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PROCESS QUALITY ASSOCIATES INC.

690 King St., Suite 2, London, Ontario N5W-2X3 Phone (519)-667-1720 1-800-837-7046 Fax (519)-667-1722

"We engineer the quality of your success"

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Circulated to people interested in improving their products and processes

Are Your Employees Committed?

Companies need to generate a high level of commitment among their employees in order to achieve the highest levels of quality, productivity, and innovation.

A high level of commitment is evident in 3 ways:

1. Employees use their discretionary time -- time they could be spending on other activities -- working for the company because they are motivated to do so, and because they receive satisfaction from doing their jobs, and from being associated with the company itself.
2. Typical organizational problems, such as employee discipline or absenteeism, no longer require major time and effort to resolve. Frequency of disruptive activities is minimized, such as dealing with grievances, hiring extra people, sabotage, etc.
3. Employees are more creative. They fix what is not working, they think about how they can perform their jobs better, and bring their suggestions to the manager.

Why Teams Fail

- They don't focus on a mission that both the team and management are committed to solving
- They are trapped in a groupthink mind-set where no action is taken until everyone agrees to every decision
- Individual assignments aren't accomplished because there is no support for the time and resources needed to achieve the results
- The team stops holding meetings to co-ordinate efforts and check progress because departmental politics get in the way
- Team leaders receive inadequate training in the fundamentals of how to make a team effort produce results. They are trained on how to use analysis and problem solving tools, but are not taught the leadership skills needed to turn a group of people into a team

NEXT MONTH: How To Make Teamwork Work

Give Teams An Immediate Opportunity To Use New Skills

Have teams apply their training to a real improvement opportunity as soon as possible after they have completed their quality training. This gives teams a chance for quick success, which motivates them to try again. Nothing is more demotivating to teams than to be excited by quality training and then let down when they can't use their newly acquired skills.

ISO-9000 More Than Just A Quality Manual

ISO-9000 is more than a framework for quality, or the ability to measure, or the ability to identify areas for improvement and to take corrective action. ISO-9000 can also help achieve other critical goals, such as:

- Educating your employees about the benefits of follow-up procedures
- Instilling pride in your company's service and products
- Ensuring information is correct before passing it on
- Engendering a commitment to quality
- Helping to ensure your employees are properly equipped
- Facilitate communications both internally within your company, and externally with your customers and suppliers
- Rewarding your employees and suppliers through recognition
- Getting buy-in from your employees to your company's quality improvement policy
- Ensuring that everyone in your company has the information required to do the job
- Documenting lead times and average variances with your suppliers, based on your information -- not the suppliers'
- Providing data and understanding about your company's delivery performance relative to your customer's expectations
- Increasing the confidence of your customers in your company and its products and services
- Providing the information needed to determine the true impact of decisions

Loyal Customers Pay Off

Loyal customers are critical to a company's profit because they are a continuous source of income. They provide higher profits, repeat business, higher market share, and referrals.

Companies should seek lifetime customers because it costs five to seven times more to find new customers than to retain customers you already have.

To calculate what one lifetime customer is worth to your business, multiply the profit a customer generates for your company each year by the lifespan of the customer, and then multiply that number by every customer that the company gains through word-of-mouth advertising.