

Leadership in the ASQ Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence Body of Knowledge

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Leadership includes four sub-categories: Organizational Structures; Leadership Challenges; Teams and Team Processes; and the ASQ Code of Ethics. In the exam, twenty-five questions are devoted to this major aspect of the BoK.

Leadership is one of the foundations of organizations. Leaders provide vision, direction, and focus for people to achieve a common purpose. They act as champions and advocates for achieving goals and continual improvement.

Organizational Structure

The CMQ/OE understands the roles and relationships of managers and leaders in various organizational structures and cultures found in today's businesses and organizations. The design of organizational structures takes into consideration the purpose, methods and structures of decision-making and work distribution. Various designs include matrix, flat, parallel, collateral, etc. Understanding the effect and influence of management hierarchies is an important aspect, and so is understanding the culture.

By understanding the culture of an organization the CMQ/OE can define the beliefs and values that drive it. Values and beliefs are the underlying characteristics that guide how it reacts to changes both internally and externally. The attitudes demonstrated by managers and leaders reflect the beliefs and values held by the organization. Leadership can face many challenges when various segments of the organization hold differing beliefs and values.

Leadership Challenges

The CMQ/OE can describe the typical, and often overlapping, roles, responsibilities and competencies of people who are in management and leadership positions. Leaders may be managers or they may be those who have a special interest and passion for a cause or project. They motivate others to accomplish goals through their knowledge, skills, experience, and passion. Assuming many roles, such as, facilitator, appraiser, forecaster and others, leaders must also possess self-awareness, self-control, motivation, empathy, and social skills.

Managers are responsible for the effective and efficient use of resources in an organization. Some key roles include: leader, organizer, innovator, supporter, mentor, motivator, and trainer. Among other things, leaders and managers have the challenge of motivating others and effecting change while overcoming

resistance.

To manage change, the CMQ/OE can draw upon a variety of strategies in the role of change agent. There can be both internal and external change agents, depending on the purpose and scope of the transformation. Change agents' roles include: consultant, coach, facilitator, and leader. Some techniques include: encouraging management to create environments conducive to change; advising management on how to measure, monitor and report; or serving as a role model as a leader on a specific project.

Motivating, influencing, negotiating and resolving conflict are strategies that the CMQ/OE understands and uses to empower employees and teams to meet the goals and objectives of organizations. Understanding and using the tools, techniques and strategies described above prepare the CMQ/OE to meet leadership challenges.

Teams and Team Processes

Managers and leaders need to understand the types of teams that are used, such as process-improvement, work group, and cellular, so that they can appropriately select, form, lead, and participate in them.

In order to function well with and within teams, it pays to recognize the various stages of team development: forming, storming, norming, and performing. Applying basic team building techniques will ensure that teams have the tools to focus and plan their efforts to fulfill the team's purpose.

Typical team roles, such as facilitator, champion, project leader, and process owner, assure that the team can complete the requirements of the job or project. Understanding the roles and the responsibilities that are assigned and expected of each team member enhances the performance of the team. Recognizing disruptive behaviors, hidden agendas and distractions may allow the CMQ/OE to be more effective in leadership and member roles.

Evaluating team performance to expected standards, goals, and objectives is important so that recognition and feedback are given to team members and for continuing to improve the team process and outcomes. Understanding teams and team processes prepares the CMQ/OE for leadership responsibilities.