

The New Face of Quality Philosophy and the New Breed of Quality Professionals

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Abstract

We live in a World where the change momentum is accelerating at a great pace, making it difficult for organizations to adapt and control their internal business environment and deal with the external factors. It is universally accepted now that the principle of 'nudging and improving' at a slow pace is a futile exercise. Furthermore, the new era where innovation has become a pre-requisite, focusing on products and services is at best, a license to practice. The new era is characterized by customer experience, innovation at a large scale to include new business models, integrated value propositions and the customer becoming a collaborator in innovation through co-creation.

Value is the new currency for measuring effectiveness and establishing competitive standards. The practice of commoditization in everything produced and the need for individualization and personalization of products and services means that the focus now is no longer on the 'push mechanism' with the traditional quality measures but a customer 'pulls mechanism'. This is characterized by the desire to customize, individualize customer experiences from utilitarian needs, to hedonic ones, to emotional fulfillment all the way to perhaps spiritual long lasting influences. This is of course greatly facilitated by disruptive technologies, the ubiquity of smart phones and the phenomenon of social networking which creates peer influence.

The 20th century approach to quality which has been mainly focusing on product and service orientation and where the philosophy of Plan – Do – Check – Act has been effect is no longer valid. Quality Professionals equipped with knowledge and expertise in Lean and Six Sigma can no longer function in a world where the emphasis is on Customer Experience, personalization as opposed to optimization. Where value is the currency as opposed to volume and variety as the driver of performance and where innovation covers the business model itself as opposed to new product development.

This talk will consider all of the aforementioned factors and their implications on the quality profession, finishing with a new proposed profile for the quality professional fit to serve in a modern business environment. This will be based on managing indulgence, focusing on customer experience management and measuring the new dimension of quality (emotional quality).