

ABSTRACT

Influenced by the quality trend, the Total Quality Management (TQM) philosophy has been greatly emphasized in Hong Kong. TQM has already been widely adopted and incorporated in some Hong Kong organizations. Even companies which have not implemented TQM yet, have begun to place increased emphasis on quality.

Human Resources Management (HRM) specialists are becoming familiar with the TQM concept and ISO 9000 series. They understand that obtaining ISO 9000 certification is not an end in itself that is part of an approach to continuous improvement and assessment in quality management embodied in the TQM concept. Top management is beginning to realise that TQM development is vital for a company success as well as required by the commercial market in the future.

This project revealed that HRM professionals have started to adopt the TQM philosophy of viewing other departments as internal customers. HR department is viewed by them as acting professionals as a mediator to tackle complaints and satisfy internal customer's needs. Meanwhile, it was discovered that many HR departments have integrated TQM principles into

their functional areas in particular, in the areas of recruitment and training. It appears that in the near future, HRM will also focus on performance appraisal, compensation and communication with an aim to entirely integrate the TQM philosophy into all the HRM activities.

The role of HRM, there is becoming more significant in TQM implementation. There is evidence that HRM is taking a strategic role in some cases i.e. acting as a change agent in TQM. In many cases, the function is facilitating the implementation of TQM. The change agent and facilitating roles of the HRM are by no means mutually exclusive and effective TQM implementation requires HRM to perform both roles effectively.

Thus, guardian of such functions as recruitment and selection, training and development, performance evaluation and reward systems, the HRM professional is best able to take charge of these important functions as they relate to a TQM strategy. The integration of TQM into HR activities can be just as important as developing strategic programs that may have higher visibility and supposedly greater longer-term consequences.

Nevertheless, a number of difficulties still confront by a HRM function attempting to HRM integrate TQM principles into its activities. The main difficulties are resistance and fear on the part of staff in general, inadequate knowledge of TQM and lack of support from other departments for HRM's role in TQM as well as a lack of top management commitment to HRM playing a proactive role in TQM. This project offers suggestions on ways in which the difficulties might be overcome.