

Quality culture - How to set up a framework for quality oriented thinking and behaviour

Thomas Prefi

P3 Group, N/A, Aachen, Germany

Abstract

Improving quality we first think about optimising processes. To guide people through necessary change we need procedures and training. It is easy to change a procedure but is sometimes not easy to change people's behaviour. There is an obvious layer of behaviour that can be addressed easily and a hidden one that is not easy to change. It is called the company culture.

Culture is the result and the reason of human thinking and acting. Culture grows by time as a collection of all activities of a community and it is the natural framework that gives direction to each member of the community.

People coming out of different cultures behave differently. In a transnational context this doesn't surprise. People coming from different company cultures behave differently, too. In a blame culture people tend to hide problems. In a quality culture a problem is welcome as a starting point for improvement. On paper identical processes will show different efficiency in both cultures. In some cases a procedure is only needed to guideline a broken or not maintained culture. We learn that quality culture can be a more powerful tool than process management.

This paper will show how quality culture determines the profitability of a company and provide a framework to evaluate and maintain a company quality culture.