

## Implementation of Quality Management Systems: Changes in Personnel Management

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### Abstract

Organisations in Lithuania as well as in foreign countries are aware of the importance of implementing effective quality management systems. However, due to the lack of information or knowledge, some structural parts of these systems lack attention or are functioning not well enough. In comparison to other European countries, the implementation and adaptation of the quality management systems in Lithuania is a relatively new and innovative field, as only a small number of organisations have introduced them. Furthermore, the total quality management in business environment is perceived too narrowly and quite often is associated with acquiring a certificate. The organisations that have already implemented quality management systems already realized the crucial role of the personnel management realising the principles of total quality management. The undeniable truth is that the strategy of organisation and the principles of personnel management are closely related.

**Keywords:** quality management systems, personnel management, personnel policy, strategy of organisation.

### Introduction

New Lithuanian business environment, particularly from the small business perspective, dictates the need to take an advanced global experience, primarily changing the thinking in the management area. Quality programme of European Union treats quality as a strategic business tool, and strategic importance is given to quality policies of countries and organizations.

The *relevance of the research* is that the increasing role of quality is the result of growing position of users, organizations' focus on consumers, their needs and provision in adoption of strategic as well as tactical and operative decisions, also the ongoing transformations of society. Transformations in this case express the notion of a qualitative change pertaining to major alterations in the various spheres of public life and anticipating the trends of future development. All this covers a different approach to quality of life and makes quality a way of life, which is increasingly gaining ground. As a result, success of contemporary or-

ganizations largely depends on how they are able to understand and meet the needs of existing and potential customers, and requirements of partners as well, on whether they are able to assess their expectations for the future.

According to data from Lithuanian Standardization Department now almost nine hundred Lithuanian organizations have certificates testifying compliance of their quality management system with the requirements of ISO 9001 standard. Most of the companies invested from 50 000 to 100 000 Litas for the development and operation of standardized quality management systems (Bertasius, 2007). However, the findings of foreign scientists assume that part of standardized quality management systems in organizations in Lithuania are not sufficiently mature, and therefore they are unable to effectively make use of the facilities that quality management system offers. Certified quality management systems are becoming the attribute for formal administration. The formal implementation and operation of quality management systems negatively affects not only organizations, but also whole country's economy. Such systems generally operate as an attribute of organization's image, and actually do not work or proceed not as planned.

It should be noted that the joint participation of organization's staff during the implementation of quality management systems is a crucial component of total quality management. Organization's success is based on the work of all levels of personnel, therefore their involvement in joint activities enables the use of workers' ability to benefit the organization. Human needs, psychological climate, corporate culture is a powerful force affecting labour productivity. Motivation enables to understand the reasons of human behaviour, to provide effective management actions, regulate, and drive organization's behaviour in the direction that both the organization and the employees could realize their goals. The organizations that already introduced quality management systems are aware that personnel management plays a key role in the achievement of total quality principles.

*Novelty of the research.* Studies by Lithuanian and foreign scientists (Kaziliunas, 2007; Gagilai-

te and Boguslauskas, 2006; Susniene, 2005; Vanagas, 2004; Seniunaite, 2004; Juran and Gryna, 1999; Mirams and McElheron, 1995; Flynn et.al., 1994, and others) involve a broad analysis of the nature, development, principles, future trends of total quality management, there are many case studies on implementation and adaptation of quality management systems, as well as analysis of models of how to adapt standards to a particular organization. However, the number of works that analyse the considerations for development of quality management system, its interactions with other areas of activity, is limited. This paper will at least partially overcome this deficiency.

**Research subject:** relationship between an effective operation of quality management system and personnel management.

**Research aim:** to assess the results of the implementation of quality management system in the context of personnel management.

**Research objectives:** to discuss the concept of quality multiplicity, to analyze quality management features, to identify the changes in personnel management after the implementation of quality management systems.

**Research methods:** analysis of scientific literature and questionnaire survey. The quantitative and qualitative analysis of data was applied.

## The concept of quality and quality management

The importance of quality management increased with expansion of mass production. More and more companies that produced products for the same purpose were established, and this required improving the quality of products, reducing the costs, and increasing the productivity to remain competitive in the market. For these reasons, as Dikavicius and Stoskus states, it has become necessary to find methods and means to ensure that products entering the market are of high quality and to develop a management system for new work organization principles (Dikavicius, Stoskus, 2003).

The conceptual analysis revealed that quality of an object (product, service, process) is its feature. Quality as a feature can be assessed in the light of stakeholder interests. The very concept – quality – in many Western European languages (French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and German) comes from the Latin *vualis*, meaning what or from what (a product) is made (Ruzevicius, 2006).

Quality is a broad and multi-faceted concept that has dozens of definitions, therefore scientific publications provide an infinite number of definitions of this term. It is argued that quality is the symbol of

perfection, which is based on a systematic approach, including leadership, strategic planning, consumer and market objectives, information and analysis, employee satisfaction and performance results (Dedhia, 2004). According to McQuaig, quality is based on user experience: it is not enough just to produce a product, it must be submitted on time, in place and at the fitting price (McQuaig, 2004). According to Young, the best products are not those that comply with the requirements and satisfy the needs of users, but those that meet consumer expectations (Young, 2004). Describing the quality Juran emphasizes product compliance with consumer needs, the perception of quality (Juran et. al, 1999), while Jurkauskas identifies such factors: absence of defects, beauty, refractivity, feasibility, etc. (Jurkauskas, 2006). Referencing to Dikavicius and Stoskus (2003), quality can be defined as a set of characteristics, fully satisfying the individual needs of each user in a given stage of society development (Dikavicius, Stoskus, 2003).

On the basis of analysis of scientific literature it can be concluded that quality is perceived as permanent development in time, i.e. quality is changing phenomenon. With the development of the product, consumers' needs are growing as well, giving various quality concepts. Quality is a characteristic that meets the user needs in given period of time, or maybe surpasses some of their expectations due to their incomplete knowledge. Definition of quality is more philosophical, since the quality is linked to the human desire to reach the peak of perfection.

Quality management is defined as the management philosophy and methods that help an organization to evolve, that ask to take into account all personnel while implementing innovations, which force an organization to seek high level of user's satisfaction by improving product or service quality and reducing costs (Vanagas, 2004). Stancikas and Bagdoniene provide such definition of total quality: it is management concept and methods that allow an organization: to establish a mechanism for continuous improvement, which includes the improvements of work of particular units and of each worker, also operation processes; product and service quality development, cost reduction, customer satisfaction (Stancikas, Bagdoniene, 2004).

According to ISO 8402 (1994), quality management can be defined as follows: all activities of the joint management function that determine the quality policy, objectives and responsibilities, and their implementation by means such as quality planning, quality control, quality assurance and quality improvement within the quality system.

The concept of total quality management, according to Deming, concerns the creation of an organizational system that fosters cooperation and lear-

ning for facilitating the implementation of process management practices, which, in turn, leads to continuous improvement of processes, products, and services as well as to employee fulfilment, both of which are critical to customer satisfaction, and ultimately, to survival of the company (Deming, 1994). Therefore, total quality is a description of the culture, attitude and organization of a company that strives to provide customers with products and services that satisfy their needs. The culture requires quality in all aspects of company's operations, with processes being done right the first time and defects and waste having been eradicated from operations. Total quality management is a method by which management and employees can become involved in the continuous improvement of the production of goods and services. It is a combination of quality and management tools aimed at improving business and reducing losses due to wasteful practices.

The importance of modern quality management theory and methodology for science and business is confirmed by their effects on competitiveness and the fact that in 2003 the Network of European Universities that prepares quality management masters, was established. The European Universities Network for Total Quality Management (EUN.TQM) has been created to give European students and professors (and society in general) opportunities to explore the different aspects of the principles and methodologies of total quality management and business excellence in the context of the richness and diversity of European culture. The mission of the network is to develop and implement education and research programmes that meet world-class standards in order to create value for: 1) all European private and public organisations of all sizes; 2) participating universities; 3) participating students; 4) the European Foundation for Quality Management; 5) the European Union.

Assessing the quality management systems at the level of the organization, it must be emphasized that the certificate is only the beginning of high quality; it shows that from the date of certificate issue the organization is working systematically to improve operations and product quality. All organization leaders and employees must constantly take care of production quality – it must become an integral part of their activity; everyone, from worker to manager – is responsible for quality policy. The workers must realize that success of work is based on quality assurance, continuous work process improvement and constant personal development.

In order to realize the goals of quality management, the professionals of quality management propose to break down management process into elements. Flynn proposed a model under which the organiza-

tion's management must create such an environment where all quality management activities are promoted and evaluated (Flynn et. al., 1994). These activities are related to quality information system, process management, product design, staff management, supplier and customer involvement. Mann suggested the division of quality management into ten elements: supplier's management, process management and improvement, internal user's management, measurement and reporting, leadership, quality system, participation, recognition and promotion, education and training, fulfilment of external users needs. Meanwhile Kaziliunas proposes six factors of organization's internal environment (i.e. leadership, people, policies and strategies, processes, suppliers and customers) to be divided into eleven primary elements of quality management: leadership, supplier quality management, vision and planning, assessment, process management and improvement, design, development of quality management system, employee involvement, recognition and promotion, competence and training, orientation to the user (Kaziliunas, 2007).

Although the quality management elements may vary depending on the organization's activities and specifics, but in practice the essence of eleven basic elements of quality remains the same. The application of each quality management element has its own particularity as well as certain approaches.

### **Personnel management in the context of implementation of quality management systems**

Modern personnel management, in contrast to traditional one, mainly focuses on market and consumer. A user rather than the organization's management becomes a key assessor of employee performance. Meanwhile quality management emphasizes the joint participation to address the quality issues, namely the participation of all employees is one of the basic principles of total quality objectives and the necessary prerequisite for quality management – the effective management of personnel. Employee orientation in the context of total quality management is understood as personnel policy to achieve better quality. It includes personnel development, job structuring, training, active participation in all processes taking place at the company, motivation, etc. (Duttine, Ginevicius, 2003).

Each organization must be able to identify where it is going to be in the future and how it will manage changes in order to come into desired situation. It is clear that organizational changes cannot be separated from the organization strategy, as well as management of organizational change requires particular managerial skills. Graetz argues that in the environment



of increasing globalization and deregulation, acceleration of technological innovation, change of social and demographic trends, the undisputed task for today's management is appropriate guidance of organizational changes (Burnes, 2004). According to some authors, organizations often do not presume need for change, therefore organizational changes can be characterized as reactive, inconsistent, as processes lead by organizational crisis (Nelson, 2003). On the other hand, although the successful change management is considered to be a need to remain competitive and ensure the success of the activities, some authors indicate that nearly 70 percent of the initiated change programs fail (Balogun, Hailey, 2004).

Research into Lithuanian organizations suggests that organizations' approach to organizational change is positive, i.e. they do not avoid change and have ability to change, therefore they rather quickly put in place new policies and methods. The assessment of external and internal factors allowed identifying the elements that have the greatest impact: market position, emergence of new products and technologies, need to increase productivity and efficiency (Korsakiene, 2006). It should be noted that the factors such as leadership, communication and motivation affecting the success of organizational changes are interdependent and complement each other. It presupposes the reduction of workers' resistance, minimization of uncertainty and ensures staff involvement in organizational change process.

The study "Developing Business Leaders for 2010" identified the key management tasks in meeting future business challenges and pointed out the biggest dangers that await us in the future (Barrett, Gates, 2002). The four main future leader's roles were indicated: strategist, change manager, relationship / communication developer / maintainer, talent educator. For all these roles to be successfully performed the essential human or even front-runner features are crucial: in order to pass the strategy and inspire people to implement it, a manager must be a leader. In order to successfully manage continuous change, a manager must be able to encourage people to take the risk and liability.

Personnel management specialists, direct managers must restructure the approach that is based on care and control, into cooperative relationship based on commonality of objectives of the employee, their enabling (Kaziliunas, 2007). Cooperative relationship within the company is resulting from cooperative management style. Then the workers are treated as partners. A leader understands that he cannot achieve company goals by himself, he knows that a considerable part of the success depends on employees, therefore he must be ready to delegate some of his work,

seek for collaborative mutual assistance, but not punishment. This management style activates employees, promotes opening their potential, realizing growth ambitions. One of the main features of this management style is that staff is involved in management; therefore the cooperative management style is most suited to modern conditions (Siupienyte, 2001).

The idea of joint participation in quality management is understood as workers' involvement in continuous quality improvement activities, by giving them more authority and the possibility to make decisions (Pociute, 2002). Delegation of authority is closely linked to the principle of decentralization. Functions are transferred to departments, giving autonomy does not reduce the responsibility of manager, as managers must properly delegate tasks, select staff, and assist. As a result, a manager never fully transfers responsibility, he is always responsible for proper execution of tasks, as well as for personnel mistakes.

Joint participation in quality management is closely linked with employee responsibility. A responsible worker performs more tasks in better quality in order to fulfil the objectives of organization or to improve product. On the other hand, the confidence in workers obligates them; they want to justify the trust of leaders. The confidence in manager is also of particular importance.

According to Stancikas and Bagdoniene, the idea of joint participation promotes such a system that widely involves both lower- and middle-level as well as top-level workers and managers (Stancikas, Bagdoniene, 2004). This needs the responsibility for the quality to be given to both employees and managers. Employee participation in company activities impacts workers' incentives, increases their value and importance, forms loyalty.

Thus, the principle of joint participation is implemented by the analysis of decision-making groups' needs, sharing responsibilities, making multi-purpose-work teams, developing group activity skills. No organization can function without staff interactions and operation results are directly dependent on the quality of these interactions. Qualified personnel and proper organization of work is a key factor for long-term growth and development. This is confirmed not only by global experience in personnel management, but also by increased interest in effect of human capital on company's growth in Lithuania.

### **Interactions between quality management system and personnel management**

In order to clarify interactions between quality management system and personnel management, a study of Siauliai district companies that have intro-

duced quality management systems was carried out. The aim was to clarify the attitude of business managers, quality managers, mid-level managers and ordinary workers towards quality management system and its links with personnel management. According to Lithuanian Department of Statistics, 65 companies in Siauliai district have certified quality management systems, and they represent about 8% of Lithuanian companies. The study was based on survey (questionnaire and interview) of top-level managers and mid-level managers, specialists and workers. The questionnaires were answered by employees of 36 enterprises. The distribution of companies according to represented sector is such: industry sector 19%, services – 56%, trade – 25%.

The first stage of investigation involved 176 respondents: mid-level managers (32), specialists (80) and workers (64). It was important to analyze personnel's opinion with regard to their position, because rank can influence the approach to company's quality policy. While only companies that had certified quality management systems were researched, not all staff was aware of operation of such a system: all mid-level managers were aware, 80% of specialists knew about systems and about 70% of workers do not have this information. This indicates that some companies have not fully implemented the principle of joint participation.

The establishment of quality management systems requires documenting everything what is performed and to perform in a way how it is specified in the documentation. Therefore, it is very important that the procedures provided would be understandable and acceptable to workers, and this can be achieved when employees are involved in arrangement of procedures. The answers to the question "Are main company processes documented?" distributed in such a manner: about 47% of workers and 26% of specialists responded that documents do not exist or they do not know about them, while all mid-level managers knew about documentation.

The state of quality management systems is controlled by internal quality audits. The audit provides information about the state of management system, its purpose – the continuing review and evaluation process, by checking whether the system works as it should, clarifying where it can be improved or adjusted in order to avoid problems. Unfortunately, about internal audit nothing was known for about 44% of workers, 24% of specialists, but all mid-level managers were aware of it. At the same time, all mid-level managers pointed out that quality management system has a direct impact on their work, and the similar opinion was expressed by specialists (79%), while 40.6% of workers were unaware. Respondents who

indicated that quality management system has little influence or direct effect on their work, may be regarded as people who have no touch with the system, have little interest in company processes.

The quality system must provide preventive action to pre-empt problems. When deviances are identified, the reasons are analyzed, planned actions are reviewed. After structuring answers to the question "Are the causes of departure from requirements assessed?", it was found that almost 6% of workers and 4% of specialists said that this process at the company does not work. About a half of the workers responsible for product quality were not aware about this. To assess the state of quality control, it was asked "Is the quality of products under control?". The survey revealed that even 40% of respondents indicated that they do not know whether the company implements production quality control. Responses distributed differently: part of unaware mid-level managers was 3.1%, specialists – 27.5%, workers – 42.2%. What is striking is relatively high number of unaware specialists.

The study results were summarized by respondent's answers to the question of what they think about operation of quality management system at their company. The results surprised as it was found that in 75% of enterprises quality management systems operate superficially, 6% of enterprises give very little attention to quality management systems and 19.4% of companies have perfectly operating systems. The results confirm earlier findings that organizations not always manage to exploit effectively the opportunities offered by the ISO standards and achieve certification goals.

The second stage of investigation was designed to assess the quality of business processes and products offered. The research has shown that many companies face permanent problems due to poor product quality. This was demonstrated by answers of all personnel groups, in particular of mid-level managers (see Table 1). The question arises of what is the situation at the enterprises that have not introduced quality management systems?

Quite often employees have no opportunities to learn whether they have worked well, and eventually begin to ignore the quality of work. The study received a paradoxical situation – the largest part of workers think that they know the requirements for quality improvements which are arranged by executives, while mid-level managers believe that more than 80% of employees are unaware about requirements for quality improvements (see Table 1). The situation can be interpreted as a different perception of quality and quality improvements.

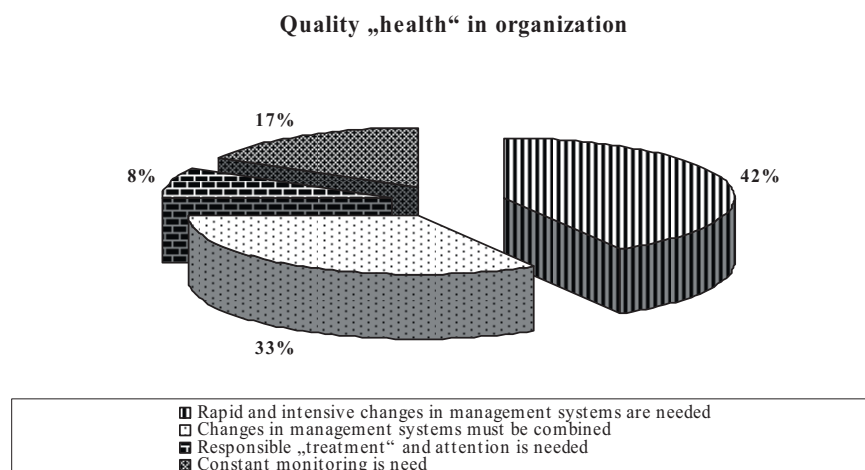
## Estimations of quality “health” in organization

Criteria	It is entirely characteristic to us	Something is characteristic to us	This is uncharacteristic to us
<b>We are constantly noticing the signs of departures from requirements (our products are returned, do not meet standards, etc.)</b>			
Mid-level managers	81.2	3.1	15.6
Specialists	68.8	10.0	21.3
Workers	56.3	3.1	4.06
<b>Our staff do not know what executives want in respect of quality improvements</b>			
Mid-level managers	81.3	0	18.8
Specialists	53.8	6.3	40.0
Workers	36.9	5.2	59.4
<b>Executives do not know what the cost of the departures is</b>			
Mid-level managers	84.4	6.3	9.4
Specialists	53.8	15.0	31.2
Workers	32.8	14.6	53.1
<b>Executives think that quality does not depend on supervision</b>			
Mid-level managers	81.3	0	18.8
Specialists	31.3	15.0	33.8
Workers	35.9	8.3	56.3

A similar situation is found when analysing financial problems related to inappropriate quality. Workers tend to think that executives are aware of the costs of departures, while mid-level managers state that in most cases executives does not know (see Table 1). Analyses of the links between quality and executive supervision indicated that mid-level managers suppose that quality does not depend on executi-

ve supervision much, when the part of workers with such viewpoint was much smaller (see Table 1).

The research results indicate that more than 40 percent of the surveyed companies that have implemented quality management systems must review business processes and take urgent measures to improve product quality (see Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** Quality “health” in organization

This is very important in the current market situation, as contemporary consumers try to buy the same products at a lower price, i.e. wish to receive the same quality cheaper. During economic recession a consumer turns away from the products that have less value.

At the third stage of the research top-level executives were interviewed. The executives pointed out

that primary motives to implement quality management systems were better options for entering into business agreements with foreign partners, increase of company’s goodwill and value.

Assessing the significance of particular elements in quality management system, all executives indicated that the process of quality improvement is infinite and it contributes to the long-term objectives,

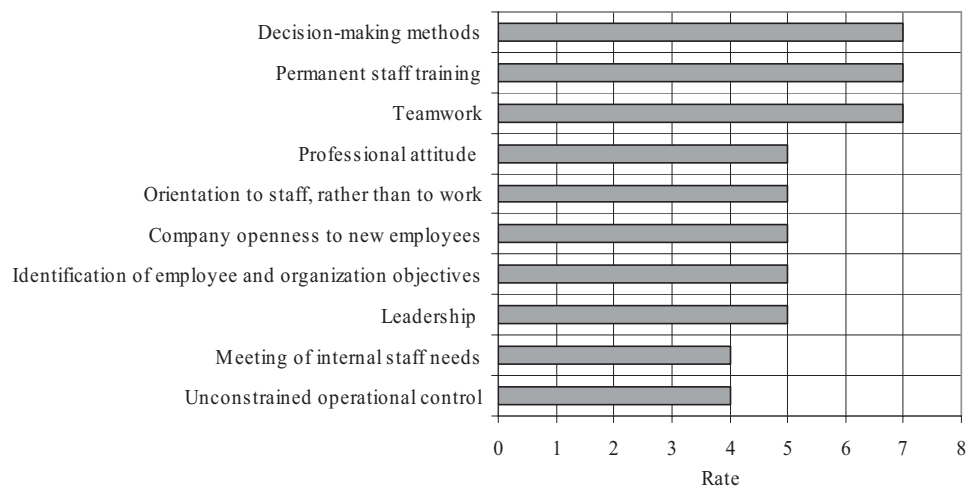
it is very important to treat user as an integral part of an enterprise, to try to achieve one hundred percent quality, which is understood as correctly carried out any operation or task.

In leaders' opinion, the success of quality management system is ensured by workers' acceptance of quality policy and quality objectives. Other important factors are investment in quality management and improvement, knowledge and abilities of mid-level managers to motivate employees, competences of specialists and workers. The importance of investment in quality management and improvement was stressed by 29% of executives, staff support – by 42%, consultants work – by 29%.

Top-level executives noted that quality management systems directly affect personnel management methods (affirmed by 71% of respondents), because the effective functioning of the system is determined by staff perceptions about relevance of their activities and their contribution to the common goals of the company. In order to help employees to understand relevance of their activities, top-level executives must ensure that responsibility and authority are clearly defined and distributed to personnel. Responsibilities and authorities are mostly defined by personnel work profiles, instructions, orders regulating responsibilities, etc.

All top-level executives stated that the successful implementation of quality management system is closely related with organizational culture, and leader's actions have a significant impact on organizational culture as they set limits for workers' "freedom", provide rules which determine motivation and promotion, etc. Operational efficiency increases due to changes in corporate management, formulation of such a culture where people are regularly encouraged to develop skills and confidence. Leaders noted that personnel in companies that have introduced quality management systems differ from others as they are aware of company's strategy, external and internal problems, activities, successes and failures, and they are always kept informed.

Generalized study results showed that top-level executives identified ten personnel management elements that changed with introduction of quality management systems (see Figure 2). According to top-level executives, when the company introduces quality management system the main function of leaders is delegation of tasks that personnel carry out themselves. Therefore, top management must ensure that employees are aware of the appropriateness of the activity; the responsibility and authority are clearly defined and distributed to staff.



**Figure 2.** Basic factors of quality management system that influence changes in personnel management

Summarizing the results obtained, it can be argued that the introduction of quality management system directly affects personnel management methods as an effective management and supervision of quality system depends on personnel perceptions of their suitability to company activities, their contribution to joint goals of the company. Top-level corporate executives confirmed the statement that management of staff plays a key role in improving business processes and product quality. Business strategy and objectives has a very close relationship with personnel management methods.

## Conclusions

Quality management is based on management philosophy which helps to strive for continuous perfection, which involves all employees into improvement activities, and enables to better meet the needs of consumers, improve quality and reduce operating costs.

Quality management systems are successfully adopted in many different organizations. They represent not only quality management, but also the framework of the overall management system as use of qu-



ality management methods in various areas of business management is one of the basic assumptions enhancing mutual trust between organizations.

Quality management system directly affects organizational structure, personnel responsibilities, authorization and organization of work. Dynamism, need for new knowledge, innovativeness is characteristic for quality and personnel management, and this allows continuous interaction between them in organization.

Quality management system is focused on objectives formulated in the light of needs of not only customers (external users), but also of employees (internal users), as principles of quality management influences personnel management through initiated procedures, strategic, tactical, operational planning, i.e. quality management system has an impact on all elements of personnel management.

It was found that only in 19% of companies quality management systems operate perfectly, while other companies give very little attention to quality system or systems operate superficially. The results confirmed previous studies that companies do not cover all options granted by ISO standards, the implementation of quality management system in partial, associated with the acquisition of the certificate.

It was determined that regard to product quality is insufficient in more than 40% of enterprises, therefore mid-level managers and quality managers need to review business processes, and take intensive measures to improve product quality.

According to top-level executives, success of a quality management system is ensured by personnel's acceptance of quality policy and quality objectives, as well as identification of quality aspects. No less important factors are investment in quality management and improvement, the knowledge of mid-level managers and their ability to motivate employees, equally staff competence.

The research confirmed that the interaction between quality management system and personnel management is very close, as an effective operation and maintenance of quality system is directly dependent on the perceptions of personnel. Success is achieved when the staff is aware of how important are their activities, their contribution to the joint company goals.

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## Kokybės vadybos sistemų diegimas: pokyčiai personalo vadyboje

Santrauka

Nuolat kintanti Lietuvos įmonių veiklos aplinka, ypač smulkaus verslo perspektyvų požiūriu, sąlygoja būtinybę sparčiau perimti pažangią pasaulio patirtį, pirmiausia, keičiant požiūrį į valdymą. ES Kokybės programoje kokybė laikoma pagrindiniu Europos organizacijų veiklos strateginiu instrumentu, o šalių ir organizacijų kokybės politikai suteikiama strateginė reikšmė. Kokybės svarbą taip pat lemia vartotojo pozicijos stiprėjimas, organizacijų orientacija į vartotojus, jų poreikių, nuostatų įvertinimas priimant tiek strategiškai svarbius, tiek taktinius ir operatyvinius sprendimus, taip pat visuomenėje vykstančios transformacijos.

Kokybės vadybos sistemas įdiegusios organizacijos supranta, kad personalo vadyba vaidina pagrindinį vaidmenį siekiant įgyvendinti visuotinės kokybės principus. Organizacijos strategiją ir personalo valdymo principus sieja itin glaudus ryšys. Praktikoje diegiant moderniausias vadybos sistemas, būtina įvertinti organizacinės elgsenos aspektus, verslo specifiką ir struktūrą, personalo valdymo būdus ir metodus.

Lietuvos standartizacijos departamento duomenimis, šiuo metu beveik 900 Lietuvos organizacijų turi sertifikatus, liudijančius jų kokybės vadybos sistemos atitiktį ISO 9001 standarto reikalavimams, tačiau užsienyje atliktų tyrimų išvados perša prielaidą, kad dalis Lietuvos organizacijų turi nepakankamą standartizuotą kokybės vadybos sistemų brandumo lygį, todėl negeba efektyviai išnaudoti kokybės vadybos sistemų teikiamų galimybių. Sertifikuotos kokybės vadybos sistemos tampa formalus administravimo atributu.

Straipsnio *tikslas* – įvertinti kokybės vadybos sistemos diegimo rezultatus personalo valdymo kontekste.

Kokybės vadybos reikšmė išaugo sparčiai plečiantis masinei gamybai. Steigėsi vis daugiau įmonių, gaminančių tos pačios paskirties gaminius, o tai lėmė poreikį gerinti gaminių kokybę, mažinti savikainą, didinti gamybos našumą, kad būtų galima konkuruoti. Atsirado būtinybė ieškoti metodų, užtikrinančių gaminių, patenkančių į rinką, kokybę.

Kokybė yra plati ir įvairiapusė sąvoka, turinti dešimtis apibrėžimų, moksliniuose leidiniuose pateikiama daug analizuojamo termino formuluočių. Kokybė daugumai reiškia tobulumą, ji taip pat grindžiama vartotojo patyrimu, t. y. reikia ne tik pagaminti kokybišką produktą, jis turi būti pateikiamas laiku, vietoje ir už tinkamą kainą. Produkto kokybė suprantama ir kaip jo savybių visuma, atitinkanti vartotojų reikalavimus, kurie nustatyti standartuose Young nuomone (2004), geriausi produktai ne tie, kurie atitinka reikalavimus ir tenkina vartotojų poreikius, bet tie, kurie pateisina vartotojų lūkesčius. Tarptautiniame kokybės vadybos standarte ISO 9001:2001 kokybė apibūdinama kaip turimųjų charakteristikų visumos atitikties reikalavimams laipsnis.

Apibendrinant galima teigti, kad kokybė suvokiama kaip nuolatinis tobulėjimas laike, t. y. kokybė yra kin-

tantis reiškinys. Tobulėjant produktui, auga ir vartotojų poreikiai, o tai lemia ir kokybės sampratos kitimą. Kokybė yra charakteristika, kuri duotu laiko periodu santykinai tenkina vartotojo poreikius, galbūt ir pralenkia kai kurių jų lūkesčius dėl jų nevisiško žinojimo. Kokybės apibrėžimas yra daugiau filosofinis, nes kokybė yra susieta su žmogaus noru pasiekti tobulumo viršūnę.

Visuotinės kokybės vadybos koncepcija – į kokybę orientuotas organizacijos vadovavimo būdas, pagrįstas visų jos narių dalyvavimu, siekiant ilgalaikės sėkmės tenkinant klientą ir naudosis visiems organizacijos nariams bei visuomenei. Visuotinės kokybės požiūris apima motyvaciją ir teigiamo organizacijos klimato bei kultūros suformavimą labiau nei praktinius ir tiksliai apibrėžiamus mechanizmus. Šiuolaikinės kokybės vadybos teorijos ir metodologijos svarbą mokslui ir verslui patvirtina jos įtaka organizacijų konkurencingumui. Be to, 2003 m. įkurtas Europos universitetų, rengiančių kokybės vadybos magistrus, tinklas EUN.

Vertinant kokybės vadybos sistemas organizacijos lygmeniu, svarbu, kad sertifikatas yra tik pradžia į tikrąją kokybę. Jis liudija, kad nuo sertifikato įgijimo dienos organizacija sistemingai dirba tobulindama savo veiklą ir gerindama produkcijos kokybę. Visi organizacijos darbuotojai ir vadovai turi nuolat rūpintis produkcijos kokybe, tai turi tapti neatsiejama veiklos dalimi. Kiekvienas dirbantysis tampa atsakingas už kokybės politikos įgyvendinimą. Organizacijos darbuotojai privalo žinoti, kad sėkmingos veiklos pagrindas yra atliekamų darbų kokybės užtikrinimas, nuolatinis darbo proceso gerinimas ir tobulėjimas.

Kokybės vadyba akcentuoja visuotinį organizacijos darbuotojų dalyvavimą sprendžiant veiklos kokybės gerinimo klausimus, t. y. visų darbuotojų dalyvavimas yra vienas pagrindinių principų siekiant visuotinės kokybės tikslų, nes tikslingo kokybės valdymo būtina sąlyga – efektyvus personalo valdymas. Darbuotojų orientavimas visuotinės kokybės vadybos plotmėje suprantamas kaip personalo politika siekti geresnės kokybės. Ji apima personalo ugdymą, darbo vietų struktūrizavimą, mokymąsi, aktyvų dalyvavimą visuose įmonėje vykstančiuose procesuose, motyvaciją ir t. t.

Lietuvos organizacijų tyrimo rezultatai leidžia teigti, kad organizacijų požiūris į pokyčius yra pozityvus, t. y. jos nevengia ir turi galimybes keistis, todėl gana greitai imasi naujų veiklos kryptių ir būdų. Vertinant išorinių ir vidinių veiksmų įtaką, didžiausią poveikį darantys veiksniai: padėtis rinkoje, naujų produktų ir technologijų atsiradimas, poreikis didinti darbo procesų našumą ir efektyvumą (Korsakienė, 2006). Tyrimo „Developing Business Leaders for 2010“ metu buvo išskirti svarbiausi vadovų uždaviniai pasitinkant ateities verslo iššūkius ir numatyti didžiausi pavojai, kurie laukia ateityje. Keturi pagrindiniai ateities vadovų vaidmenys: strategas, pokyčių vadovas, santykių / bendravimo kūrėjas / palaikytojas, talentų ugdytojas (Barrett, Beeson, 2002). Siekiant, kad visi vaid-

menys būtų sėkmingai realizuoti, labai svarbios žmogiškosios, netgi lyderio savybės: norėdamas perduoti strategiją ir gebėti įkvėpti žmones ją įgyvendinti, vadovas turi būti lyderis. Vadovas supranta, kad jis vienas negali pasiekti įmonės tikslų. Jis žino, kad nemažai sėkmės priklauso nuo darbuotojų, todėl jis pasiruošęs deleguoti dalį savo darbų, stengiasi bendradarbiavimą grįsti tarpusavio pagalba, o ne bausmėmis.

Visuotinio dalyvavimo idėja kokybės vadyboje pateikiama kaip darbuotojų įtraukimas į veiklos kokybės nuolatinių gerinimą suteikiant jiems daugiau įgaliojimų ir įtraukiant į sprendimų priėmimą (Pociūtė, 2002). Įgaliojimų perdavimas (delegavimas ar kompetencijos paskirstymas) darbuotojams glaudžiai susijęs su decentralizavimo principu. Dalis funkcijų perduodamos padaliniams, suteikiamas tam tikras savarankiškumas, teisė spręsti klausimus, kuriems jie turi deramą kompetenciją, tačiau užduočių perdavimas nemažina vadovo atsakomybės lygio. Vadovas privalo teisingai deleguoti uždavinius, parinkti reikiamus darbuotojus, padėti jiems, todėl vadovas niekada iki galo nedeleguoja atsakomybės, o darbuotojų įtraukimo ir įgaliojimo procese ypač svarbi kiekvieno darbuotojo atsakomybė už atliekamą darbą.

Empirinio tyrimo *tikslas* – išsiaiškinti Šiaulių apskrities įmonių vadovų, kokybės vadybininkų, vidurinio lygio vadovų ir darbuotojų požiūrį į įmonėse veikiančių kokybės vadybos sistemų sąveiką su personalo valdymu. Taip pat nustatyti, ar diegiamos kokybės vadybos sistemos sąlygoja personalo valdymo pokyčius, t. y. įvertinti kokybės vadybos sistemos diegimo rezultatus personalo valdymo pokyčių kontekste. Nustatyta, kad Šiaulių apskrities įmonėse kokybės vadybos sistemos diegimui lemiamos

įtakos turėjo noras gerinti produkcijos / paslaugų kokybę ir siekis neprarasti konkurencingumo. Be šių pagrindinių motyvų darbuotojai įvardijo ir kitas priežastis: geresnis vartotojų (išorinių ir vidinių) poreikių tenkinimas, ketinimai sudaryti sandorius su užsienio kompanijomis, įmonės prestižas, kokybės tikslų įvardijimas strateginiuose įmonių dokumentuose. Nustatyta, kad 75 proc. organizacijų kokybės vadybos sistemos įmonėse įdiegtos paviršutiniškai, apie 6 proc. įmonių kokybės vadybos sistemoms neskiria pakankamai dėmesio ir tik 19 proc. įmonių kokybės vadybos sistemos įdiegtos tinkamai ir veikia efektyviai. Nustatyta, kad daugiau nei 40 proc. Šiaulių apskrities įmonių vadovams ir kokybės vadybininkams būtina peržiūrėti veiklos procesus ir imtis intensyvių priemonių produktų kokybei gerinti.

Atlikus Šiaulių apskrities įmonių aukščiausio lygio vadovų apklausą, nustatyta, kad sėkmingą kokybės vadybos sistemos veikimą užtikrina darbuotojų pritarimas įmonės kokybės politikai ir kokybės tikslams, taip pat kokybės aspektų identifikavimas. Ne mažiau svarbūs ir šie veiksniai: investicijų į kokybės valdymą ir gerinimą apimtis, vidurinio lygio vadovų žinios ir gebėjimas motyvuoti darbuotojus, darbuotojų kompetencija. Aukščiausio lygio vadovai nurodė, kad kokybės vadybos sistemos ir personalo valdymo sąveika yra labai glaudi, nes efektyvus kokybės vadybos sistemos valdymas ir priežiūra tiesiogiai priklauso nuo personalo suvokimo apie jų veiklos įmonėje tinkamumą ir jų indėlį siekiant bendrų įmonės tikslų.

**Pagrindiniai žodžiai:** kokybės valdymo sistemos, personalo valdymas, personalo politika, organizacijos strategija.