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QUALITY principles will grow and multiply every kind of business in South Africa especially small enterprise



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"To improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person."

Preamble to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa

The launch by SAQA (The South African Qualifications Authority) in May 2009 of the first-ever National Certificate for Quality Management Systems is a major step forward for South Africans wanting accredited qualifications in the Quality arena.

This National Certificate, and the unit standards, that were developed in cooperation with the Services SETA Quality Chamber Board, are the building blocks underpinning the qualification. The qualification and the supporting standards were developed by the Community of Expert Practitioners brought together by SAQA and SSETA. SAQI's own directors Paul Harding and Pat McLaren are part of the SAQA / SSETA task team mandated to develop and periodically review QMS qualifications.

The structure of this NQF level 5 Qualification will allow learners to acquire a set of generic competencies in QMS and is aimed at individuals who want to be assistants or technicians to a quality management systems manager. The qualification carries 120 credits in the field of business, commerce and

management studies. From this Certificate, in terms of a learning pathway, the learner will be able to eventually pursue a higher qualification soon to be developed.

SAQA is the official body appointed by the ministers of Education and Labour to oversee the development of the National Qualification Framework. For full information on this National Certificate for QMS go to www.saqi.org.za and follow the link to search qualifications and enter the course ID number 66189.



For your diary...

National Quality Week 2009

9 -13 November 2009

including World Quality Day 12 November 2009

Theme to be announced soon



SAQI is Proudly South African

Making use of Lessons Learnt

Many problems can occur during the life cycle of a project. The project analysis should help to prevent repeating the same mistakes, and to become proactively aware of potential problems at any stage. This case study by Lukas Groenewald, Quality Assurance Manager at Telkom, outlines the steps to ensure quality upfront by learning from others.

Lessons Learned is a process that allows you to retrace the steps of the project and determine those aspects that worked well and those that did not. Normally these sessions are conducted after completion of every major milestone, phase or when the need arises.

The following building blocks to make the learning of lessons meaningful are of utmost importance:

- Lessons Learnt sessions must take place at regular intervals and as soon as possible after the occurrence that warrants a session. If not, one could end up missing critical issues or even not having access to the right people anymore.
- The immediate action taken to overcome the issue that covered the Lesson Learnt is not always the ideal solution to the problem. In many cases emergency steps or "running repairs" are implemented. These might save the day but the real solution or prevention could be something totally different.
- Lessons Learnt will only be meaningful if it is implemented and acted upon in other projects.

In preparation of a Lesson Learnt session, a request is to be submitted to the various role-players to identify key issues and concerns upfront. An agenda, stating the objective of the session and all identified issues and concerns, must be forwarded to all role-players in advance.

During the session all positive outcomes of the project must be noted, as the recipe for success must also be shared with other projects. Group discussions must take place on issues and concerns identified. Various techniques can be used to determine the root causes of problems, as well as the criticality of each issue. The group also needs to come up with possible solutions to the identified issues, e.g. what can be done to prevent the issues from happening again. Issues raised previously will also be re-worked during the session to determine whether they are still valid or not.

The outcome of the Lessons Learnt session must be documented and approved. The Quality Assurance division then further investigates the lesson by mapping it onto the existing Lessons Learnt Repository prior to present it to the subsequent QA Forum.

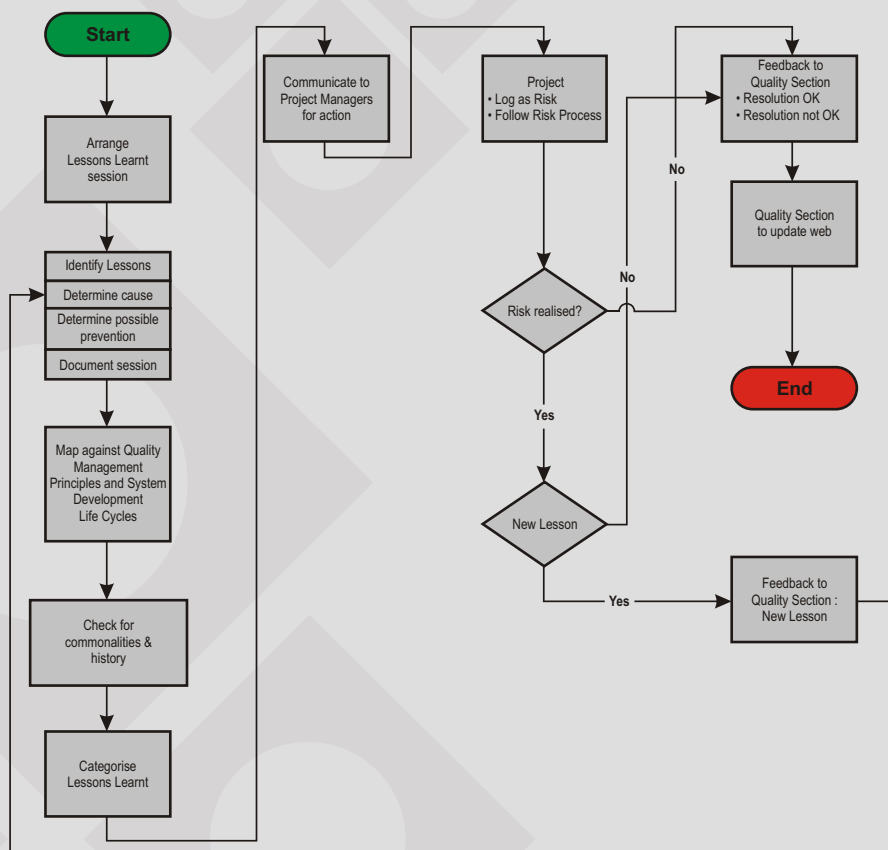
At the QA Forum the lesson is presented, discussed and categorized based on the impact and probability as well as possible solutions and preventions.

After approval at the QA Forum the particular lesson is added to a central Lessons Learnt Repository. Participants in all projects must be able to access this Repository.

The QA division also conducts Lessons Learnt Awareness sessions per project phase. For Lessons categorized as A (which are relevant to the specific project), projects are advised to log a risk with mitigation steps. Risks logged will be monitored closely to determine whether the suggested prevention steps are successful or not. The outcome is noted onto the Lessons Learnt Repository. For Lessons categorized as B (which are relevant to the specific project), projects will only be made aware of the possible risk as the probability for this lesson to appear is low.

The QA division will continually update the Lessons Learnt Repository to improve the existing lessons.

Below is a typical flow diagram of the process.



The Quality Edge is an electronic supplement dedicated to quality issues as they impact leaders and decision makers in today's South Africa. For comment or to submit an article, contact editor@saqi.co.za

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Quality is not rocket science...

a regular column by Bongji Mali-Swelindawo

There are many perceptions of quality. Some are of the opinion that quality is the best of things like superior grade eggs, choice wines, prime beef, prize carnations, quality paper, select peaches etc. Others have described quality as meeting customer requirements, doing things right the first time and so on.

My perception of quality is being satisfied. Products and Services characteristics that leave customers contented whether low-priced or costly are OK. When customers are content about the quality of products or services that they get, you can say the stuff is fit for purpose. The quality is creating good business opportunities.

It's not just money

In generic language and understanding, Quality is normally linked to monetary value, the more expensive the product or service is, so is the perception of quality. For example, many people perceive that a five star hotel is superior when compared to the local Bed and Breakfast, but if what you require is a clean room for the night with a freshly made up bed, clean towels and a good breakfast in the morning? How do you compare the quality? The Bed and Breakfast is fit for purpose. I'm a contented customer!

It is therefore not advisable to measure quality based only on monetary value. What one individual perceives as expensive could in fact be cheap for another customer's pocket.

Customer contentedness

Another big secret to customer contentedness, and therefore their perception of Quality, is to be remembered or to be noticed. For example, many people dislike standing on a long queue, but what a difference it makes if the shop staff can shorten the queue or at least talk with the customers as they wait

Perception Of Quality

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and apologise for the delay. Follow-up calls and after sales communication, is another perception of good quality that suppliers can create with customers who have purchased something from them. Like when a car gets a big service, how nice to have the workshop call centre call and check that everything was done correctly.

A colleague of mine recently changed his insurance company because he had been promised that the lead time on Claim approvals was 48 hours but when his cell phone got lost it took weeks for it to be replaced. Poor quality lost the first insurance company a client.

Customer diversity

People are different. This is based on many aspects of life and one's background such as race, culture, age, attitudes, religious beliefs and so on.

Customer diversity impacts a lot on what customers perceive as superior quality and as poor quality. A housewife in Germany would require the washing powder she uses in her washing machine to meet the washing machine manufacturers' specifications. A housewife in a rural area of Africa washing by hand needs a different washing powder. Both want their family's washing clean and fresh, but need a different kind of washing powder quality. Have you ever wondered how it is possible that 9 passengers get onto a flight, later on 6 of them are very happy with the service by the airline team whilst 3 of them cannot believe how poor the service was? The service was the same standard for everyone, but different customers

had different requirements, like extra leg room for example.

So quality is not just measured by monetary value alone but rather by customer satisfaction and individual requirements. We're dealing with human beings and it's not rocket science!



Bongji Mali-Swelindawo has more than 7 years of experience in Quality Assurance, Quality Engineering and Quality Management experience and is a member of the South African Quality Institute.

Amongst her other qualification she has a B-Tech Quality and is a member of Quality CEP (Community of Experts Practitioners) – SSETA and of the SAQA Task Team (mandated to develop & periodically review QMS Qualification @ NQF Level 5). Bongji can be contacted at qualitable@absamail.co.za or 083 412 0881.



GETTING CHILDREN TO LIVE QUALITY VALUES

As most of our readers are parents themselves, we have asked SAQI's education editor Richard Hayward (rpdhayward@yahoo.com), a retired headmaster and published author to give us some words of wisdom on how to get quality principles instilled in young people. Here is the first of what we hope will become a regular column.

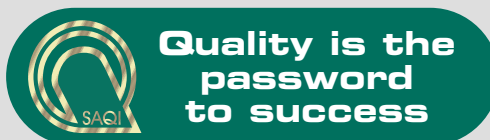
Do children understand the meaning of the word 'Quality'? They don't have a grasp of the concept at a business level. Yet children often have an intuitive feel of what the word means. Ask them to give you the brand name of a quality car or pair of soccer boots. They'll usually give you the names of the best brands!

Children can be made aware of what makes for Quality. If, for example, they might prefer going to a Spurs or Steers for a birthday celebration meal, ask them to give their reasons. Possible answers might be that the food is delicious, in generous quantities as well as that the waitrons are ever-friendly and willing to be of service.

In their own lives, children can be encouraged to abide by Quality values. Are they friendly and cheerful? Do they smile and persevere when things get a bit tough (like the busy restaurant waitrons on a Saturday night)? Do they understand that before achievement in the classroom and at extramural activities, hard work is required? Children need to be given values that will help them live happy, meaningful lives.

There's a view that children don't need to be taught moral values. Apparently, they'll simply 'pick them up'. True, they get values from others but not always the right ones. The home should be the most important source of learning about values. Families that are very dysfunctional or have disintegrated are unable to fulfil this function. The school has a crucial role in teaching values. Religious institutions such as the church, mosque, synagogue and temple are strongly focussed on values education. Children need to be guided towards universally accepted moral values.

On 22 April 2009 South Africans voted in their fourth democratic elections. The politicians have made promises of abiding by ethical standards. Some of today's children will be voting in the 2014 elections and most of them in the following one. Give children the values which add quality to their lives today. Yet also give them those values which will help them to create a better South Africa tomorrow.



Quality Education News available online

Since 2005 this quarterly newsletter has been one of the most popular SAQI Quality supplements. The newsletter is aimed at educators, parents and is freely available to all who are interested in education.

It can be viewed and downloaded on the MySchool site (www.MySchool.co.za) which sponsors its distribution to their card holders and schools around South Africa. The newsletter is also available on the SAQI website (www.saqi.co.za) where you will find a range of CDs, DVDs, books and pamphlets on school issues. The most recent addition to the range is Richard Hayward's book titled *Making Quality Education happen: a 'how-to' guide for every teacher*. This free book has been generously sponsored by Caxton and CTP Group as a social responsibility project. There is a R30 fee to cover packaging and registered/tracker posting.



Packaging Standards

It will soon be illegal to sell hazardous drums to street traders

It will soon become illegal in KwaZulu-Natal for street vendors to trade in formerly used packaging drums, says Responsible Container and Packaging Management Association of Southern Africa (RCMASA) president Liz Anderson, who hopes that other regions will follow suit.

In the eThekweni municipality, as in other parts of the country, street vendors trade in packaging drums, which are stolen or bought from drum collectors, reproducers, reconditioners and chemicals industries. These drums are a serious health risk and are being sold to the public by these vendors.

“A common problem in Africa is the dumping of unsafe drums, and the sale to the poor of chemically contaminated containers, which cause poisoning and environmental pollution,” she adds.

However, the street vendors make a living out of buying and selling the used drums, and even though the Health Department is concerned about this, it has been mulling over the problem for a number of years as, although it does not want to take away the street vendors' livelihoods, the risk of chemical poisoning needs to be stopped.

As a step towards solving these problems, the eThekweni municipality has started the Safe Drums project. These drums have not been used before, and are safe for food and water storage. Some industry members are also involved in contributing funds to the project.

Drums that have previously been used to store and transport chemicals are made of plastic, which absorbs the chemicals. Once these drums become a selling product for street vendors, they rinse out visible traces of chemicals and empty the residue into stormwater drains.

Even if these drums have been washed thoroughly, the chemicals leach out into the water or food stored by the buyer, resulting in the risk of poisoning.

Similarly, the chemicals and residue rinsed out of these drums and poured into stormwater drains reach beaches, affecting the water quality and the Blue Flag status.

However, industry will not be exempt from being prosecuted for breaking the law in selling these used drums to traders.

By selling used drums to traders, industry is breaking several laws.

By law, industry needs to take responsibility for its final waste and the environment – as stated in the National Environmental Management Act, the precautionary principles and the 'duty of care' and 'polluter pays' stipulations, and the 'extended responsibility clause' in the Waste Bill, to be introduced later this year. Industry members who do not comply with these laws, bylaws and regulations will be liable to criminal prosecution and fines of up to R10 million or ten years' imprisonment.

Companies have also been warned that if any of these contaminated drums are traced back to them, the law will be enforced.

“There is a lot of denial in the industry, and companies believe that the after effect of their packaging and products is not their problem.”

Global regulatory changes to affect industrial packaging industry

A number of regulatory changes have been made by the United Nations (UN) regarding the transport of dangerous goods and the globally harmonised system of classification and labelling of chemicals, which will affect the entire industrial packaging industry.

UN representative for Africa and president of the Responsible Container and Packaging Management Association of Southern Africa (RCMASA) Liz Anderson says that packaging needs to adhere to the regulations specified by the UN. These regulations are taken up by the main models of transport – shipping, air, rail and road – in the different national regulations.

“There has been a series of problems recently with aircraft and shipping transportation, and, therefore, at the latest biennium, a revision took place that will have an impact on the industry. It is important for the trade industry to know about these changes to stay in line with global standards,” she adds.

Anderson attributes the problems arising in the industry to the loss of skills over the years.

“Many people are retiring and leaving large gaps in knowledge that is not being transferred. Companies break up and new companies are being formed with no knowledge base. Some of these companies rely on the packaging industry to know how to deal with the packaging regulations; however, there is a knowledge gap in the packaging industry as well.”

She adds that it has been a challenge to get industry to recognise and support the key issues of packaging, which is to get products to the consumer with the correct specifications and compliance, and to instil the need to reuse formerly used packaging in the system.

Some of the regulatory changes to the transport of dangerous

goods say that any permeation of the substance contained in the packaging shall not constitute a danger under normal conditions of transport.

Changes were also made to suitable packaging for clinical waste, materials that are toxic when inhaled and the rebottling, cross bottling and marking of intermediate bulk containers, quality assurance, packaging containing carbon dioxide, lithium batteries and nickelmetal hydride batteries, fuel cells and electronic data interchange for documentation.

For the globally harmonised system of classification and labelling of chemicals, regulatory amendments were made to the test methods for regulation on registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals, and to the procedure for classification of various forms of ammonium nitrate, chemical hazardous to the ozone layer regarding disposal, recovery and recycling, and to obtain information to replace 'manufacturer' with 'manufacturer or supplier'.

The RCMASA focuses on industrial and reusable packaging. It is part of an initiative set up globally, which originated in North America to assist in regulating industrial packaging and looking into reusing it as many times as possible and getting it back into the value chain.

"From Creamer Media's Engineering News at www.engineeringnews.co.za"



Liz Anderson has over 30 years' practical industry experience in the United Kingdom and South Africa in the packaging, food, beverage, agriculture, chemical, pharmaceutical and plastics sectors. This includes working with various government departments at local, regional and national level on regulatory, transport, health and environmental matters. Since 2001 Liz has also been in the role of president & executive director of Responsible Packaging Management Association of Southern Africa www.rcmasa.org.za

RPMASA is a focal point for all industry sectors that use and dispose of industrial packaging especially drums and containers. It advocates a life cycle approach from the packaging manufacturer, filler, user, emptier, reprocessor and recycler to final disposal, seeking solutions to sustainable use and disposal to protect people health and the environment.



SAQI QUALITY TRAINING

SAQI and its associates present these and other courses throughout the year both at the CSIR Quality Centre in Pretoria and, if numbers dictate, at other centres as well. We specialize in tailor made courses to meet specific company requirements and bring this learning to your premises at special in-house rates. All prices VAT inclusive with a 10% discount to SAQI members.

	COURSE	DATE	COST
B49	SHEQ Internal Auditing	17- 19 June	R 3,400.00
B20	Lead Auditor (QMS)	22-26 June	R 13,500.00
B16	Internal Quality Auditing	1-3 July	R 3,400.00
B22	Understand the Changes to ISO 9001:2008	6 July	R 1,750.00
B34	Statistical Process Control (BQC)	6-10 July	R 6,600.00
B42	Certified Quality Technician	27-29 May	R 3,400.00
B48	ISO 9001:2008 Requirements Workshop	13-17 July 24-28 August	R 13,500.00
B13	Development of EMS based on ISO 14001	20-24 July	R 9,200.00
B50	Environmental Auditor (EMS)	3-7 August	R 7,150.00 - R 650.00 (Exam Fee)
B24	How to write procedures, work instructions and ISO 9001:2008 overview (Process Mapping)	13-14 August	R 3,250.00
B38	Development of QMS based on ISO 9001:2008	17-21 August	R 9,200.00

For more information and a complete course synopsis visit www.saqi.co.za or contact the SAQI Training Coordinator, Vanessa du Toit, at telephone (012) 349 5006 or email vanessa@saqi.co.za.

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