledgement of changes and improved processes.

Quality programs defined in the Toyota’s QMP should be based on key concepts that ensure that the quality program is active and not passive; the program fully supports the objectives and goals of the organization’s management and encourages improvements of processes. In addition, methods used in determining the quality standards in Toyota should always consider continued improvement. A life cycle activity is an example of the management activities that could be vital in implementation of an effective QMP in Toyota.

5.4 Quality Assurance, Quality Control and Evaluation Criteria

5.4.1 Quality Assurance

Quality assurance cycle in case of Toyota would be a process that would enhance consistency in application of approved operation processes. It might include supporting basic quality management related activities such as identifying and documenting the approach to be followed in performing continued improvements of the manufacturing processes, verifying compliance with the approach and the processes by which it is to be implemented and reporting and monitoring actions to solve issues identified in the process.

5.4.2 Quality Control

In order to ensure that the implemented QMP is successful, Toyota should perform general audits in accordance with the documented procedures that would usually identify the required content and distribution of audit reports. The Toyota audit report that should be prepared by the quality management department should include definition of the main reason why the audit is been done, names of the specific personnel who are supposed to conduct the audit, finding and discussions of the audit and needed follow up of the audit.
5.4.3 Evaluation Criteria

Once an audit has been carried out, specific forms and procedures should be used to evaluate the findings of the audit. The evaluation should be done in accordance to the set standards and policies.

5.5 Application of appropriate standards and procedure

Since Toyota is a multinational corporation, the company should apply International Standards in order to give guidance on quality in project management processes. In deed, Toyota should aim for ISO 9000 standards series that is aimed on quality management principles covers factors such as customer focus, leadership, involvement of people, process approach, continual improvement, factual approach when it comes to decision making, mutually beneficial supplier relationship.

At this point, it is important to highlight that the main difference between ISO 9000 and Total Quality Management is that Total Quality Management is quite broad since the approach aims to search for excellence whereas ISO 9000 is only aimed at completing quality commitments with the customer. Toyota should aim for Total Quality Management since the approach aims for excellence throughout the organization. Some of the elements that Total Quality Management approach incorporates include suppliers’ quality management, customer focus, employee involvement, process control and improvement and design of the product among others.

5.6 QMP implementation review and audit

Once the Quality management document has been developed, Toyota’s Quality Management department will then be involved in implementation of the document in the company. During the implementation, the Quality management department should also identify the monitoring, measurement and analytical processes that Toyota needs in order to be able to demonstrate
that the organization confirms with the ISO requirements. In addition, auditing should be done on regular basis so that to confirm that Toyota complies with the ISO specifications.

5.7 QMP activity status and audit report

In order to monitor the effectiveness of the Quality management report, Toyota's Quality Department must at all time keep a status report of the state at which the QMP is at. In addition, it is important to highlight that the status report can only be developed after an audit has been conducted.

6 Compliance with Quality management standards

The suggested Quality Management Plan is compliant with the quality management standards set by ISO since the suggested steps includes identifying customers product requirements, collecting feedback from customers, ensuring that employees are satisfied at all times, monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction continuously, analyzing quality of finished vehicles, making quality improvements suggestions, controlling nonconforming products and establishing the Quality Management department.

It is vital that Toyota’s management have a clear understanding of all ISO management standards so as to ensure that the company fully complies with the required specification. As earlier stated, the company should also hire an external quality expert on regular basis to conduct an audit that should then be compared with the audit done by the internal quality team. Any differences found between the two audits reports should be addressed in order to ensure that the company always adheres to the set standards.
7 Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be summed up that an effective Quality Management Plan should at the end result to higher quality as far as Toyota cars are concerned. Higher quality would in the longer run result to more sales due to the strong brand that Toyota would be able to build around the higher quality perception. In addition, if Toyota implemented an effective Quality Management Plan, the company would witness a drastic reduction in number of recalls something that has been common with most of car manufacturers of late. According to Reuters (2012), Toyota recalled over 681,000 Tacoma trucks that were manufactured in the years 2005 to 2009 due to problems with the steering wheels. It can be argued that if Toyota had an effective Quality Management Plan in place, the company should not be recalling any cars. The recalls are also expensive since Toyota has to fix the problems free of charge since the customers are covered by the warranty.

*Procedures and elements that a Quality Management Plan should have.*

Finally, it is important that Toyota understands that there will be some environmental factors that will affect the implementation of the Quality Management Plan. The four main factors that will also play a key role in determining success or failure of the Quality Management Plan are:

i. Legal –political environment factors – Rules and regulations put in place by governing bodies in various countries in which Toyota have operations in will affect the way the QMP is implemented.

ii. Social factors – Toyota has to consider factors such as ethical issues, personal value systems and the impact that the company’s operations might have to the communities in regions where Toyota has operations.

iii. Economic factors – It is vital that Toyota reviews aspects such as market conditions, inflation levels and working hours among others.

iv. Technological factors – Toyota has to always review the technology adapted against new technologies and has to aim at always using the latest technologies which ensures high quality while enhancing efficiency.
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