

Lesson 12

The Implementation Plan

	J	F	M	A	M
QMB	<u>Δ</u>	<u>∇</u>			
Education	<u>Δ</u>		<u>∇</u>		
Culture		<u>Δ</u>	<u>∇</u>		
Processes			<u>Δ</u>		
Commitment				<u>Δ</u>	

Introduction

The best way to implement TQL in a command is to start with a plan. The DoN has delegated authority to commands for initiating improvements in processes important to mission effectiveness. Because this is a long-term endeavor practiced by all members of the command, it requires a written plan for implementation. There is no “cookbook” approach to implementing TQL. Though a typical TQL implementation plan includes many universal quality actions, each plan must be tailored to a particular command. This planning activity is critical to providing each command’s unique specific actions to establish a system of quality and to provide **continuous focus** to its quality efforts. Although there are specific activities that each command needs to undertake, such as TQL education and training, the beginning point is influenced by where the command is in the TQL journey.

This lesson describes the importance of an implementation plan, the roles related to its development and related considerations. Additionally this lesson includes an implementation planning exercise.

Objectives

Upon completion of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Describe reasons organizations develop implementation plans.**
- **Describe the relationship of implementation plans to the more comprehensive Strategic Plan.**
- **Describe the roles of various organizational members in creating an implementation plan.**
- **Demonstrate the ability to assist the ESC in developing an implementation plan.**

“This blueprint is important for what it encourages and also for what it discourages”

Scholtes/Hacquebord

A TQL Implementation Plan

“Plan your work and work your plan” (anonymous)

The basic objective of phase one TQL activities is to establish the practice of command-wide process management to enable the improvement of mission performance. The TQL coordinator will assist the top leader and the ESC in developing a plan for establishment of the critical mass and institutionalization of process management. The plan should outline the sequence of activities, specifying who does what and in what time frame. The implementation plan should be an ESC team effort, **accomplished only after they have received sufficient education and training in TQL and have knowledge of how process management efforts will affect the command.** In the article “*A Practical Approach to Quality*” (provided as a recommended reading) authors Scholtes and Hacquebord state the following as the 3rd of 12 strategies:

Strategy #3: Top managers engage in quality transformation planning starting with a two-year blueprint for preparation, start-up, and early expansion.

This blueprint is important for what it encourages and also for what it discourages.

- * It encourages a specific strategy. Thus, it discourages a “haphazard, play-it-by-the-ear” approach to implementing quality.
- * It encourages that the planning be done by top management. Thus, it discourages delegation of planning efforts downward in the organization.
- * It encourages looking ahead for two years. Thus, it discourages short-term commitment and a search for instant solutions. Quality is not a “program”, a temporary diversion. It must be a way of life.
- * It encourages targeted efforts. Thus, it discourages an “everywhere at once approach”.

As Scholtes and Hacquebord go on to say, “The transformation to a quality organization is a complex, difficult undertaking. ***The way to go about it is not in the manner of a bulldozer.*** The better way to go is in the manner of a boll weevil; patiently and persistently, inch by inch, and row by row. Convert one process after another, eliminate one barrier after another, constant improvement and continuous education. Develop a pace of change that doesn’t overextend your ability to coordinate and support, and incorporate it in your plan.

A good TQL implementation plan consists of a list of activities and timelines that relate to establishing the critical mass and beginning process management. Timelines show the start and completion of these activities, as well as their sequence. The timing and

sequence of many activities overlap. Some may start and end concurrently while others are ongoing.

The development of an implementation plan is taught in the SLS course. Training conducted in the SLS course complements the training here. ***The important skill taught here is the development of the plan in a group environment.***

Some specific activities include: (This is **not** a complete list of all that must be in an implementation plan)

- Forming and chairing the ESC.
- Selecting and training the TQL coordinator.
- Establishing continuing education in TQL.
- Identifying and prioritizing major customers and their requirements.
- Identifying and prioritizing significant processes and process owners.
- Chartering and training Quality Improvement teams.
- Identifying and removing impediments to process improvement.
- Planning for the reinvestment of resources.

Benefits of an Implementation Plan

Process management and improvement lead to changes in how the work gets done. An implementation plan identifies the sequence that will be used to make those changes, and the people that will be involved in the effort.

A well conceived plan helps a command allocate resources in a more appropriate and efficient way, reduce waste and duplication of effort/resources, and avoid the “false starts” typical of unplanned programs. A plan demonstrates leadership commitment and helps the top leader and other critical members understand their role in leading and following through on process improvement efforts throughout the command. Leadership commitment is often deepened by participation in the planning process.

- A two-year plan helps the organization overcome the short term focus prevalent in other approaches. *Although, the two year timeframe is not a mandate, it is recommended by Scholtes and others.*

<p>Note: SLS includes an exercise in which participants develop a one-year implementation plan. Use the timeframe that works best for your command.</p>
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- A plan with milestones allows for the assessment of progress towards the full implementation of TQL

Once written, an implementation plan can function as a guide to the activities of the ESC, and anchor its activities. The Implementation plan provides focus to the activities of the TQL coordinator in managing the ESC team process.

The implementation plan begins the establishment of the critical mass and sets in motion the organization-wide practice of process management. Additionally, an implementation plan will assist the organization to;

- Become **adaptive** by establishing structures necessary to respond to rapid change
- Begin the process of **organizational learning** that will strengthen decisions made for near and long term change
- Gain an **external focus**.
- Begin to **understand, at a greater level of detail**, how the work (products and services) of the organization is accomplished.
- **Reshape** leadership's thinking
- Support **Deming's point #14** -Take Action

Relationship Between the Implementation Plan and Strategic Planning

There are many positive benefits to the organization that result from the development of an implementation plan. As you can also see from the statements above, many of the benefits are preparatory in nature. In other words, **the organization uses an implementation plan to prepare itself** for longer term, organization-wide transformational change. **Transformational change is the aim of strategic planning** and that can be best accomplished when an organization is prepared with the information and structure achieved through an effective implementation plan. Without the information, many strategic plans amount to prediction without knowledge.

Cautionary Notes

1. Remember to not *front-load* the implementation plan. Command's are too optimistic about what they can accomplish. The quickest way to go is to go slow.
2. Remember a logic check at completion. Most especially, ensure the items are sequenced correctly.
3. The implementation plan **can** be modified as necessary, however, lots of items being shifted to later dates **may indicate a lack of commitment**.
4. The implementation plan should be displayed and promoted as much as possible throughout the command.

5. A smaller “*working copy*” can and should be produced on many readily available flow charting programs. The production of these copies should be in addition to the master large copy .

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Summary

- The implementation plan is used to provide focus to the organization’s start-up activities.
- The implementation plan is developed by the ESC with the advice and assistance of the Command TQL coordinator.
- The implementation plan is an important tool for developing the “critical mass” and for building commitment.
- The implementation plan serves to focus the organization’s quality efforts.
- Important information is gathered during the execution of the implementation plan that is used in the development of more long-term, breakthrough plans.

Readings

Ackoff, R. “*Creating the Corporate Future*” Prentice -Hall

Berry, T. “*Managing the Total Quality Transformation*” Quality Press (1990)

Joiner “*The Team Handbook*” Joiner and Associates (pp. 1-14/1-15) (1990)

Scholtes/Hacquebord “*A Practical Approach to Quality*” Joiner and Associates (1987)