



Published each month by:

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"

VOL. 96 No. F

Circulated to people interested in improving their products and processes

5 Tips For A Successful Benchmarking Study

When benchmarking is done well, it is a powerful, competitive tool. When it is done poorly, it can be an incredible waste of money. Following are some tips to make benchmarking teams more successful:

- Do the study quickly or don't do it
- Choose a broad-and-shallow or narrow-and-deep scope
- Integrate Critical Success Factors
- Select the "best-in-class" companies that meet your needs
- Manage the change from the start

We will elaborate on these tips in future issues of *Process Quality News*. Anyone requiring this information now can call the office and we will Fax it to you.

How To Provide Good Customer Service

Surveyed companies, known for their superior customer service, shared their strategies on how to be a top customer service provider. Following are their tips:

- **Build customer loyalty and confidence** by taking a progressive approach to meeting customers' needs and doing what is sensible to maintain customers' goodwill.
- **Empathize with customers.** Be sensitive to their feelings. Show genuine concern & respect. Recognize different personality types to respond appropriately.
- **Gather and analyze information** to negotiate solutions and arrive at appropriate resolutions.
- **Communicate effectively.** Be articulate and diplomatic. Ask appropriate questions. Make appropriate use of written communication.
- **Handle stress.** Stay organized, calm, and constructive. Demonstrate tolerance and patience. Control emotions.
- **Listen actively.** Don't just *hear* customers' words, know also how to interpret their meaning.
- **Demonstrate mental alertness** and process information quickly.
- **Maintain a professional image**, including appropriate dress and a calm, confident attitude.
- **Demonstrate reliability & loyalty.** Always perform well. Be loyal to the company in words and in action.

These competencies are highly visible to customers; they are the ones that the customer hears, sees, and experiences the instant a service interaction begins.

Good Leadership A Must For Companies To Succeed

There are many factors that influence the success of a company. One of the most important is dynamic and effective leadership. But what constitutes dynamic and effective leadership?

At two events held last Fall -- ASQC's Quality Forum XI and the Business Week Symposium -- leaders from successful organizations gathered to share their experiences and views.

For these leaders, dynamic and effective leadership included three things:

- creating and articulating a vision and plan
- being customer driven
- creating the necessary environment in which employees can do their best work and be innovative

"Today's successful leader," said Kevin Jenkins, president and CEO of Canadian Airlines, "realizes that innovation creates opportunity, quality creates demand, and teamwork makes it happen."

"Quality leadership," explained Gary Tooker, vice chairman and CEO of Motorola Inc., "starts with leaders who plant the seeds, set the tough goals, create the environment for success, empower their people, and then get out of the way. It becomes self-sustaining when these empowered people learn the process and build it into the way they do business."