THE AWARE CONSUMER

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WORLD QUALITY DAY 2021

11TH NOVEMBER 2021

RESEARCH FEATURE
The Pursuit of Quality -
MSMEs Charging on
the Quality
Improvement Path

OUT OF THE BOX
Sustainability Through
the Lens of Quality

INTERVIEW
Mr. Adil Zainulbhai
Chairman - QCI

Fostering a Culture
of Quality Consciousness

**PLUS**   **ROUND UP • MY MARKET • THE PRESCRIPTION**

NATIONAL ACCREDITATION BOARD FOR TESTING AND CALIBRATION LABORATORIES

Quality plays a crucial role in our lives. Quality is sought by all involuntarily and brings happiness when the products and services used adhere to requirements thereby ensuring safety, cost effectiveness

NABL Grants accreditation to laboratories, Proficiency Testing Providers and Reference Material Producers covering entire laboratory ecosystem and ensuring quality of services and test results generated

Calibration Laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025
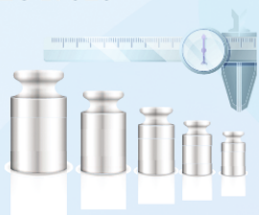
Testing Laboratories in accordance with ISO/IEC 17025

NABL operates in accordance with ISO/IEC 17011

Reference Material Producers (RMPs) in accordance with ISO 17034

Medical testing Laboratories in accordance with ISO 15189

Proficiency Testing Providers (PTPs) in accordance with ISO/IEC 17043

NABL is a full member and signatory to Asia Pacific Accreditation cooperation (APAC) and International Laboratory Accreditation Cooperation (ILAC) Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MRAs).

National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL)
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VIEW POINT

Conceptualising The Probability That Is Called QUALITY

QUALITY IS 'CUSTOMER Satisfaction', it is measured as 'how good or bad something is, be it a product, a service, a system, a process, a task or even an action. The question always arises - Is it good enough to make it worthwhile?

It follows that quality is a perception, a mind-set, based on what an user expects something to be like. If it is acceptable and performs well, it will be deemed to be of quality. But, if it fails to deliver as expected, it will be branded low quality, spurious or not of standard quality (NSQ). And if it has a 'wow' effect that surpasses expectations, it will be considered the best quality as per standards.

Therefore, quality is a subjective concept that encompasses everything from whether the characteristics conform to specifications and are free of defects and deficiencies to whether it can satisfy the need and fulfil the expectations. This is perceived in every segment – clothes and automobiles, water and roads, healthcare and education, infrastructure and even governance – and will differ from person to person.

Quality also has a direct relationship with price – if the price of a product or service is high, it has to literally jump through many more hoops to meet the expectations of quality and vice versa to deliver value for money.

The ability to deliver becomes a function of quality. And this quality is what drives value in the world. What's more, it also impacts our quality of life and well-being. In fact, we survive and thrive on the pillars of quality!

Then again, we cannot expect quality to remain static. It is an ever-evolving perception that keeps changing over time, as a product, service or process matures, innovates or faces competition of alternatives. To add to this, customer expectations are also expanding to new frontiers. People and organisations alike have to keep striving to achieve and maintain quality as a means of delivering value to the consumers.

On this note, I would like to add that we, at Consumer Online Foundation (a voluntary not-for-profit consumer organisation), have always been endeavouring to deliver quality across all our initiatives. It is a moment of great pride and joy for us to be the first and only certified ISO 9001:2015 organisation in India on Consumer Complaint Redressal Services. Thanks for your support and encouraging words, which has been truly motivating to sustain our activities.

Prof. Bejon Kumar Misra
Publisher & Editor
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CONSUMER
ONLINE
FOUNDATION

CONSUMER ONLINE FOUNDATION

THE FIRST

AND ONLY

ORGANISATION

CERTIFIED

AS PER

INTERNATIONAL STANDARD

ISO 9001:2015

FOR

CONSUMER
COMPLAINTS
REDRESSAL SERVICES

CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

intertek
Total Quality. Assured.

This is to certify that the management system of:

Consumer Online Foundation

Main Site: B-506, 1st floor, C R Park,
New Delhi, 110019, India
has been registered by Intertek as conforming to the requirements of:

ISO 9001:2015

The management system is applicable to:

Consumer Complaints Redressal Services

Certificate Number:
0117013

Initial Certification Date:
21 September 2021

Date of Certification Decision:
21 September 2021

Issuing Date:
21 September 2021

Valid Until:
20 September 2024

UKAS

intertek

Calin Moldovean
President, Business Assurance

*A proud moment for us
to share with our
well wishers and supporters*

PROF BEJON KUMAR MISRA
Founder – Consumer Online Foundation

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www.patientsafetyaccess.org

Healthy You Foundation

THE AWARE CONSUMER

35+
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CONSUMER MOVEMENT
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Prafull D. Sheth

Editorial Board Member

PURSUING QUALITY EXCELLENCE THROUGH THE ECOSYSTEM OF SUSTAINABILITY

DESKTALK

CQI theme this year is: **'Sustainability: Improving our Products, People and Planet'.**

QUALITY IS A distinctive attribute; it manifests as a mark of excellence that everybody aspires for, but only some achieve!

This distinguishing proficiency of delivering as expected forms the lifeblood of any organisation. It is inherent, implied and has to remain consistent. The perception of quality is what drives performance, profits and even the reputation of the organisation by solemnising it as worthy of consumer trust. Therefore, long-term success and growth are a quotient of the organisation's faculty for quality.

On the other hand, dissatisfaction becomes a bane that no one can afford. Systems, plans, processes and objectives are put in place at every level to avoid this grave misstep. This also calls for specialists who can create a culture of quality while handling quality issues and designing methods of improvement et al.

Quality professionals are equipped with the knowledge, experience and tools to envisage the big picture of quality. Call them quality managers, quality assurance managers, quality engineers, quality directors or any other name, these experts always put customers front and centre in the quest of building and maintaining quality. Their agile approach to zeroing in on these most crucial stakeholders leads to mutual benefit and satisfaction.

Chartered Quality Institute (CQI) - a chartered body for quality professionals – works on the agenda of promoting quality and innovation while acknowledging the efforts, contributions and achievements of all those who make quality happen. Accordingly, it has instituted November as the global World Quality Month and celebrates the second Thursday of November every year as World Quality Day. This year, CQI has moved to celebrating World Quality Week from 8th to 12th November, 2021 with the theme of 'Sustainability: Improving our Products, People and Planet'.

Closer home, the Quality Council of India is furthering the cause of quality through a mandate of being the national accreditation body in the country. The National Board for Quality Promotion (NBQP) also celebrates November as Quality Month every year with a host of competitions and other initiatives. Organisations should use this platform to recognise their customer-focused people and initiatives that bring quality to the fore while reinforcing a sincere commitment to further enrich their products, services or processes with continuous quality improvement. ▶

INSIDE

THE AWARE CONSUMER NOVEMBER 2021

TATIANA VALOVAYA
UN GENEVA DIRECTOR-GENERAL

First, let me say that the pandemic has made the 2030 Global Agenda more relevant than ever and we must do all we can in order to reach our goals. People often think that ISO standards are only related to very technical topics, such as electricity and the like, but they are so much broader than that. In fact, there are International Standards for every SDG.

ROUNDUP

ISO & SDGs

Contributing to the UN Sustainable Development Goals with ISO standards
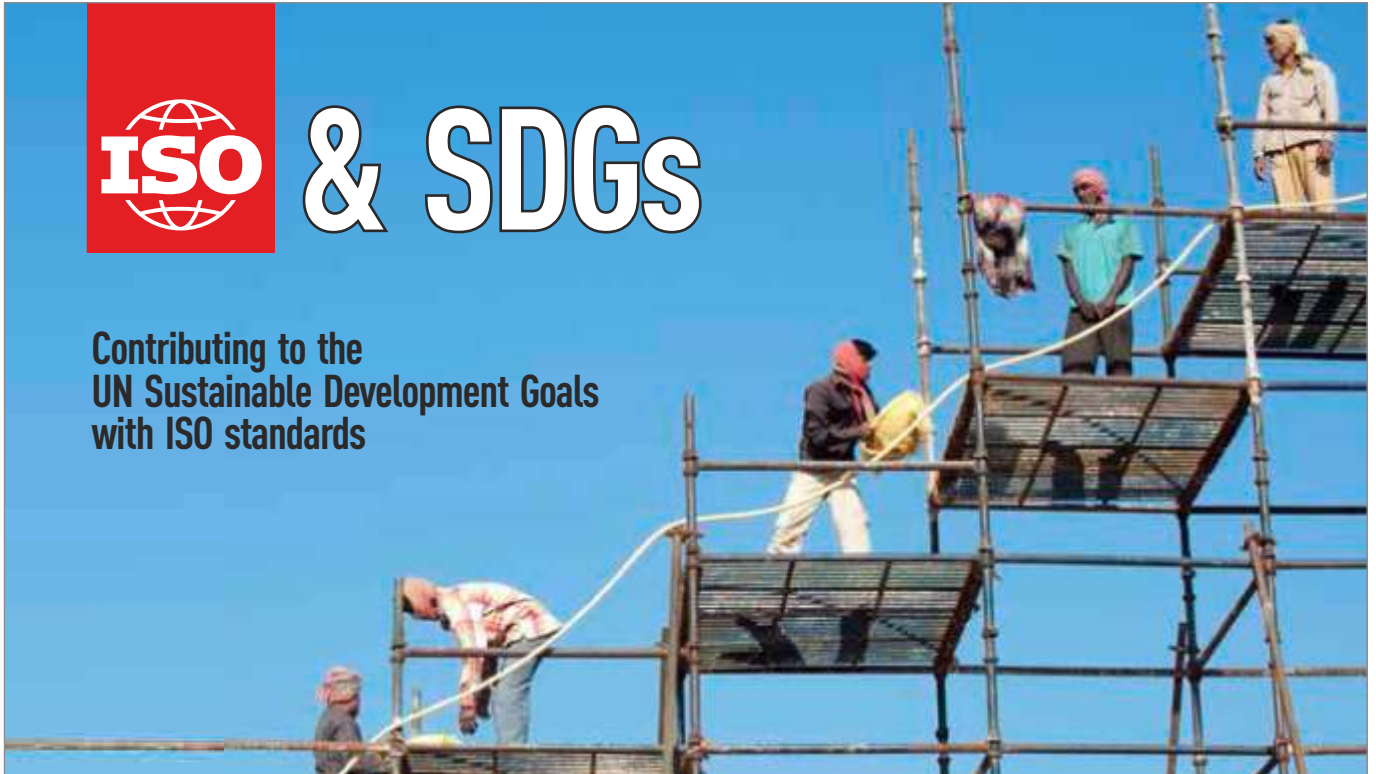
ISO 9001
– The World's Favourite Standard
– To Continue Unchanged

The global standard reference for quality, ISO 9001 'Quality Management Systems – Requirements' in its latest 2015 version is still globally relevant and will not be updated.

More than one million organizations from more than 160 countries have applied the ISO 9001 standard requirements to their quality management systems.

THE ISO 9001:2015 standard that was up for revision in 2020 is to continue as is without any changes. The subcommittee SC 2 operating under the technical committee ISO/TC 176 carried out a systematic review of the standard, discussions and a survey of ISO 9001 users to find out whether the standard is valid, and if not, then what should be changed. Based on the results, it was agreed that the ISO 9001:2015 version provides as much value today as it did when it was updated in 2015 and a revision is not required as of now.

The reviewing committee further proposed that a special task force will continue to evaluate potential changes that can impact the standard. Another systematic review will determine whether the next revision should be started earlier than usual.

What is ISO 9001?

ISO 9001 is the international standard that sets out the requirements for a quality management system (QMS). First published in 1987 by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), it helps businesses to become more efficient and improve customer satisfaction. The specifications are designed to enable organisations to:

- demonstrate the ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and
- enhance customer satisfaction through the effective application of the quality management system.

All the requirements are generic and can be applied to any organisation, regardless of its type, size or the products/services it provides.

The seven principles of ISO 9001:2015

- **Customer focus** — 01
- **Leadership** — 02
- **Engagement of people** — 03
- **Process approach** — 04
- **Improvement** — 05
- **Evidence-based decision making** — 06
- **Relationship management** — 07

The 7 quality management principles

Consumer Online Foundation has become the first and the only ISO 9001:2015 certified organisation in India on Consumer Complaint Redressal Services. This has established the fact that we have been adopting the global best practices while managing the consumer complaint redressal mechanism. We will continue to strive to sustain quality practices and deliver global best processes and systems to provide solutions to the consumers that are worthy of this eminence!

ISO 9001 is a powerful business tool that builds on seven quality management principles to ensure that the organisation consistently creates value for its customers. With these seven pillars firmly in place, it will become much easier to implement a quality management system. Becoming ISO 9001:2015 certified garners benefits like:

- Continually improving and streamlining operations and reducing costs
- Winning more business and competing in tenders
- Working effectively with stakeholders
- Satisfying more customers
- Being more resilient and building a sustainable business

This is the most popular standard in the ISO 9000 family and the only standard in the series to which organisations can certify. According to the latest data (CQI), there are 878,664 valid certificates related to 1,180,654 sites across the globe. It also forms the base for numerous industry standards that define the requirements for management systems in sectors including automotive, aircraft and medical device manufacturing.

Like all ISO standards, ISO 9001 also undergoes an assessment every five years to ensure its continuing relevance and usefulness to address the challenges of changing economies, advances in technology and trends in society. Every time a revision is released, all organisations that use ISO 9001 are required to transition as soon as possible.

Conclusion

ISO 9001:2015 has been warranted fit enough to meet the needs of its users. Following another systematic review starting in 5 years and allowing further time for development, it is expected that the next edition of ISO 9001 will be released around 2030. ❯

ISO

9001:2015

Indian Consumers Assured Quality In Gold – The Hallmarking Initiative

India's unorganised gold market has finally stepped into an organised realm with mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery. This protects consumers from frauds by ensuring that they pay only for the promised purity of gold.

WE LOVE BUYING gold. Our fascination with the yellow metal transcends festivals, auspicious occasions and weddings. The pleasure of wearing jewellery is surpassed only by the joy and security of having gold in our lockers.

However, the quality of our purchases is always a huge question mark. It is no secret that many jewellers charge customers for 22 carat gold while the ornament is actually made of 18 carat only. Some even purposely distort their weighing machines to display more grams than the actual weight of the jewellery. This way the buyers are duped of thousands or even lakhs of rupees. Yet, the hapless consumers have no way of checking the purity and accuracy of their purchases.

The Guarantee of Mandatory Hallmarking

Gold hallmarking was introduced in April 2000 in India on a voluntary basis. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is the designated authority to implement hallmarking of gold jewellery. It defines hallmarking as the 'accurate determination and official recording of the proportionate content of precious metal in precious metal articles'.

BIS (Hallmarking) Regulations were introduced from 14th June, 2018 in alignment with the international criteria of hallmarking. BIS-registered jewellers can get their jewellery hallmarked from any BIS-recognised assaying and hallmarking centres. The ornaments undergo purity tests before getting

a BIS quality certificate guaranteeing the purity/fineness of the gold. This third-party assurance spells credibility of the wares.

However, only 30% to 40% of Indian gold jewellery is actually hallmarked as jewellers convince customers to buy untested jewellery by insisting that hallmarking will drive up the costs and delivery time.

In fact, India is the only country with significant gold consumption that did not have mandatory hallmarking of gold. According to World Gold Council, there are about 4 lakh jewellers in India, of whom only 35,879 are registered with BIS.

In November 2019, the government announced that mandatory hallmarking of gold jewellery and artefacts will come into effect from 15th January, 2021 across the country. This was extended in view of the pandemic and from 16th June jewellers can only sell hallmarked gold jewellery of 14, 18 and 22 carats. This is being implemented in a phased manner in 256 (of the total 715) districts which have the assaying and hallmarking centres. No penalty was applicable till the end of August 2021. Therefore, jewellers had time till 1st September to get their existing stocks duly assessed at the designated centres.

The hallmarking is done in three categories: 14 carats, 18 carats and 22 carats. Gold of additional 20, 23 and 24 carats will also be allowed for hallmarking. The process covers homogeneity testing, purity testing and marking individual items. If the results return satisfactory, four hallmarks - BIS mark, purity in carat, assay centre name and jeweller identification mark - are applied via hand/press or laser marking.

At long last, this brings hope of increased trust and transparency in the jewellery trade. As the purity is marked on the ornaments, consumers cannot be cheated anymore. If you are buying gold bangles of 22 carat gold, the hallmark will guarantee that you are getting fair value for your money. Standardising the gold purity also levels the playing field when exchanging or collateralising old jewellery. Additionally, there will be traceability of certified articles through HUID (hallmark unique identification) numbers which can be tracked back to the jewellers.

This will remove the lingering confusion from the sale process of gold jewellery and protect the consumers. It will also promote better recognition and trade for Indian jewellery on international platforms.

Right now, jewellers with annual turnover up to Rs 40 lakh are exempted from mandatory hallmarking. It is not applicable to Kundan, Polki and Jadau jewellery and to watches and fountain pens. The exemptions extend to export and re-import of jewellery as per Trade Policy of Government of India - for international exhibitions and government approved Business 2 Business (B2B) domestic exhibitions.

ALWAYS CHECK HALLMARK BEFORE YOU BUY GOLD

BIS Logo

Purity of Gold

Assaying and Hallmarking Centre's Mark/Number

Jewellery Identification Mark

22K916

Hallmarking is an assurance of quality and purity
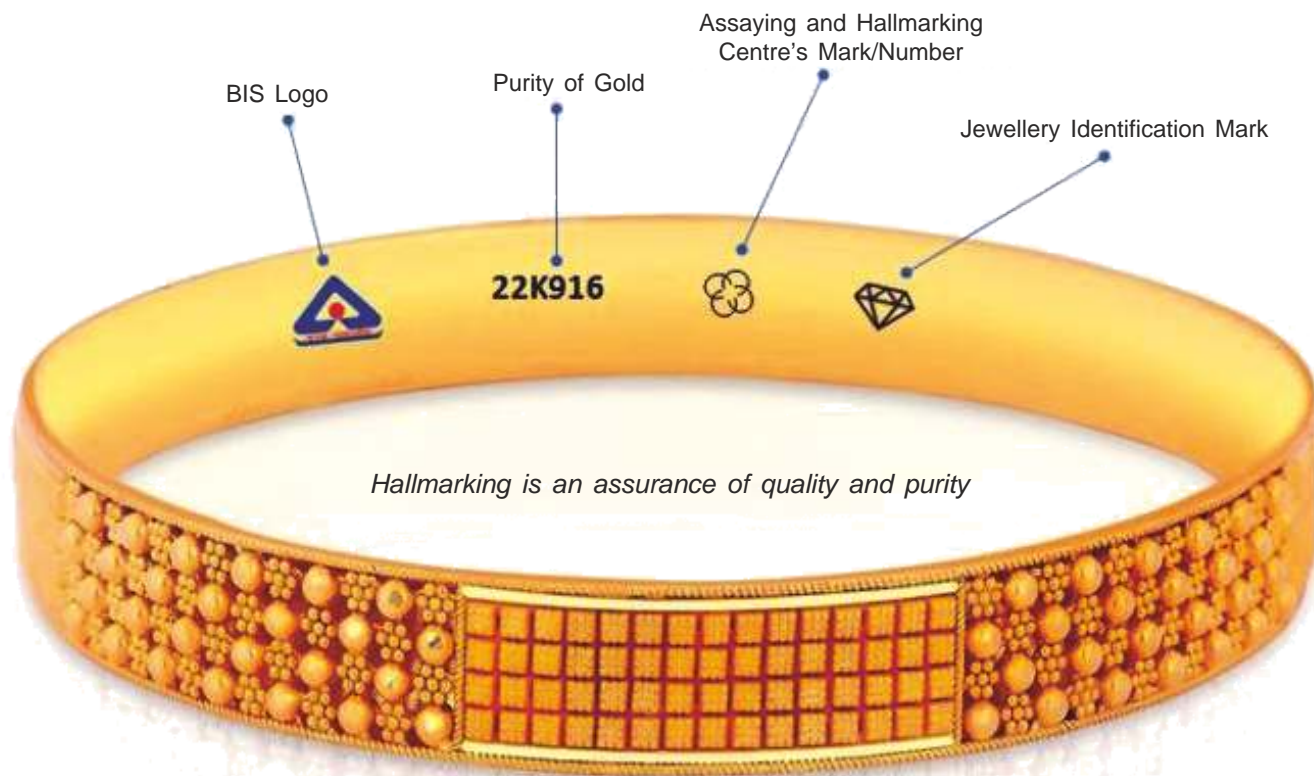
India makes hallmarking of gold jewellery mandatory to protect consumer interests

There are around 945 assaying and hallmarking centres in the country – each one can hallmark 1500 articles per day, making the cumulative testing capacity at 14 crore articles in a year. However, many of these centres have been cancelled or suspended recently, thus straining the testing capacity.

What This Means To You As A Consumer

The government is doing its bit to protect the consumer from such fraudulent practices. We should also be alert on our part and:

• Visit jewellery shops that display the BIS logo as only BIS registered jewellers can sell hallmarked jewellery. You can ask them to show their BIS registration or licence number.

• Ask for a magnifying glass and check for the hallmark and other logos.

• Hallmarking is charged at Rs. 35 per piece irrespective of the weight – a pair of earrings will cost an additional Rs. 70 only. This should be clearly mentioned on the bill and you don't have to pay anything more.

• In case of any doubt, you too can get a hallmarked jewellery tested at a BIS assaying and hallmarking centre (on chargeable basis). In case the hallmarking turns out to be fake or the purity compromised, you can file a complaint through the BIS CARE app, consumer engagement portal on the website or offline methods too. You will be entitled to compensation that is twice the shortage in purity for the weight of the article sold.

• Keep in mind that jewellers are still required to buy back old gold jewellery without a hallmark from consumers. Do not let them dupe you into accepting a lower price just because your ornaments are not certified.

The Ground Reality

The jewellers are crying foul over the lengthy and complicated administrative work of logging the weight and other details of each item before sending for hallmarking. This is causing unnecessary delays and eating into time that can be devoted to other business operations. Moreover, jewellers in rural areas who do not use computers are unable to follow through. There is fear of compromising of data and inadvertent errors which can lead to penal and criminal consequences - pay five times the cost of the product sold or face up to a year of imprisonment. (On 1st September, the government granted further leeway by announcing that HUID numbers will not be transferred to the jewellers and some more relaxations.)

Moreover, the current process involves cutting a small part of the ornament for testing. The jewellers are worried that this can damage their finished products and also lead to gold wastage that will have to be considered as scrappage. The losses due to reduced weight of the items are unacceptable.

The labs are already working overtime and refusing to accept hallmarking orders beyond their insurance limits. As the jewellers cannot sell their un-hallmarked pieces, they are suffering more losses.

Burdened by these new factors, the jewellers are driving up the prices of the hallmarked jewellery. In fact, the invoice often mention Rs. 100 per piece as the hallmarking/certification charge from September instead of Rs 35 as mandated.

Conclusion

India happens to be the biggest consumer and importer of gold in the world. It is imperative that the gold jewellery should be marked with quality and trust. What we need is improved and updated non-destructive processes for testing gold ornaments submitted by the jewellers. ◗
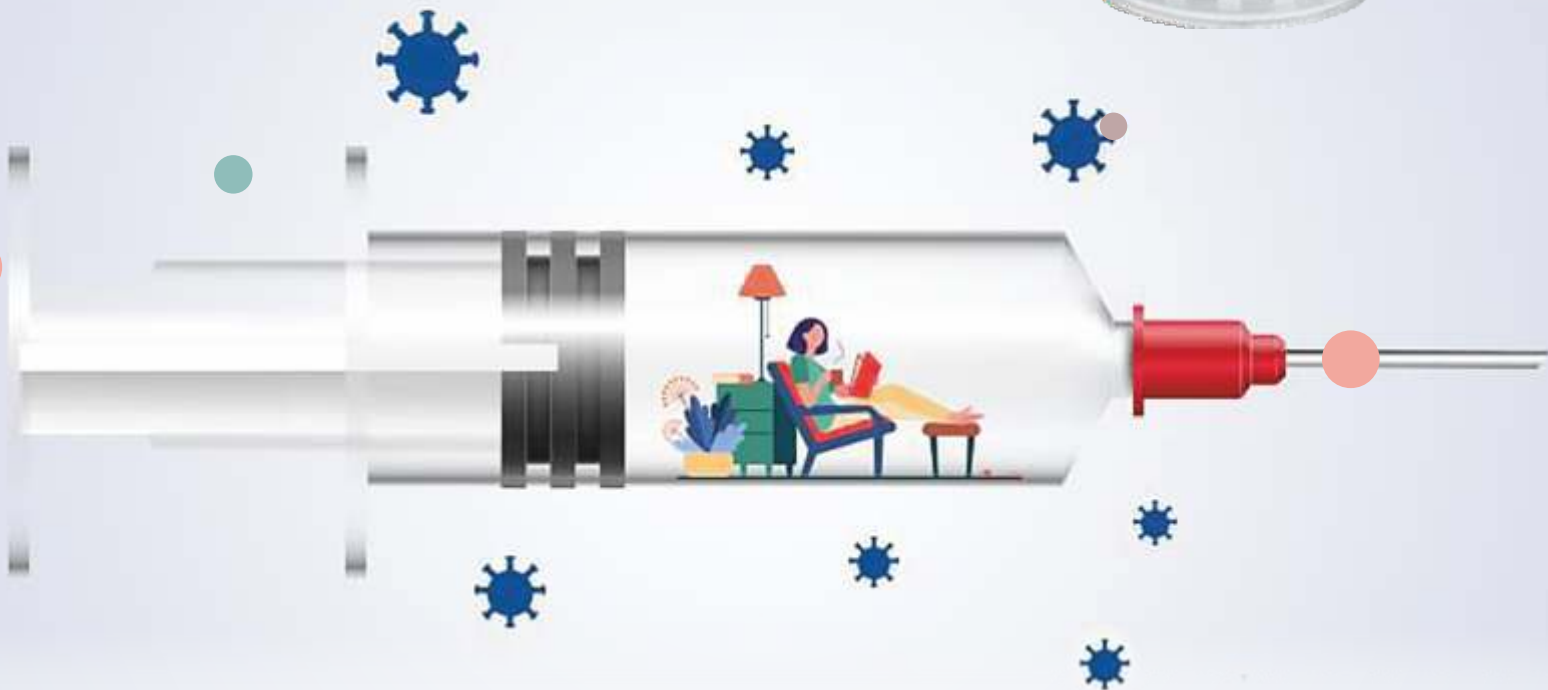
Consumers Should Look for
QUALITY ASSURANCE
in Services Too

Quality is an intangible aspect and so are services. Service quality refers to the presence or absence of superiority or excellence in the experience. It follows that there should be clear quality parameters for services and consumers should insist on quality services.
This will drive service providers to up their ante and deliver quality.

Why don't quality parameters cover the service sector?

WE ARE USED to equating quality with products – the clothes, cars, mobile phones, television sets, furniture, appliances, books, paintings, etc. that we purchase and use. These are tangible items and their quality is determined by whether it is made well and meets the standards.

But what about quality of services? What are the parameters for judging whether a service is good, poor or can be improved?

Indeed, there is a wide variety of services we use in our day-to-day lives – some tangible, most intangible. It includes hospitality, banking, investments, education, training, consulting and healthcare to more run-of-the-mill facilities like repairs, maintenance, transportation, beauty treatments, housekeeping, cooking, arts, entertainment and more. But how do we judge the quality of say a rock concert or a knee replacement surgery?

> According to the World Trade Organization, services represent more than two-thirds of the World Gross Domestic Product (GDP). They are a core economic activity, contributing more to GDP than both industry and agriculture combined.

Defining the Concept of Service

Service is a process or an activity that delivers a benefit or an experience – like a body massage, renovating a bike or staying in a hotel. The quality is an inner feeling which is perceived, but there is nothing you can actually touch, feel or take home. There is no concept of ownership here either.

Then again, interactions with staff is also a service and is universally termed as 'customer service'. It covers the gamut of courtesy, friendliness, understanding, willingness and timeliness. This is again a perception and quality will be based on whether the experience meets the expectation or not.

Yes, it is imperative that any kind of service should meet the consumer's needs and be consistent with his or her expectations. This determines the quality of the service and it can be based on technical, functional or even a perceptual assessment. It also drives customer satisfaction and loyalty.

For instance, when the food ordered in a restaurant is delicious, well-presented and served on time by attentive and friendly staff, it becomes an appealing service and the customer is likely to visit the place again and again. The service is marked satisfactory when a retail worker helps a customer process a return in an efficient and helpful manner. On the other hand, when a car is not repaired properly or is delivered later than agreed, the service will be deemed to be sorely lacking and may even be badmouthed by the fuming customer.

> Top quality service is a service that is better than what you expect!

The Role of the Consumer

The dimensions for measuring service quality are markedly different. The perception will also vary depending on the context and the promise associated with the brand. However, in general, when a service contributes to our well-being or generates pleasure, we will term it as good. And when it is better than anticipated, it is considered superior or excellent.

First and foremost, as consumers we have to develop the attitude of never settling for anything less than the acceptable standard. It is when we start proscribing services that are substandard or below par and demand better, that the service providers will shift their focus to filling the gap between the customer expectations and their perception in every way.

> Don't consider quality service as an option, it should be a requirement!

Companies often try to gauge their service quality through questionnaires, surveys, follow-up messages or emails, etc. As consumers, we should not shy away from providing feedback whenever requested. The comments should be prompt, genuine and as detailed as possible to have a positive impact.

The following dimensions should be considered when evaluating quality of a service offering:

- **Reliability –** The service provider should deliver the service in a dependable, accurate and timely manner. This will inspire trust in their claims of delivery.

- **Responsiveness –** The service staff should be willing to help the customer – in terms of queries, requests or complaints – even to the extent of going the extra mile to meet the needs of the customer. The response should be prompt as well.

- **Empathy –** This is the ability to understand the situation from the customer's viewpoint and appreciate what he or she is feeling. It encompasses a caring response along with personal attention.

- **Assurance –** The service provider should present a clear picture of the uncertainties or risks involved in the service (if any) and inspire confidence through a positive and helpful attitude. They should also be knowledgeable, cooperative and available when needed to clarify any details or doubts.

- **Tangibles –** In case the service involves physical facilities, equipment or appearance (like a doctor's clinic or a service centre), they should reinforce customer trust in the quality of service.

The service providers on their part should use the responses to ensure constant improvement of qualitative services.

Conclusion

Getting quality service is a right. Ensure that you get the best quality possible! ❯

RESEARCH FEATURE

The Pursuit of Quality - MSMEs Charging on the Quality Improvement Path

MSME units are so occupied with management and other issues that they don't have the time and resources to dedicate to understanding and acquiring strategic techniques for enhancing productivity, quality and competitiveness. The Lean Manufacturing Competitive Scheme (LMCS) under Ministry of MSME, undertaken by Quality Council of India in 2014, is the first step intervention to improve the quality and competitiveness of MSME sector by driving continuous improvement initiatives to achieve resource optimisation.

MANUFACTURING IS THE main engine of growth of the economy and the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are considered the backbone of this economic structure. The Indian MSME sector - accounting for more than 80% of the total industrial enterprises and producing over 8000 value-added products - acts as a bulwark. It contributes for 45% of the manufacturing output, 40% of the total exports and 8% of GDP. The over 13 million MSMEs in India generate the largest employment in the manufacturing sector by employing over 6 crore people.

Yet, the MSMEs face challenges such as sub-optimal scale of operation, technological obsolescence, supply chain inefficiencies, change in manufacturing strategies, turbulent and uncertain market scenario and more.

To build and maintain the competitiveness to face these globalisation challenges, the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises instituted the Lean Manufacturing Competitiveness Scheme (LMCS) programme for the benefit of MSMEs in 2014. The application of LM techniques helps to reduce manufacturing costs through proper personnel management, better space utilisation, scientific inventory management, improved process flows, reduced engineering time, optimum resource utilisation, etc.

What is Lean Manufacturing?

Lean Manufacturing is a set of principles and tools aimed at eliminating waste in all forms, including product design, factory management, supplier networks and customer relations. The goal is to incorporate less of labour, materials, capital, time and space to develop top quality products with fewer defects and also become more responsive to customer demand. By reducing time and total cost, the objective is to attain continual improvement in efficiency and bottom line while improving quality.

In other words, Lean Manufacturing eliminates work processes that add no value to the product while simplifying those that add value, thus achieving extremely high levels of quality as compared to traditional manufacturing methodologies.

The LMCS Set Up

Under the scheme, Mini Clusters were formed comprising of 6 to 10 units with a Lean Manufacturing Consultant assigned to each cluster to implement specific Lean tools and techniques (depending on the need and requirement of the enterprise) for a period of 18 months. The objective is to cut off non-productive elements like overproduction, waiting time, overprocessing, inventory defects, etc. 80% of the consultant fee isborne by the government, under the scheme.

A National Monitoring and Implementing Unit (NMIUs) was responsible for facilitating, implementation and monitoring of the scheme that is directed by the Screening and Steering Committee (SC) and headed by the Development Commissioner (MSME). National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET) of Quality Council of India, functioned as the NMIU. It has formed 243 Clusters and conducted 300 awareness programmes since 2014. The following maps depict the spread of conduct of awareness programmes and clusters formed across the country.
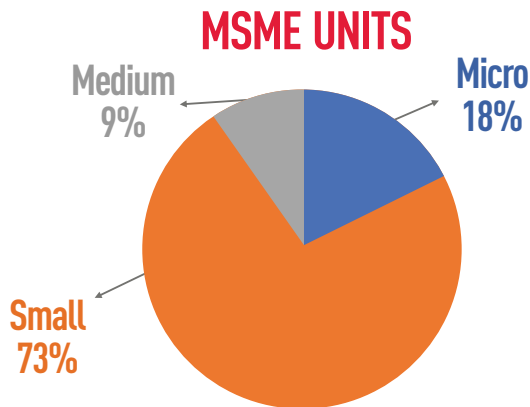
300 Awareness Programmes

243 Clusters

QCI completed LMCS in 94 clusters including 135 micro, 564 small and 69 medium units, achieving productivity increase of 20% to 27%.

MSME UNITS

- Medium 9%
- Micro 18%
- Small 73%

Let us take a look at sample achievements in some of the clusters and individual units:
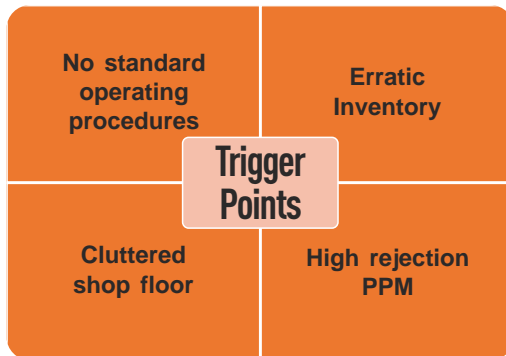
LMCS Cluster 1 - Lumax Tier-1

Number of members: 7
  Consultant: Maruti Centre for Excellence
  Nature of Business: Rubber Components, Springs, Fasteners, Plastic and Sheet Metal
  The following problems cropped up during the LMCS journey:

No standard operating procedures	Erratic Inventory
Cluttered shop floor	High rejection PPM

Trigger Points

Glimpses of Lean Implementation

Unit 1 – Faridabad (Haryana)

BEFORE   AFTER

Mixed material kept on the shop floor was taking too much space. After 5S implementation, they were segregated and allocated properly in racks.

Unit 2 – Delhi

BEFORE   AFTER

Mixed and scattered wires took too much space on shop floor. After Kaizen implementation, they were arranged in spools and placed machine-wise, taking less space and reducing retrieval time.

Unit 3 – Gurugram (Haryana)

BEFORE   AFTER

Spanners and other tools kept in cluttered condition were causing high retrieval time and loss of tools. After Lean implementation, a Shadow Board was created to properly track tools and make them quickly available.

Internal Rejection PPM

BASELINE	TARGET	ACTUAL
24744	1217 1	91 72

Overall Equipment Efficiency %

BASELINE	TARGET	ACTUAL
80	86	89
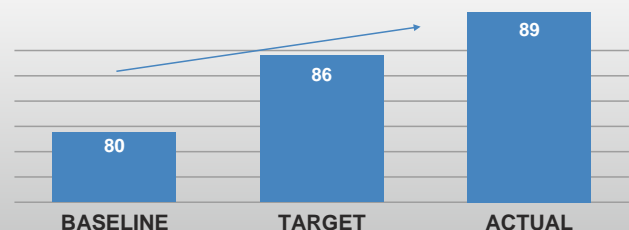
Savings from Lean Intervention

Lumax Tier-1 LMCS Cluster-1								
Sr No.	Lean Project (Indicative List)	Cluster Units							Total
		Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	
1	5S (Housekeeping)	23,350	87,570	21,544	55,000	40,000	40,000	45,000	3,12,464
2	Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's)	-	-	-	12,000	40,000	40,000	30,000	1,22,000
3	Poka Yokeor Mistake Proofing	-	-	-	15,000	40,000	50,000	40,000	1,45,000
4	Kaizen Blitzor Rapid Improvement Process	4,19,700	42,135	50,000	35,00,000	16,16,000	3,50,000	3,58,600	63,36,435
5	Training	-	-	-	25,000	25,000	25,000	30,000	1,05,000
6	Visual Management	-	-	-	50,000	45,000	45,000	35,000	1,75,000
7	Quality Improvement	29,77,000	2,51,974	3,69,816	35,000	30,000	15,000	40,000	37,18,790
8	Change Over Time Reduction (SMED)	7,50,000	86,400	2,64,000	15,000	40,000	45,000	35,000	12,35,400
9	VSM	2,16,000	9,96,000	22,680	45,000	20,94,000	83,000	2,25,000	36,81,680
10	Inventory Reduction	40,000	2,40,733	8,000	20,000	1,08,000	25,000	1,07,986	5,49,719
	Unit Wise Saving	36,76,050	17,04,812	7,36,040	37,72,000	40,78,000	7,18,000	9,46,586	163,81,488
Total Cluster Saving in Rupees = 1,63,81,488/-									

Over 50 Kaizens were implemented in each cluster member unit with Standard Operating Procedures deployed for all major operations in all units translating into savings of over Rs. 1.60 crores.

Engineering and Fabrication Cluster, Yamuna Nagar, Haryana

Number of members: 9

Consultant: LBE Consulting Group

Nature of Business: Electrical control panels, Aluminium utensils etc.

The following problems cropped up during the LMCS journey:

The results speak for themselves:

Upto 60% improvement achieved in through put yield

500+ Kaizens implemented in cluster

Upto Rs. 1.17 crore savings achieved in the cluster

High Inventory Levels

Manual Operations

Trigger Points

High Rejection Rates & Improper Recording

Improper Maintenance
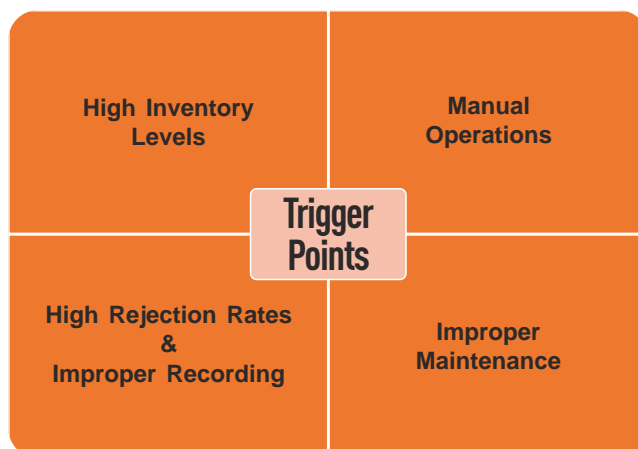
Govt has addressed MSMEs' lack of credit availability

% REJECTIONS RATE

Legend: Intial (DSR), Final (PHASE-5)

5S LEVELS

Legend: Final (PHASE-5), Intial (DSR)
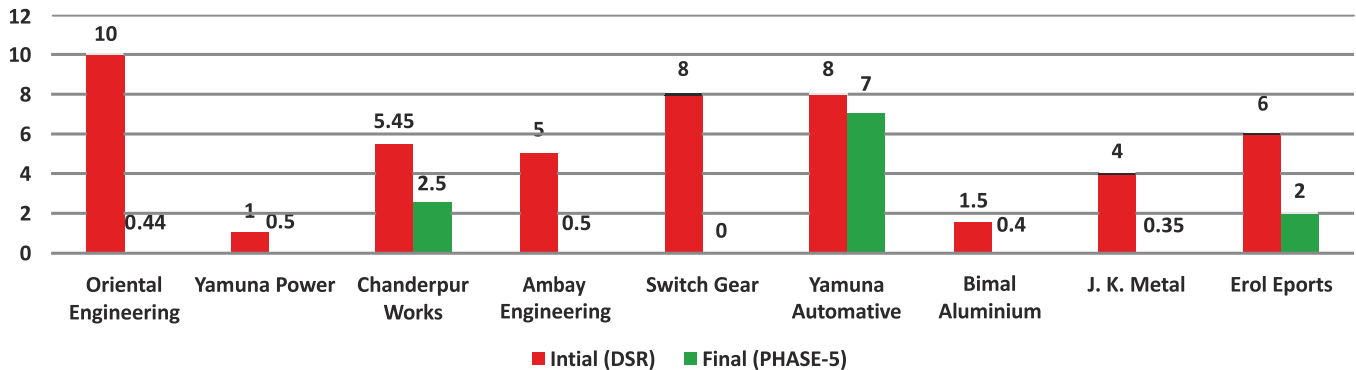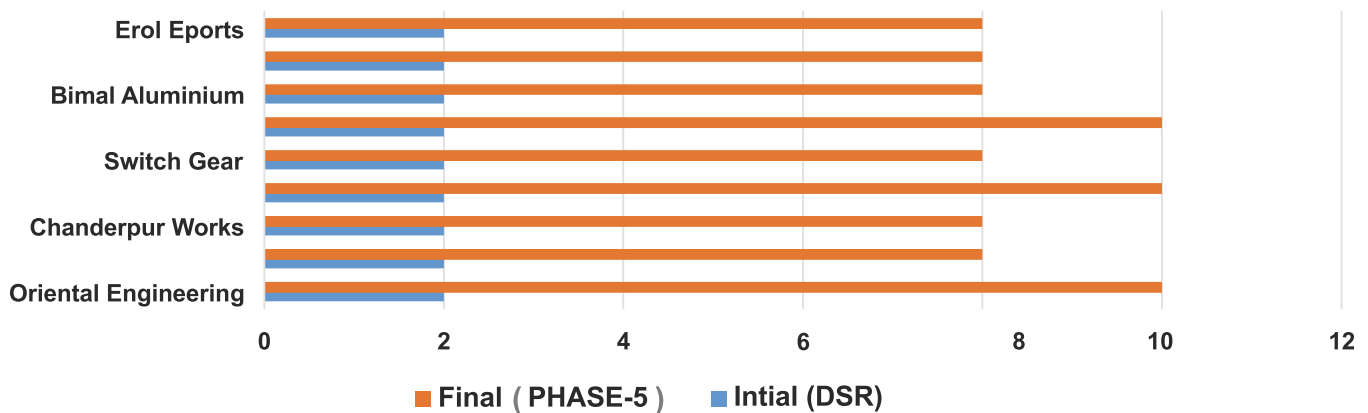
Shri Lakshmi General Engineering Cluster
Unit - M/s Pragati Founders, Kolhapur
Consultant – PPDC Agra

Layout Change and 5S

Opportunity	Measures Taken	Benefits
'Core Shop' and 'Core Assy. Shop' located away from 'Pouring area'. 1. Total travelling dist. = 128 mtrs. 2. Two helpers + foreman employed = Rs. 25,000 per month 3. Rent cost = Rs. 14,000	With 5S and VSM, vacant area created in main shop, Core shop and core assy. Area shifted there. Total travelling distance reduced to 30 mtrs.	1. Rent cost saving = Rs. 14,000 2. foreman + 2 helpers cost saving = Rs. 25,000/- 3. Transport trips reduced = Rs. 9,000/- saved 4. Savings by applying single piece flow = Rs. 16,000/- 5. Defects reduced = Rs. 2,000/- saved 6. Total Rs. 66,000/- savings/month * 12 = **Rs. 7,92,000/- lakh p.a.** 7. Space saving = 1500 sq.ft.

The company moved from a 3% loss making venture to achieving 12% profits with Lean implementation.

Mr. Milind Patil, Managing Director appreciated the assistance with, "This scheme gave us the opportunity to build and motivate our team for implementation of Lean tools that will go a long way in adding value to our processes. The classroom training and hands-on implementation on the shop floor of Lean tools/projects has given very good results of reducing the waste in the enterprise. There is a lot of change in the attitude of our staff and workers. We have saved around Rs 62,13,534 per annum till Phase 5 by implementation of 5S, Visual Control, Cellular Layout, Kaizen, Kanban, Poka Yoke, SMED, TPM, etc. We will keep this going and sustain in our factory."

Automotive Transmission Parts Manufacturing Lean Cluster

Unit - Beejay Enterprises, Balgaum, Karnataka
LMCS - SMED methodology applied in machining of Ring Gear D2500001 component

The five main steps of implementation covered:
- Identify Pilot Area
- Identify Elements (like 3M's)

- Separate the External Elements
- Convert Internal Elements to External
- Streamline Remaining Elements

Two broad categories of improvement were outlined as - Human (achieved through preparation and organisation) and Technical (achieved through engineering). The following chart illustrates the areas of opportunity and improvements for the SMED project:

Human Improvements (Quick Wins)
- Define roles, measures, and accountabilities
- Coach teams and look for immediate process improvements
- Create standardized work instructions

Human Improvements (Next Step Examples)
- Retrieve parts before changeover starts
- Mark standard settings on equipment
- Eliminate waiting and unnecessary motion

Technical Improvements (Examples)
- Install quick release mechanisms
- Eliminate adjustments
- Modularize equipment

(Y-axis: Setup Time, X-axis: Implementation Time/Effort)

The Benefits:
- Lower manufacturing cost (faster changeovers mean less equipment downtime –elimination of 16 losses)
- Smaller lot sizes (faster changeovers enable more frequent product changes)
- Improved responsiveness to customer demand (smaller lot sizes enable more flexible scheduling)
- Lower inventory levels (smaller lot sizes result in lower inventory levels)
- Smoother start-ups (standardised changeover processes improve consistency and quality)

The Achievements:

The company was delighted that, "The LMCS has created an environment in which we have felt free to ask questions and were always available for help with backup team, we have learnt to share knowledge, cross learning across the clusters. It taught our team the importance of self-motivation and determination, and we appreciate how hard work was rewarded."

Item	BEFORE	AFTER
Assumed Setting Time	86.44 Min	27.74 Min
External Setting Time	19.32 Min	3.97 Min
Internal Setting Time	67.52 Min	24.67 Min
Actual Setting Time At Video Shooting	89.64 Min	30.04 Min
Cost Saving through SMED		
Before Changeover time		89.64 Min
After Changeover time		30.04 Min
Saved/Setting (i.e. 59.60 x M/c Hour Rate Rs. 7.5/min)		Rs. 447.00
Annually Saving (48 Setting's)		Rs. 21,456.00
Horizontal deployment for other products		
Ring gear-300500001		Rs. 21,456.00
Spindle-706		Rs. 18,000.00

Furniture Component Manufacturing Lean Cluster Mumbai/Pune

Unit - Matrix Auto, Pune, Maharashtra

Consultant - Lean Management Consultancy, Nasik, Maharashtra

The Lean Journey from October 2017 to June 2019 delivered learnings of OEE (Overall Equipment Effectiveness), capital productivity, labour productivity, elimination of hidden wastages, reduction in lead time with the help of Value Stream Mapping (VSM) and new ideas converted to Kaizens. The employees were educated and trained to make cultural and behavioural changes in their attitude. After implementation of Lean principles, the company grew and saved Rs.16 lakhs through all cluster projects, elimination of wastes and improvement in its processes.

Some of the auto applications include:

	Before	After	Result
Double Needle Machine			
Analysis	For double top stitch operationthe operator would work twice on single needle machine for top stitch on the trim.	We have purchased double needle machines for doing double top stitch	Over Processing Reduce
Plotter Machine – for Marking Process			

Analysis	Marking Process was done manually	We have purchased plotter machine for marking	Waiting Time Reduce – Rs. 37,440 saving annually
Trimmer Machine – for finishing process			
Analysis	The excess thread is removed during finishing operation by scissors or trimmer	We have purchased thread cutting machine (Trimmer) - to reduce thread cutting time and packing process will be completed in lesser time	Man Power Reduce – Rs.1,32,000/- annually

Morning Meetings

Analysis: Lack of co-ordination among team leaders, work not properly synchronised, low production and low throughput yield.

Result: - All zone leaders assemble every day at a particular time in the morning and discuss, review, suggest about production details, quality and daily whereabouts. This, in turn, gives good results in terms of coordination, throughput yield, quality orientation, new ways to eliminate wastes, 3M and optimum utilisation of resources and meeting targets set by the organisation with ease.

Work Force Trainings and Review

Analysis: Random working style, lot of quality and production issues.

Result: Training the operators led to disciplined way of working, rejection PPM levels came down, many SOPs were developed, with involvement of workforce enthusiasm and morale improved. 5S, TPM, Kaizens, 3M activity trainings led to change of mindset.

3M, 7 Wastages & Kaizens Project

Analysis: - Randomides and working style, lot of quality issues, low productivity, unnecessary movement.

Result: - Reduce searching time, eliminate motion waste, improve quality, reduce rejection PPM, reduce manpower leading to savings of Rs.9.47 lakhs annually.

Nashik Industrial Components and Equipment Manufacturers Cluster 2

Unit: Preeti Engineering Works
LMCS: Lean Design for Manufacturing

Problems Faced:

- Multiple time consuming manufacturing processes
- Poor on-time delivery
- Excess material movement
- Chances of rejections/rework
- Chances of product failure at customer end due to improper spot weld
- Operator fatigue
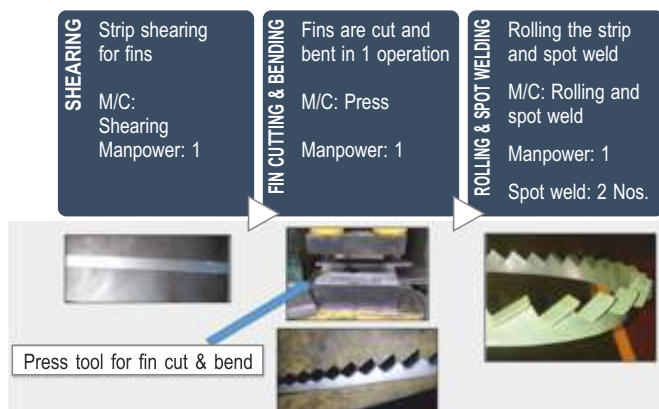- High cost of manufacturing

Analysis

- Manufacturing process was lengthy with multiple processes involved
- Batch processing led to excess handling and transportation
- Job involved too many spot welds (66 per job)

Process 'Before' Improvements

SHEARING	BLANKING	BENDING	ROLLING & SPOT	FIN SPOT WELD
Strip shearing for fins M/C: Shearing Manpower: 1	Blanking to make pieces strip M/C: Press Manpower: 1	Bending to make fins from blanks M/C: Press Manpower: 1	Rolling the strip and spot weld M/C: Rolling and spot weld Manpower: 1 Spot weld: 2 Nos.	Welding fins on to the roller strip M/C: Spot welding machines Manpower: 1 Spot weld: 64 Nos.

Process 'After' Improvements

SHEARING	FIN CUTTING & BENDING	ROLLING & SPOT WELDING
Strip shearing for fins M/C: Shearing Manpower: 1	Fins are cut and bent in 1 operation M/C: Press Manpower: 1	Rolling the strip and spot weld M/C: Rolling and spot weld Manpower: 1 Spot weld: 2 Nos.

Press tool for fin cut & bend

Solution

- Based on Lean Principles, new part design was proposed to the customer
- Lean Design process was incorporated to ensure 'Design for Manufacturing'
- Focus was to reduce the number of processes, batch size, manpower required, equipment required and chances of rejections and rework
- Small specialized tool was made which took care of cutting and bending
- Customer approved the samples after testing functionality

Benefits Gained:

Lean wastes addressed

- Motion
- Excess transportation
- Inventory
- Over production
- Over processing
- Waiting
- Defects

Improvement achieved in

- On time delivery
- Customer responsiveness
- Drastic improvement in lead time
- Eased production planning and control

The total number of operators came down from 3 to 2 while the total time required for producing 100 finned rings fell from 25 hours to 9.5 hours with a financial saving to the tune of Rs.1,52,100 per year.

Number of processes Reduced from 5 to 3

Number of components in final product reduced from 33 to 1

Number of Spot Welds reduced from 66 to 2 per job

In sum, the micros, small and medium enterprises have benefitted to the tune of 4.71 times, 7.66 times and 8.66 times with respect to the Rupee invested respectively. The overall benefit across the MSME units stands at 7.23times of the Rupee invested.

Lean Implementation: Cost-Benefit Analysis

Scale (Investment in P&M-Manufacturing Units)	No. of Units	Total Savings in Lakhs	Savings Per Unit (Lakhs)	Investment in P&M - Per Unit (Lakhs)
Micro (<0.25 Cr)	47	Rs.624.00	Rs.13.28	Rs.14.80
Small (<0.25 Cr & < 5 Cr)	204	Rs.6343.20	Rs..31.09	Rs.183.40
Medium (< 5 Cr & <10 Cr)	24	Rs.1145.40	Rs.47.73	Rs.750.20
	275	Rs.8112.60	Rs.29.50	Rs.204.00

On Time Delivery percentage was improved by 26% → **Defect percentage of Cluster was reduced by 73%** → **Continuous improvement through improved employee involvement**

Making Quality 4.0 a Reality

To achieve excellence through quality is to embrace the future of quality! Quality 4.0 opens the window to exploiting the emerging technologies of Industry 4.0 - such as improved data transparency and high quality data-driven insights - to realign quality management functions with the broader organisational strategy. However, a BCG study reveals that while crucial, technology is only one piece of a broader quality transformation that must also focus on people and skills.

Anticipated changes that will occur during Industry 4.0	+ Integrated cyber-physical interfaces automate working environments. + Automated processes deal with end-to-end systems. + Humans serve only in positions where human judgement cannot be automated and human interactions cannot be simulated. + Machines learn to learn (artificial intelligence).	Quality 4.0	+ Digitization is used to optimize signal feedback and process adjustment, and adaptive learning supports self-induced system corrections. + Quality shifts its control-oriented focus from the process operators to the process designers. + Machines learn how to self-regulate and manage their own productivity and quality. + Human performance is essential; the emphasis shifts from production to system design and integration with the business system.

TECHNOLOGY HAS GROWN exponentially over the past decade driving the fourth industrial revolution which is termed as 'Industry 4.0'. Disruptive digital technologies like Internet of Things (IoT), Cloud Computing, Edge Computing, Artificial intelligence, machine learning, Big data, blockchain, Additive Manufacturing and Augmented/Virtual/Extended Reality (AR/VR/XR)are creating paradigm shifts in manufacturing and the delivery of products and services.

Organisations have no choice but to adapt to this new industrial reality which will also dramatically transform day-to-day business both for the workforce and the management. The unprecedented and unexpected COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the value of Industry 4.0. Industry leaders who had jumped on the bandwagon with rapid learning and adaptability to new technology tools are now reaping the benefits of their pre-pandemic investments with their businesses achieving real scale at an accelerated pace.

Quality 4.0 comes in as a measure of aligning traditional best practices in quality disciplines with the emerging capabilities of Industry 4.0, thus enabling organisations to move towards operational excellence and growth.

For example, companies can monitor processes and collect data in real time and apply analytics to predict quality issues and maintenance needs. Manufacturers can use simulation tools to experiment with alternatives and select what is most beneficial, both for product design as well as for manufacturing processes. Using IoT to connect the legacy manufacturing assets and cloud-based data analytics applications to acquire shop-floor insights will promote quick and accurate day-to-day decision making.

> Quality 4.0 is the leveraging of technology with people to improve the quality of an organisation, its products, its services and the outcomes it creates - Chartered Quality Institute (CQI)

LNS Research has identified 11 key components or axes of the Quality 4.0 framework including both familiar and unfamiliar quality considerations to help organisations adopt Quality 4.0. The axes cover data, analytics, connectivity, collaboration, app development, scalability, management systems, compliance, culture, leadership and competency.

In February 2021, the CQI commissioned a consortium comprising Leeds University Business School and The Oakland Institute for Business Research and Education to carry out some research into the concepts and principles that underpin the evolution of 'Quality 4.0'. This will also contribute to developing a working definition of Quality 4.0.

A 2019 Boston Consulting Group's (BCG) global study - in partnership with ASQ and Deutsche Gesellschaftfür Qualität (DGQ) sought the opinions of professionals on the skills needed to implement Quality 4.0, obstacles to implementing, and cases for the use of digital quality management. The survey covered executives and quality managers from 221 companies representing 18 producing industries in major sectors: consumer goods, industrial goods, medical technology and pharmaceuticals from USA, Europe, China and Japan. The questions were designed to evaluate participants' views on Quality 4.0 then and in 2024, to understand the most important use cases, and to identify major challenges and skills needed to implement a transformation. The study team also interviewed numerous experts to gain insight into industry benchmarks, the impact of use cases and best practices. The interviews gave experts the opportunity to elaborate on key survey findings and offer insight into executive-level implementation challenges and success stories.

While the data on the planning and implementation of Quality 4.0 and even the expectations thereof have become outdated, the potential value, challenges and other information still holds good. Moreover, even though the study did not involve Indian participants, the findings are globally applicable across industries, domains and countries.
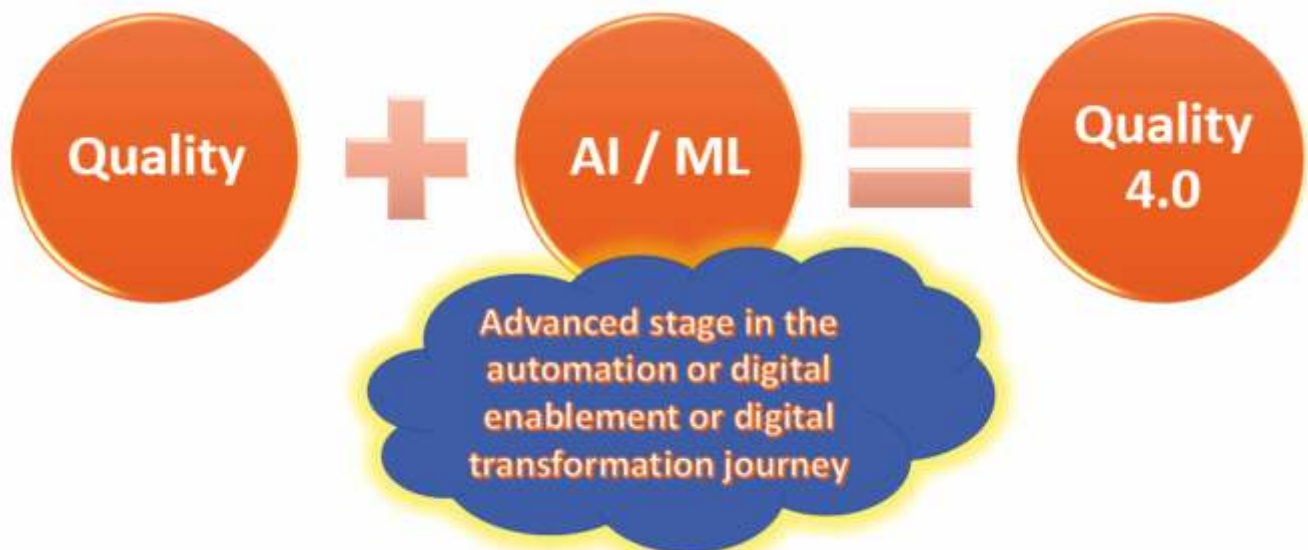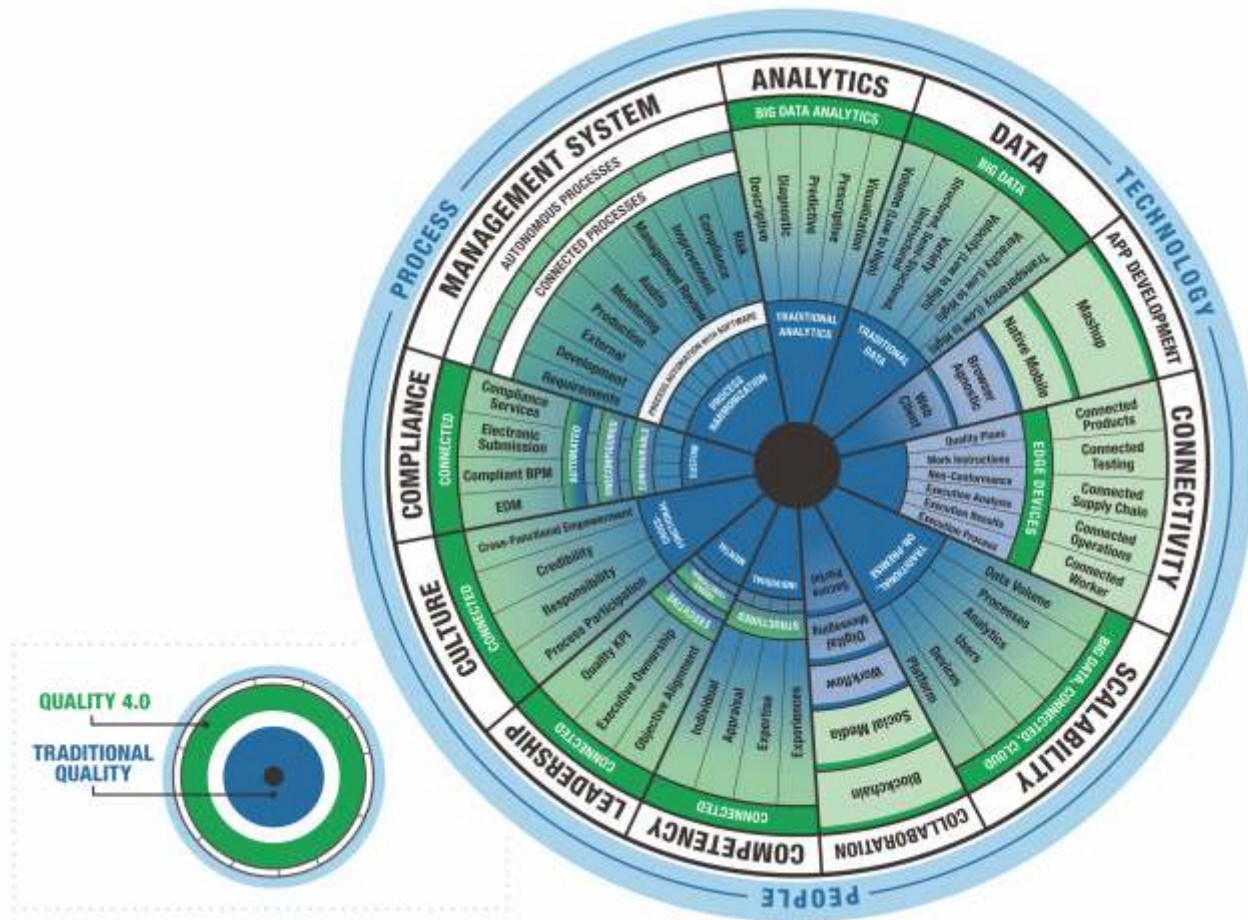
The study report titled 'Quality 4.0 Takes More Than Technology' reveals that companies recognise the fact that Quality 4.0 can create substantial value at all stages of the value chain. They perceive that manufacturing and R&D areas will benefit most from improved quality. (See Exhibit 1).

EXHIBIT 1 | Survey Participants Rate Quality 4.0 as Important in the Value Chain from End to End

Importance of quality at each value chain stage (%)
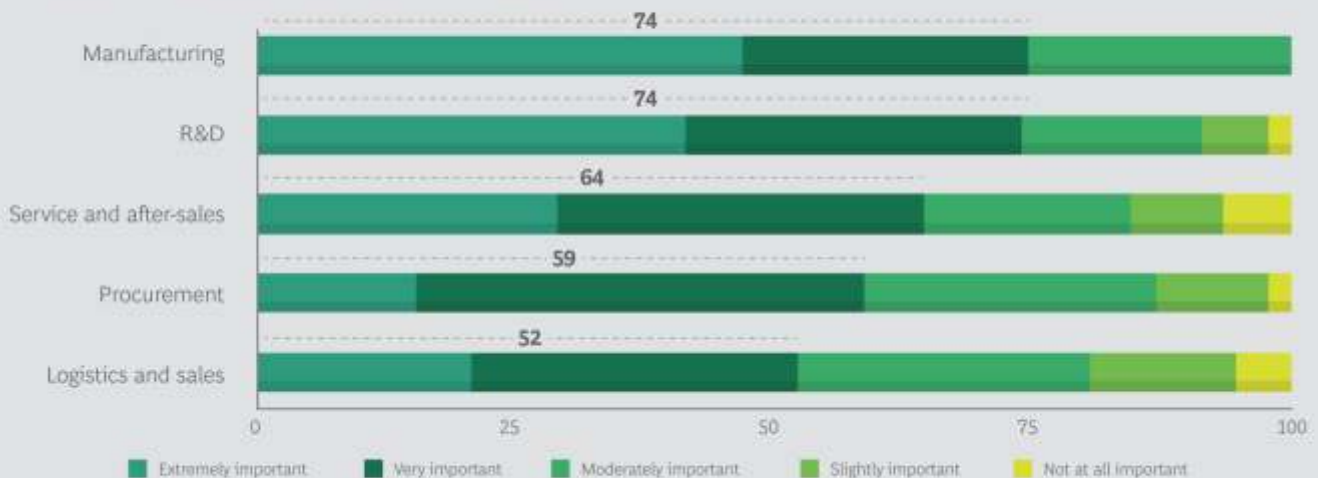
Source: Quality 4.0 survey by BCG, ASQ, and DGQ.

Participants point to predictive analytics, sensors and tracking, and electronic feedback loops as the most important technologies for driving impact. More than 60% say that predictive analytics will significantly affect quality performance and the bottom line by 2024. This emphasises that investments in predictive analytics for quality management will become a major competitive advantage.

Other high-impact technologies include digital twins (digital replicas of physical objects and processes) and simulation testing. These will enable preventive maintenance and optimised production, thereby reducing the likelihood that a company will inadvertently release poor-quality products.

Exhibit 2 highlights the top use cases that survey participants have identified in each area of the value chain.

Size of the Prize

Nearly two-thirds of the survey respondents believed that Quality 4.0 will significantly affect their operations by 2024. Most of them stated that within the quality function, digital technologies will be important for quality governance, performance management and training.

The companies rated performance, responsiveness and productivity as their main reasons for implementing Quality 4.0. Their top three metrics for assessing improvements are manufacturing quality (first-pass yield, scrap rate, rework, etc.), impact of poor quality on customers (rejects, complaints, warranty claims, etc.) and the monetary cost of poor quality. They also agreed that Quality 4.0 can promote significant improvements in key quality metrics.

RealWorld Challenges

Participants identified factors unrelated to technology and data as the most significant challenges to implementing Quality 4.0. A shortage of digital skills and talent was ranked as the main impediment. An unclear digital strategy ranked second among the most important barriers to implementation and lack of quality culture came third (See Exhibit 3).

Surprisingly, cyber security was ranked lowest among the challenges revealing that companies are oblivious to their growing exposure to cyber threats courtesy the expanding use of digital technology. They should carefully assess the vulnerabilities that Quality 4.0 initiatives create and work with experts to address the resulting exposure.

EXHIBIT 2 | Quality 4.0 Has Many Applications at Each Stage of the Value Chain
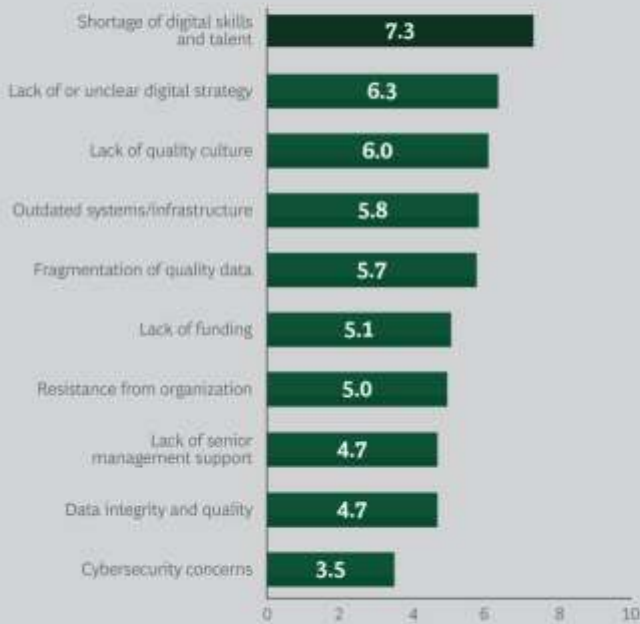
Top use cases selected by survey participants

Centralization of quality data

End-to-end quality management system

Quality cost transparency

Pick by light

Glove equipped with barcode reader

Agile product development

Usage pattern data

Advanced analytics to support decisions

Supplier performance dashboards

Integration of supplier quality data and analytics

Predictive quality

Machine-vision quality control

Digital SOPs on touchscreen for manual assembly

Warranty management enhanced with IoT and analytics

Remote quality diagnosis for customer support

■ R&D   ■ Procurement   ■ Manufacturing   ■ Logistics and sales   ■ Service and after-sales   ■ Cross-functional

Source: Quality 4.0 survey by BCG, ASQ, and DGQ.
Note: IoT = Internet of Things; SOPs = standard operating procedures.

EXHIBIT 3 | Survey Participants Generally See Talent, Strategy, and Culture as Greater Challenges Than Technology
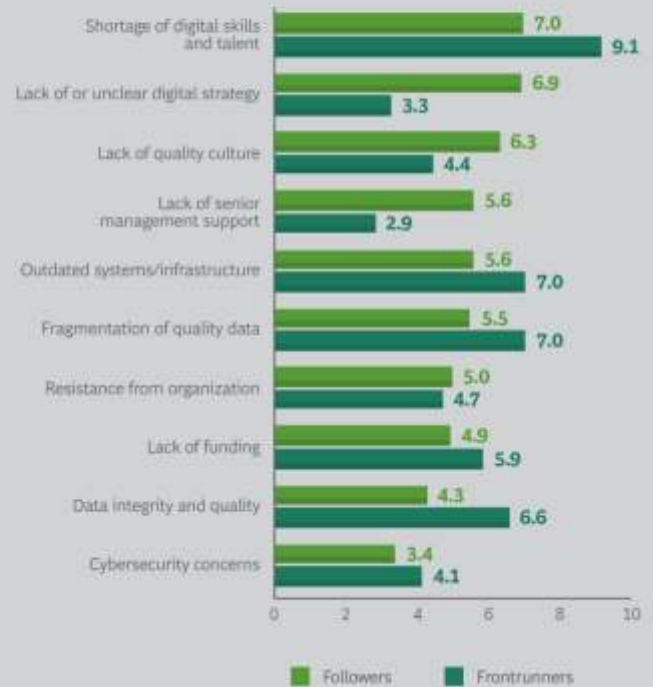
A shortage of digital skills is the top barrier to Quality 4.0 implementation

Ranking from 1 (minor barrier) to 10 (major barrier)

Barrier	Value
Shortage of digital skills and talent	7.3
Lack of or unclear digital strategy	6.3
Lack of quality culture	6.0
Outdated systems/infrastructure	5.8
Fragmentation of quality data	5.7
Lack of funding	5.1
Resistance from organization	5.0
Lack of senior management support	4.7
Data integrity and quality	4.7
Cybersecurity concerns	3.5

Frontrunners give greater emphasis to data-related barriers

Ranking from 1 (minor barrier) to 10 (major barrier)

Barrier	Followers	Frontrunners
Shortage of digital skills and talent	7.0	9.1
Lack of or unclear digital strategy	6.9	3.3
Lack of quality culture	6.3	4.4
Lack of senior management support	5.6	2.9
Outdated systems/infrastructure	5.6	7.0
Fragmentation of quality data	5.5	7.0
Resistance from organization	5.0	4.7
Lack of funding	4.9	5.9
Data integrity and quality	4.3	6.6
Cybersecurity concerns	3.4	4.1

■ Followers ■ Frontrunners

Source: Quality 4.0 survey by BCG, ASQ, and DGQ.

Nearly two-thirds of survey participants believe that Quality 4.0 will significantly affect their operations within five years.
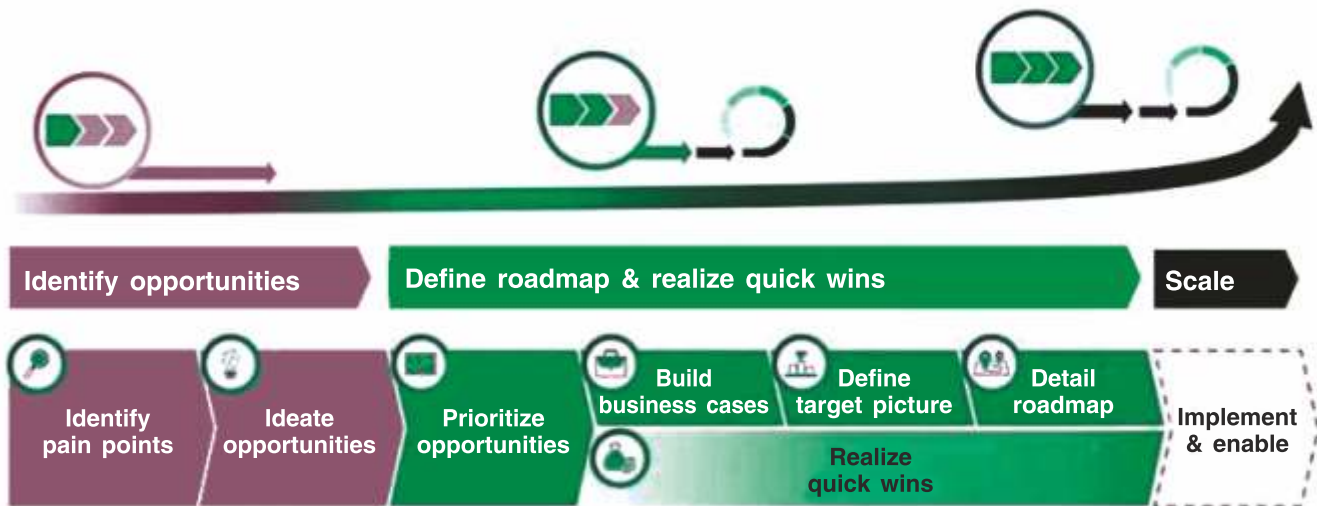
Spotlighting People and Skills

The survey respondents support the idea that successful Quality 4.0 implementation depends on empowering people in the right roles and developing the right skills. They regarded soft skills such as communication, change management, teaming, and strategic and long-term planning as the most important for quality management leaders for creating a quality-centred culture across the organisation. They also acknowledged the need to improve the analytics and big data skills.

> "Quality needs to be driven cross-functionally, with all functions having 'skin in the game'!"

However, companies are unable to find people with appropriate skill sets and are thus focusing on upskilling and reskilling their current employees. Therefore, only when Quality 4.0 is considered a competitive advantage driving business value, will quality careers become more attractive.

The Winning Moves

Companies must take a multi-faceted and structured approach for effectively implementing Quality 4.0 that addresses the full range of strategic, cultural and technological issues. This includes:

- Prioritise pain points
- Identify, test, and scale up use cases
- Define a clear vision and roadmap
- Establish technology and data enablers
- Build the required skills
- Manage the changes
- Foster a quality culture

Quality 4.0 Value Propositions

ASQ defines six value propositions that Quality 4.0 initiatives should deliver in order of significance:

- Augment (or improve upon) human intelligence
- Increase the speed and quality of decision making
- Improve transparency, traceability and auditability
- Anticipate changes, reveal biases and adapt to new circumstances and knowledge
- Evolve relationships, organisational boundaries and concept of trust to reveal opportunities for continuous improvement and new business models
- Learn how to learn by cultivating self-awareness and other awareness as skills

The Quality Council of India is also highlighting how Quality 4.0 can play a defining role in developing an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. Achieving self-reliance requires Indian companies to become leaders in quality and productivity. And adopting Quality 4.0 can become the catalyst for organisations to realise their true potential with enhanced competitiveness and innovation with a focus on data and new emerging technologies. Therefore, increased awareness of Quality 4.0 is the need of the hour!

Conclusion

Developing an effective Quality 4.0 strategy will enable organisations to address long-standing quality issues by engaging in strategic planning for leveraging new technologies to achieve a culture of excellence. And yet, Quality 4.0 is about much more than technology and does not diminish the role of people in assuring quality. It is a new way of managing quality by giving people the skills to apply digital tools to redefine quality excellence in the 'factory of the future'. ◗

A New Revolution of Human Touch in Quality Management is Beckoning

Even before the world has grasped the fundamentals of Quality 4.0, Quality 5.0 is already unfolding and rewriting the future of quality management once again. Indeed, we have to gear up for the fifth generation of quality right away!

Industry 5.0 is still in its relative infancy – when fully developed, it will feature collaborative robots that emphasise the importance of people in robotic technology

QUALITY 4.0 - EMERGING from Industry 4.0 - is the buzzword today. Organisations are gearing up to incorporate integrated technologies and automation to notch up their productivity and efficiency. Injecting digitally-enabled technology in quality control processes brings us to the threshold of Quality 4.0. Now it is all about connecting people, information and machines in unprecedented ways to make quality smart as well.

Even as we are mired in rising to the new challenges, the next phase of industrialisation is already upon us. Indeed, the world is welcoming Industry 5.0 a lot sooner than expected. And Quality 5.0 is following in its wake as always!

Industry 5.0 - Defining the Rules for Collaborative Human and Machine Interaction

While Industry 4.0 is all about automation and smart machines for achieving efficiency with minimum human involvement, Industry 5.0 brings the human touch back to the forefront. In other words, advanced and emerging technologies are leveraged to help humans work better and faster.

> "Excessive automation at Tesla was a mistake. To be precise, my mistake" - *Elon Musk*

The smart and connected machines will be there, but their cognitive abilities will now be merged with human intelligence and resourcefulness in collaborative operations. The robots will not work separately anymore; they will instead be operating alongside humans in a safe and effective manner. Neither will workers be competing with machines and nor will the machines take jobs away like earlier. A balanced pairing of empowered humans and smart machine workers will enable the industries to take advantage of the human intuition, adaptability, problem-solving and critical thinking capabilities while reaping the benefits of speed, accuracy and precision in repetitive tasks handled by robots. The work will be restructured in ways like human hands handling lighter and creative aspects while machines bear the more strenuous and demanding tasks leading to positive work relationships.

Therefore, technology becomes assistive and refines the interactions between people and machines to foster effective, sustainable and safe production.

> "Industry 5.0 will make the factory a place where creative people can come and work, to create a more personalised and human experience for workers and their customers" - *Esben Østergaard, Universal Robots co-founder and chief technology officer*

Reconciling man and machines indicates that the unique creative potential of human beings will once again be placed front and centre. Even as the technological innovations of Industry 4.0 spell mass production sans any personalisation, Industry 5.0 is poised to bring customisation to the forefront once again in both products and services. Human touch comes into play here which sets the stage for care, creativity and craftsmanship. This will help consumers to satisfy the inherent urge to express themselves in a unique manner.

What's more, the shift in technologies with sensitivity will lead to sustainable manufacturing policies - like lower carbon footprint, using renewable energy, minimal waste and even zero waste generation.

Highlights of Industry 5.0 compared to Industry 4.0

Organisations that do not tailor themselves to the 5.0 model will lose out on the accompanying competitive advantages and become obsolete very soon.

A Paradigm Shift for Quality Management

These interconnections of man and machines open the door to countless opportunities in the quality realm as well. As the fifth generation of quality - that is christened Quality 5.0 - continues to evolve, there is a need to look for ways to actively strategise and integrate to reap the maximum unique benefits thereof.

Courtesy Industry 4.0 and the accompanying artificial intelligence and machine learning, we now have smart quality systems that behave intelligently. What we still need is systems that will act in the right manner. Therefore, Quality 5.0 will move from doing things right to doing the right things. The concept of emotional intelligence comes in, and this is where all the difference will lie.

This focus on human-centric and sustainable quality syncs perfectly with the post-pandemic narrative of changed priorities by bringing the human, social and environmental dimensions back into the equation. It will be an era of experience for sure!

This new platform will make societal satisfaction a more appropriate measure of success than just individual customer satisfaction like the days of yore, thus leading to sustainable development, sustainable success and a sustainable future.

Therefore, quality professionals will have to adjust to a new generation of societal satisfaction while incorporating the principal values of both external customers and stakeholders. The principles, practices, techniques and tools of quality management will expand to incorporate measurements of economic, social and environmental factors.

Conclusion

Do not dismiss Industry 5.0 as a fad – it is already making inroads in the manufacturing sector. Quality professionals have to gear up to transition to Quality 5.0. This calls for careful planning and preparation to handle highly integrated systems and extreme connectivity to drive optimal outcomes from human/machine interactions. Sustainable solutions are the key to the future! ◗

Creating an Ecosystem of Quality in the Country

QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA

QCI

Creating an Ecosystem for Quality

"QCI's efforts in making the Quality Movement a 'Mass Movement' have been quite encouraging and the impetus that has been created in the last few years has made and will continue to make strong imprint on the quality journey in our country."

QCI operates through its following constituent boards

National Board for Quality Promotion

National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies

National Accreditation Board for Education and Training

National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers

National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories

QCI IS CONSTANTLY working to establish, sustain and improve the accreditation infrastructure of the nation so as to promote quality parameters in every sphere of life. The mandate is to provide solutions to critical quality issues in trade and business to equip organisations to fulfil their journey of excellence.

Every country needs a quality infrastructure that helps the domestic products and services to improve and become competitive in global markets. Quality Council of India (QCI) was established as a National body for Accreditation on recommendations of Expert Mission of EU after consultations in Inter-ministerial Task Force, Committee of Secretaries and Group of Ministers through a Cabinet decision in 1996.

QCI was set up to:

• Establish and operate an accreditation structure in the country

• Create a mechanism for independent third-party assessment of products, services, processes and persons

• Spread quality movement in India by undertaking a National Quality Campaign

This national body for accreditation is an independent autonomous organisation established with the support of the Government of India and the Indian industry represented by the three premier industry associations:

(i) Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM)

(ii) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

(iii) Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI)

The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) – now rechristened Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) - Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is the nodal point for all matters related to QCI.

National Accreditation Board for Testing & Calibration Laboratories (NABL)

NABL has been established with the objective of providing Government, Industry Associations and Industry in general with a scheme of Conformity Assessment Body's accreditation which involves third-party assessment of the technical competence of testing including medical and calibration laboratories, proficiency testing providers and reference material producers.

National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH)

NABH has been set up to establish and operate accreditation programme for healthcare organisations. The board is structured to cater to much desired needs of the consumers and to set benchmarks for progress of health industry. The board while being supported by all stakeholders including industry, consumers, government, have full functional autonomy in its operation. The focus is on ensuring patient safety and quality of healthcare based on national/international standards, through self and external evaluation processes.

National Accreditation Board for Education & Training (NABET)

NABET has established a mechanism for the accredited certification of educational organisations, vocational training organisations and for accreditation of skill certification bodies. The accreditation program for quality school governance in the country works as a framework for the effective management and delivery of holistic education aimed at overall development of students.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made the world shift to online education and a blended learning approach (both online and offline campus delivery) will continue to be the way forward. NABET has laid down procedures and criteria for voluntary accreditation of such Learning Service Providers (LSP) to ensure the basic norms for quality delivery of domain specific education/ training.

Accreditation is the independent evaluation of conformity assessment bodies against recognised standards to ensure their impartiality and competence to carry out specific activities, such as tests, calibrations, inspections and certifications.
Source: https://iaf.nu/en/faq/

MR. PIYUSH GOYAL, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, while reviewing QCI's performance in June 2020 affirmed that quality is going to define India's future. He further observed that, "Atmanirbhar Bharat will grow and prosper on the basis of quality indigenous products and services. Quality consciousness will have to percolate to the level of the common man, and quality culture imbibed and cultivated in all aspects of our life."

Lauding the QCI for growing exponentially in the last few years and developing a large bandwidth for activities across the sectors and streams, the Minister said the march must go on in an uninterrupted manner. He said that QCI has taken many initiatives during the lockdown period, but the real challenge and opportunity lies in the post-COVID era. The future is going to usher in a new way of life with new norms. This will call for

MR. PIYUSH GOYAL
Union Minister of Commerce and Industry

new quality standards in all fields, including education, health, shopping and services.

He further called upon the QCI to study the best practices evolving in other countries for the post-COVID era, and adopt them in India, after taking into account various aspects and the local situations.

The Minister emphasised the fact that the quality evaluation and certification should be rational, transparent, reliable and free from any manipulation or malpractices. The quality standards should be high class and implementable. He also stressed on the urgent need for evolving quality standards in the education, health, hospitality, transport, packaging, food processing and MSME sectors and called upon the QCI to help the private sector also in adopting the quality standards and practices.

Source: Press India Bureau

National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB)

NABCB provides accreditation to Certification and Inspection Bodies based on assessment of their competence as per the Board's criteria and in accordance with International Standards and Guidelines.

NABCB is internationally recognised and represents the interests of the Indian industry at international forums through membership and active participation with the objective of becoming a signatory to international Multilateral/Mutual Recognition Arrangements (MLA/MRA).

Accreditation is offered for quality management systems, environmental management systems, food safety management systems, inspection, product certification, occupational health and safety management systems, information security management systems, etc.

National Board for Quality Promotion (NBQP)

NBQP works on the vision of promoting quality of life for the citizens of India. It has two important missions and the first one is to promote application of quality management standards and statistical quality tools with an objective of enabling industry, to improve their competitiveness, with specific focus on SME sectors. The

second is focussed on empowering the consumers to demand quality and consequently creating a back-pressure on suppliers to ensure quality of their products and services. This is facilitated through regular Quality Conclaves, awareness programs, workshops/seminars pan-India and instituting the QCI-D L Shah National Quality Award to motivate the industry to upgrade/enhance their processes through the application of appropriate quality tools and techniques.

> Each board of QCI functions independently within its area of expertise to provide standard quality assessment results that are globally accepted. This way they equip various entities to preserve the international standards for quality even while meeting the people's demands.

In addition to the above boards, QCI has constituted following Divisions for furthering the quality ecosystem:

Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED) Division

This Division leads various projects of national importance with a focus on 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. It assists various Ministries, like the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, under which the "MSME Sustainable (ZED)

Certification" Scheme is being launched; the Ministry of Tourism under which the SAATHI and NIDHI initiatives are being operationalised, etc.

The ZED division is also involved in the flagship programmes of the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs, ODOP initiative of Government of U.P. etc. The Division also conceptualised and launched the WASH Scheme of QCI which is a harmonised standard on 'Workplace Assessment for Safety and Hygiene' aimed to help organisations assess their preparedness to restart and run their operations safely amid the COVID-19 threat.

Project Analysis and Documentation Division (PADD)

The PAD Division of QCI handles projects which aim towards the design, development, and implementation of voluntary conformity assessment frameworks for governmental, inter-governmental, regional, and global organisations.

The Division prides itself in driving noble initiatives that have national, regional, and global relevance. QCI, through this division, continues to offer solutions to various Government ministries/ departments/ organisations, industrial bodies, international donor agencies, developmental organisations, and inter-governmental bodies such as the FAO of the UN, UNFSS, UNCTAD, SAARC Agriculture Center, ICRISAT, ITTO etc.

Project Planning and Implementation Division (PPID)

This Division is a brainchild of its current Chairperson- Mr. Adil Zainulbhai and Secretary General- Dr. Ravi P. Singh. They recognised that there were ample opportunities within the government where youth had a lot to contribute whereas the government had a lot of information and data yet the analysis and measurement required a committed workforce which can be utilised for implementation of various schemes under the overall guidance of the Department/Ministry. While the government may not possibly recruit such workforce for short term, a provision needed to be created in semi government organisations like QCI which can fill this long recognised void. Hence, they embarked on setting up a team of young professionals who could help the government from outside on key issues and provide support wherever required.

Udyog Manthan

Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji gave the clarion call to focus on quality when he said that it is an opportune moment for India to work on the ethos of 'Zero Defect, Zero Effect'. He urged the Indian manufacturers and other industry leaders to ensure that our products meet global standards.

Taking inspiration from his vision, Udyog Manthan, a marathon of webinars covering 46 sectors focussing on

quality and productivity in all major sectors of manufacturing and services was organised. The collaborative exercise was an initiative of the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in association with the DoC, QCI, NPC, BIS, Industry Chambers and all concerned ministries. The valedictory session of the webinar series held on March 2, 2021 had a special address from Shri SomParkash, Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, and kseynote address by Shri Piyush Goyal, Minister of Railways, Commerce and Industry, and Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.

During the eight weeks, 46 sessions on various manufacturing and service sectors, covering almost 70% of GDP had been conducted including Automobile, Steel, Pharma, Defence, Cement, Textiles, Chemicals, Tourism/Hospitality, Financial Services, Biotechnology, New and Renewable Energy, amongst others.These sessions were led by a senior officers from the concerned ministry, moderated by sector experts, and deliberated by experienced and expert panellists. The sessions were also streamed live on YouTube, Facebook and other social media platforms. Many high-profile International speakers and experts shared valuable insights on global best practices in improving Quality and Productivity. Recommendations on all major sectors wasconsolidated in a sectoral compendium.

Shri Piyush Goyal said that Quality is not an accident, it is a result of painstaking effort. It never has any cost and is always a win-win. Quality enhances productivity, brings down cost, increases efficiency, delivers economies of scale, brings consistency, eliminates waste and drives growth. He emphasised that Quality is non-negotiable if we want to 'Make in India'. He urged the nation to make sure that 'Brand India' gets identified by quality & engages with the rest of the world on the strength of its cost competitiveness and high quality in goods, services and all other spheres of economic activity. He appreciated the efforts taken by the DPIIT along with DoC, QCI, NOC, BIS, other ministries and organisers to conduct 'UdyogManthan' of this grand scale.

The minister said that initiative is just the beginning of a Quality and Productivity revolution in the country, which can change the destiny of India and further the Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision of PM Modi.

Source:
https://pib.gov.in/Pressreleaseshare.aspx?PRID=1702011

Conclusion

QCI is playing a pivotal role in propagating adoption and adherence to quality standards in all important spheres of activities including education, healthcare, industry, environment protection, governance, social sectors, infrastructure, sports and such other areas of organised activities that have a significant bearing in improving the quality of life and wellbeing of the Indian consumer. ◗
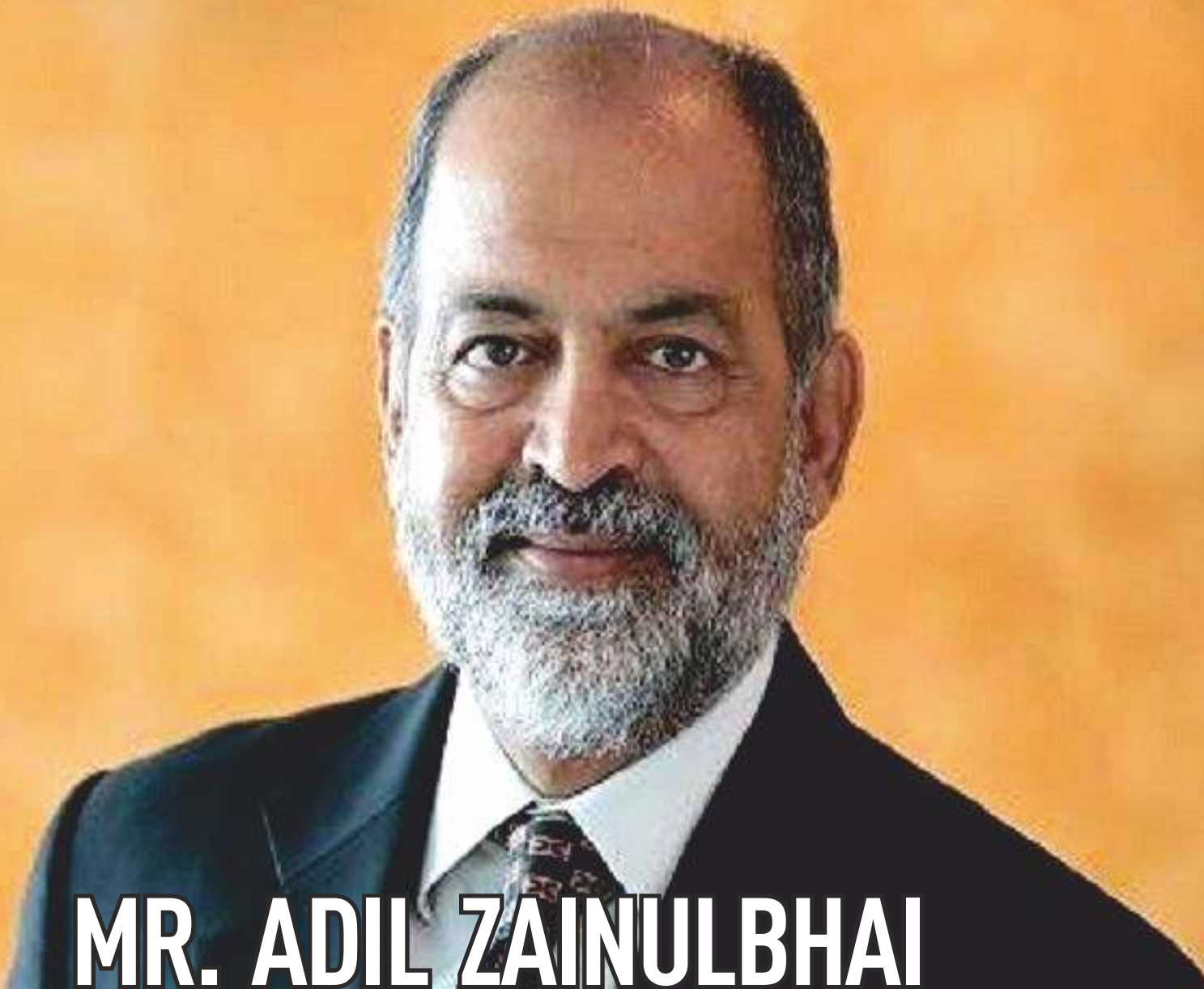
MR. ADIL ZAINULBHAI

CHAIRMAN, QUALITY COUNCIL OF INDIA, speaks about

"How QCI is driving process transformation and enhancing efficiency of government programmes and initiatives. "

Recently, the Government of India has appointed him as the Chairman of the Capacity Building Commission, which will play a central role in the National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building (NPCSCB), also known as 'Mission Karmayogi'. Mr. Zainulbhai is also the Chairman of Network 18 and TV18 and is currently on the boards of Reliance Industries Ltd., Larsen & Toubro Ltd. and Cipla.

Q **The Quality Council of India is charged with ensuring the adoption and adherence of quality standards in different spheres across the country. How has this body impacted the quality ecosystem of India?**

Quality Council of India (QCI) was set up 22 years ago as a public private partnership between the Government of India and three industry associations -- CII, FICCI and ASSOCHAM -- to be a catalyst in a nation-wide movement for quality improvement.

Today we have 5 constituent boards: National Accreditation Board for Education and Training (NABET), National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB), National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL), National accreditation board for Hospitals and Healthcare (NABH) and National Board for Quality Promotion (NBQP).

Our main area of operation has been accreditation through our boards. There has been complete dynamism in the process. Quality has been demanded from all sectors such as environment, education, healthcare as well as other sectors such as food and drugs all of which impinges directly on the quality of life of the citizens. As the industry demand grew, government departments started relying on the products and services tested, inspected and certified by our accreditation boards.

In the recent past, with the achievement of MRA signatory status for Proficiency Testing Provider (PTP) and Reference Material Producers (RMP) schemes, NABL has emerged as the second largest laboratory accreditation body after China in the world.

NABCB has been at the forefront of achieving international recognition for its accreditation schemes, bringing international acceptance to India's certifications and inspections. Today, certifications either under NABCB accreditation, or for schemes endorsed by NABCB, occupy a vital place in the industry.

NABH was recently asked to rank 700+ district hospitals across India, within a span of 4 months on the basis of the parameters defined by NITI Aayog.

NABET is another such board which has demonstrated its ability to make impact in the sphere of education. It has created a flagship program and is gradually working toward becoming the apex body for education in India. Again, the board has utilised young professionals and deployed them to execute projects with stringent timelines. This has opened up new alternatives and opportunities for the Board.

NBQP, a dedicated board working for promotion of quality in the country, has made some strategic decisions in the recent past and emerged as an improved board with a more focussed approach of including the people in their mission. Regional conclaves is one such initiative through which they have undertaken sectoral discussions in various parts of the country. They have also instituted various award schemes to encourage entities from all sectors to enhance quality culture and promote continual improvements in their process, products and services as well as showcase innovations and quantum improvement.

In June, 2018, QCI was instrumental in formulating the Indian National Strategy for Standardisation which had 4 major pillars -- standards development; conformity assessment and accreditation; technical regulation & SPS measures; and awareness and education.

Through Project Planning and Implementation Division instituted in 2014, we have 700+ young professionals who work across 22+ Ministries in over 50+ projects today.

Today, QCI is in an ideal position to be an advisor to the government and the industry on all issues related to quality, certification and accreditation. The clear vision with which the founding fathers had shaped the organization and its various boards have led QCI where it is today and there is no doubt that QCI will continue to grow as an organisation that is regarded and recognised worldwide for all the credible programs that it offers.

Q **What are the key initiatives undertaken by QCI to improve the quality of life for the consumers?**

At QCI, it has been our mission to help manufacturers establish lean management and quality practices, enable consumers to become aware of issues pertaining to product and services they pay for. We have put our best foot forward to bring in a new quality paradigm across multiple levels:

**a. Across Ministries covering varied sectors (IMPACT ASSESSMENT):**
i. **Water:** Conducted third-party verification of Atal Bhujal Yojana (Ministry of Jal Shakti) to facilitate a performance-based system for states that encourages sustainable ground-water management
ii. **Food:** Worked with the FSSAI to conduct a pan India survey, across 419 cities/districts, with the goal of eliminating trans-fat content from selected food categories and monitoring the prevalence of acrylamide content
iii. **Health (Ayushman Bharat):** Created a three-tier certification model (Gold, Silver, Bronze) for strengthening the healthcare ecosystem in India

b. Policy-Level (STRATEGY)
i. Working with **Food Corporation of India** to streamline processes across the value chain (including procurement, warehousing, distribution) through technological interventions
ii. Helped create a roadmap to double India's Exports by 2025, proposed macro-economic and sector-specific recommendations
iii. Assisting DPIIT implement the **'Made in India'** scheme, a voluntary, self-declaration based country-of-origin label for recognition of manufacturers who produce goods which are primarily made within the country

Q **How is QCI driving transformational change in the quality of products and services in the country? What should be done to make the quality changes last?**

The focus at QCI has always been to stay abreast with the latest technologies and challenges across sectors to formulate the right regulations, strategy and benchmarks which can help the 'Indian Quality Ecosystem' at large.

2 Years of QCI   #Askforquality
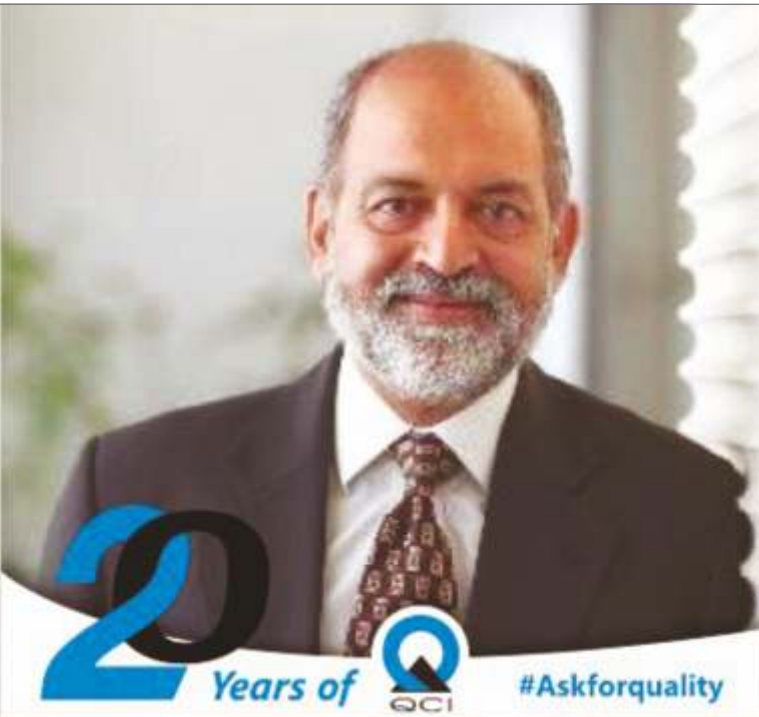
To bring about transformational change, especially in a country like India, one has to employ a decentralized lens, one that fights status quo through technology, streamlining processes and increasing stakeholders' participation.

We, at QCI, have endeavored to adapt to changing times in the following ways:

a. Tech-driven approach

- Used drones to identify and map water bodies at village and block-level and estimate their holding capacity (across 1,500 villages in 29 districts in 5 states)
- Video-based assessments which cater to more than 1,50,000 OEM/resellers on GeM

b. Access to Quality Healthcare

- NABL has accredited 7,000+ Conformity Assessment Bodies in line with international standards
- NABH accredited and certified 7,500+ healthcare providers and inspected 3,000+ hospitals for ECHS and CGHS empanelment. During the pandemic, the Board introduced remote and hybrid assessments for different programmes

For impact to be consistent and lasting, there must be in place:

a. A robust, real-time feedback and monitoring mechanism to capture on-ground changes
b. Stakeholders' participation and ownership
c. Low benchmarking and on-boarding costs (manufacturing by MSMEs, for example)

Q How has QCI addressed the challenges arising out of the COVID-19 pandemic? Kindly elaborate on some of the primary initiatives that have helped the citizens.

At the onset of the pandemic, when testing capabilities were limited and SOPs for lockdown/unlocking were not

as well established, QCI, through its Boards (NABH, NABL) and Divisions (PPID) assisted the Government of India with:

a. Accreditation of more than 1,000 private medical laboratories for RNA testing using RT-PCR to expand India's COVID-19 testing infrastructure

b. Accreditation of 137 testing laboratories for testing critical equipment and products such as medical devices, ventilators, PPE, sanitisers

c. Accreditation of 6 calibration laboratories for medical device calibration of patient monitor, ventilator, ECG machine and pulse oximeter

d. Development of Workplace Assessment for Safety and Hygiene (WASH) standards for all workplaces to mitigate COVID-19 risks, under which 300 organisations were assessed and 1,500 participating organizations were trained

e. Fast tracking redressal of COVID-19 related grievances; 30,000 grievances cleared at an average disposal time of 1.45 days

f. Assisted NITI Aayog with ideas for ramping up COVID-19 daily tests in the country

g. Creation of a scheme with FSSAI for approval of hygiene rating audit agencies to assist consumers in taking informed decisions about food outlets

h. Moved to virtual assessments and conferences using an app built in-house to ensure continuity of operations

Q Is it possible to drive changes in the processes of government programmes to enhance their quality and efficiency?

Since the setting up of the PPID, QCI has worked with several Ministries to assist them in the monitoring and evaluation of their schemes and development of quality standards. We have also routinely undertaken third-party assessments to help Ministries assess compliance to quality standards. While great strides have been made, by all stakeholders involved, to improve processes and efficiency of government programmes, there is a need to de-silo work streams to increase process efficiency and transparency (technology is pivotal here).

Some projects where we've been able to drive impact through streamlining systems/processes include:

1. Upgrading the Hon'ble Prime Minister's CPGRAMS portal in 11 Ministries and streamlining grievance redressal processes for 87 Ministries/Departments

2. Conducting third-party quality testing of 200 million metric tonnes of coal for power and non-power consumers

3. Creation of an online portal for real-time management of key tasks and activities of a Ministry; implemented across 5 Ministries (as of July 2021).

QCI's experience is testament to the fact that driving change and introducing efficiencies into the system is not just feasible, but critical for the benefit of both, the

The Quality Council of India is charged with ensuring the adoption and adherence of quality standards in different spheres across the country.

citizens of this country, and the intricate apparatus that is the government itself.

Q Where does India stand in the global arena in terms of quality standards and innovation? What should we do to improve our position?

As India moves toward the vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat, the case for having a comprehensive, robust ecosystem that fosters innovation and actively rewards quality has become even more pronounced.

It is important to ensure products and services meet global standards through technical regulations with mandatory compliance. A domain where India's existing quality standards have hampered growth is exports: being a part of numerous trade agreements has not translated into higher exports in any meaningful way, primarily due to technical barriers to trade in countries like US (8,000), Brazil (3,879) and China (2,872). India has low barriers, and therefore higher imports.

India's recent attempts at revamping and systematically enforcing technical standards aims to bolster industrial growth while safeguarding human health, consumer safety, and the environment. For instance, mandatory safety standards for gas appliances were brought in because they are one way of ensuring that products and services do not harm people.
India has taken certain key steps to upgrade its quality landscape over the years.

• The introduction of the 'Compulsory Registration Scheme (CRS) for Electronic and IT Products', launched in 2012, regulates products such as video games, wireless keyboards, mobile phones and laptops

• To improve quality, various certification marks and standards such as Geographical Indications, Bharat Stage emission standards have been adopted by the country

Given today's fast-paced technological changes, a technical standard made mandatory today might already be outdated tomorrow. Avoiding this, while also fostering the innovative capabilities of companies, requires allowing companies to develop their own ways to achieve goals such as product safety, at least for low-risk products, through self-declaration and virtual assessments, for instance.

Innovation Economy: India ranks 46th out of 132 economies in the Global Innovation Index with a substantial jump of 35 places over the past 6 years. Another valuable facet of Indian innovation is its thriving start-ups ecosystem. With 60+ unicorns, India is today the third largest start-up ecosystem in the world.

• UPI is an example of one of the most innovative deep technology infrastructures to come from India in recent times

Going forward, India should focus on creating and empowering entrepreneurs to drive innovation, engage industry leaders to benchmark standards (globally competitive), improving human capital (healthcare, education, skilling) and extensively use technology to remove redundancies and improve process efficiencies.

Q Why is sustainability important for quality management?

When India solves, it does so for the world. Quality management issues across India are varied, occur at scale and require local implementation fixes, hence a 'one-size fits all' approach wouldn't work.

Sustainability is paramount for quality management systems across enterprises in India. At the core, this is a multi-dimensional concept focussing on efficient utilisation of resources, streamlining processes and rendering value to the final end consumer.

As consumers become more aware, quality management systems that actively call out sustainable practices are key to enabling conscious consumption at a mass scale. (Volkswagen backlash for breach in emission standards)

For an enterprise, sustainability is important for bottom-line and top-line returns. Environment-friendly manufacturing (in a circular economy), lowers cost as companies judiciously use inputs, enables them to increase revenues through better products or create new ancillary businesses. Sustainability, hence, is an innovation driver.

By aligning with ISO 9001 (Quality management System) and ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System), sustainability can help solve for quality across the value chain from 'quality at source' to 'quality and beyond' once product usage is underway.

Q What is your vision for shaping the future of quality parameters in the new normal?

The pandemic has thrown open a plethora of problems and opportunities for India across industries. As we navigate through problems across the value chain, it is imperative that quality parameters are kept in mind. There is a need to re-align, innovate and assess products and services (for quality and in real-time) amidst growing uncertainties.

We should begin by defining the "new normal": we're in a state of flux globally, and uncertainty is the norm. Ideas and quality parameters that are 'anti-fragile' have gained credence and should be focussed on.

While a vision for an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' will accelerate with a focus on Quality, it has to be hinged on the power of India's demography and technological prowess. These strengths should enable/help us focus on:

• Augmenting infrastructure

• Quality focussed re-engineering of manufacturing process and a unified view of the supply chain

• Organizational capacity building to embrace quality as a way of life

• Regulatory Agencies being enablers and create a level playing field

The future of the quality paradigm in India is one that would be driven bottom-up (by MSMEs), decentralized (regional quality inspections), tech-enabled (drone inspections, thermal scanners for grain quality check) and would be anti-fragile, i.e., one that gains and strengthens from disorder. ◗

Pyush Misra
Trustee,
Consumer Online Foundation

Consumer Priorities are Changing Course – Quality is KING Now!

"Price has been driving purchase decisions for decades in the Indian subcontinent. However, the winds of change are finally tilting the scales in favour of quality, driven by the increasing emphasis on value, performance and durability. The pandemic is also fuelling the shift in consumer mindset."

— *Pyush Misra*

UP TO 70% OFF

The words are attractive, but not at the cost of quality anymore!

SALE

ONE OF THE first things that comes to mind when contemplating a purchase is the price. Obviously, the price tag will dictate whether the product or service is within your budget and determine whether you actually buy it or not.
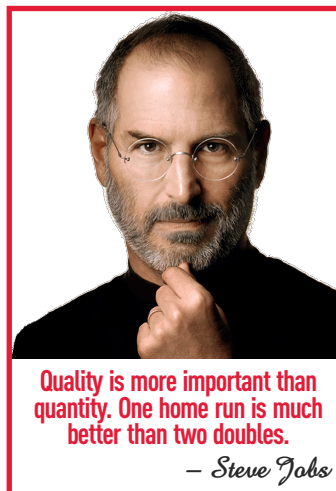
For that matter, Indian consumers have always been a price-conscious lot. Especially as the middle class – with limited disposable incomes – we instinctively tend to look at the price difference when comparing a product or service. Price is not just the deciding factor, but we are often even willing to overlook quality in favour of a jaw-dropping price. It is the item that costs the least which gets our vote; we are overjoyed that it's 'a steal'.

Think again before you nod your head to deny the statement.

Price bargains have always been the driving force behind the bulk of our purchase decisions. We are easily seduced by discounts and sale offers, even to the extent of buying things we don't need just because it is 'ON SALE'. The hunt for the best deals is always on as we scour markets and stores to get the lowest price possible.

A 2019 study at the University of Texas at Arlington by Narayanan Janakiraman, assistant professor of marketing in the College of Business unequivocally states that consumers frequently base their decisions on price as a perception of quality. Come to think of it, there is nothing wrong in trying to save a few precious bucks, is there? Why should we pay more than we have to? However, should the price tag distract us from quality is another question altogether.

In fact, mass merchants, department stores and even e-commerce portals are milking this cash cow by bombarding shoppers with unbelievably deep discounts. What consumers didn't realise is that they were being severely shortchanged, with inferior products and services being peddled off in the name of discount offers.

The Pendulum Swings to the Other End

The newly awakened and informed consumer is no longer focusing exclusively on price. We are finally tuning in to the fact that price tells only one part of the story. Quality is gaining greater traction as we start appreciating that it spells:

Better Features – Things that are of superior quality come with premium features that deliver an enhanced experience. The product or service becomes more enjoyable, sometimes even beyond expectations.

Better Performance – We very well know that everything comes at a cost – the trade-off for a low price is more often than not, the performance or service. Quality products and services on the other hand will have better materials, better design, better workmanship or better functioning which will also make them last longer while inferior ones will need to be repaired or replaced sooner rather than later. This way the cost of the latter turns out to be higher.

More Value – Better quality delivers more worth, more utility and more value in the long run. Low quality products

may cost less, but will not be as reliable as their quality counterparts. To add to this, a quality item entails other benefits like better terms of warranty/exchange and superior customer service.

Take a Prestige pressure cooker and contrast it with a cheap Chinese product that may cost half or even less. Which one will you choose when you know that the Prestige one not only cooks food more uniformly and quickly, but is also easy to use, does not bend, inflate or rust and will last for decades to come? On the other hand, the local cooker is likely to corrode, may require frequent change of gaskets, the handles may break and the whole thing will have to be replaced in a year or two. And what if it were to suddenly burst and send all the contents flying, not to mention the risk of burns to the people working in the kitchen at that time? Contrast this with the 5-year guarantee program offered by Prestige, apart from the free cookbook and more.

Therefore, quality comes at a cost - costs that are directly related to upholding the quality of the product and improving it over time. Yet, investing in a quality product ends up saving you money in terms of repair and replacement costs. Does it even make sense to skimp on quality now?

Word of Caution - While quality does drive prices higher, we should still bear in mind that a high price tag should not always be equated with better quality. Indeed, the irony here is that many consumers tend to associate high price with high quality and vice versa. However, using price as a cue for judging quality is not always the right yardstick. This calls for more research as all high-quality products are not always expensive and all cheap items are not always of poor quality.

Quality is more important than quantity. One home run is much better than two doubles.

– Steve Jobs

The New Normal

The world has changed completely in the wake of the harrowing COVID-19 pandemic. We are no longer willing to compromise on quality. Now has become all about smart spending – making wise decisions that give the most bang for the buck.

YouGov's latest 2020 survey - conducted on 1024 samples of urban Indians across 200 cities in the country - reveals that consumers consider the quality of the product (77%), price (53%) and brand name (34%) when making a purchase.

Price will continue to remain a driving factor, but what the Indian consumer is now looking for is quality. As quality-conscious shoppers, we evaluate the benefits and value vis-à-vis the price to ensure that the quality is never left wanting in our purchases. In fact, we are willing to pay more for quality, but what we want is innovative and differentiated products, that too at the right price.

Conclusion

We have definitely evolved and arrived – low-pricing no longer remains a guarantee of sale! Quality is determining choice. Organisations have to update their strategies to move beyond catering to the price-sensitive consumer! ▶

Mahika Dalmia
Asst. Editor

CONQUERING
QUALITY
THROUGH STANDARDS

" Almost everything in our life is standardised and this actually makes things so much easier. The standards serve as a sound base for determining the quality and make the world a safer place."

– *Mahika Dalmia*

IN TODAY'S INCREASINGLY complex and chaotic environment, standards help give meaning and coherence to our world by ensuring that things work in the way we expect them to!

Have you ever wondered how a microwave oven works the same in almost every country?

Shouldn't we be thankful that the traffic signals and road safety signs are consistent across the world?

How is it that we don't have to think twice about safety when our children are playing with their toys?

For that matter how are you so sure that the chips or biscuits you eat are safe for consumption?

As consumers, we are exposed to an increasingly diverse array of products and services from across the globe. It is standards which ensure that these products and services meet the requirements of quality, health and safety. The same standards also ensure that the products are tailored-made for their purpose, commonly understood and interoperable.

Standards may seem like a remote and extraneous concept to us. However, pause a moment to consider the things we use and do in our life, and we will find that standards are almost ubiquitous and actually make the world fit together. They figure in everything from our clothes, vehicles, credit cards and gadgets to farm produce, drugs, medical devices and clinical trials to road safety, air, water and soil quality to even the latest COVID-19 vaccines. Service standardisation is also ongoing with relevant standards being developed for transport, tourism, hospitality and more.

ISO standards are a proven way of doing things. They make a difference in the real world!

Understanding the World of Standards

What do we consider when purchasing a refrigerator? Apart from the size and capacity we require, another crucial criteria will be the star rating of the device. This denotes the expected energy efficiency and performance of the refrigerators. We don't know the technical details behind the star rating or how a three-star refrigerator differs from a five-star one. Nor do we need to know the difference. But we can rest assured that the five-star labelled refrigerator will definitely consume less power without inflating the electricity bills too much.

Indeed, standards work as a common language for evaluating the quality, performance, durability and even market equity. This is possible because standards define the essential requirements like specifications, guidelines or characteristics that ensure that materials, products,

processes and services work in accordance with their purpose.

At times, standards even dictate the size, shape, composition and other parameters that are used consistently to ensure that things work seamlessly. Therefore, they ensure consistency of essential features in terms of quality, safety, ecology, economy, reliability, compatibility, interoperability, efficiency and effectiveness. Moreover, standardisation become a key tool in promoting consumer protection.

These standards can be in the form of acronym ratings, graphic symbols, labelling and packaging requirements or even certification. What they do is denote a particular criteria of making a product, managing a process, delivering a service or supplying materials.

How do Standards Help Businesses?

The standards are a medium of communication between a manufacturer and consumers. The benefits of complying with standards range from facilitating business interaction to enabling companies to comply with relevant laws and regulations (both national and international) to easing trade and commerce by removing trade barriers.

In simpler terms, conforming to the requisite standards assures that the product will work efficiently and reduce possibility of failures, thus ensuring good quality service. This establishes trust and can be a differentiating factor for the business that yields concrete economic benefits.

It should be noted that standards are not mandatory – rather they are a voluntary cooperation among industry, consumers, public authorities, researchers, governments and other stakeholders.

International Standards

International Organisation of Standardization (ISO) is the leading body developing standards for the global good. Established in 1947, this is an independent, non-governmental international organisation composed of 166 national standards bodies. It has developed 23,994 International Standards till date to support innovation, to provide solutions to global challenges and also to use the planet's resources most efficiently.

ISO standards tell us the best way of doing something by bringing together experts who share knowledge and

work on framing voluntary, consensus-based, market-relevant International Standards. In fact, these standards represent the distilled wisdom of international connoisseurs of diverse sections – manufacturers, sellers, buyers, customers, trade associations, users and regulators. Indeed, it's not just about subject matter experts – even the end-users can be involved in ensuring that the products and services meet their expectations!

The ISO even established the Committee on Consumer Policy (COPOLCO) as a policy development committee in 1978 with the following general objectives:

- Supporting the development of consumer participation in standards-making
- Studying how consumers can benefit from standardisation
- Promoting the positive role of standards in consumer protection
- Encouraging the exchange of experience on standards work of consumer interest
- Channelling consumers' views both into current standards projects and proposals for new work in areas of interest to consumers

'When things don't work as they should, it often means that standards are absent' - ISO

ISO standards are not always technical specifications, they can also be defined in terms of test methods, codes of practice, management system standards, recommendations, or guidelines (guidance) on an agreed best practice. They are specifically designed for quality assurance, food safety, energy management, security of information systems, environmental stewardship, social responsibility and health and safety. Yet, they are not legally binding, but are endorsed as proof of good practice.

Implementation of the standards involves the process of conformity assessment. This is a system of evaluating whether the materials, products, processes, services, systems or persons meet the requirements as specified in the standard. This shows that it has been tried, tested and complies with the standards.

The standards have no predefined lifetime; they undergo periodic reviews to stay relevant in tune with the changing market trends and the latest technological developments. In fact, the ISO is constantly creating new standards and upgrading older ones.

Keeping Quality on Track - The ISO Way

The ISO 9000 family is the world's best-known quality management standard for all kinds of organisations irrespective of their size or operations. First published in 1987, they are most often used by manufacturers to reassure consumers that their products/services are of high quality. They also serve as a guide to improve quality, meet consumer expectations and generate customer satisfaction.

ISO 9001 sets out the criteria for a quality management system based on quality management principles. There is no obligation to be certified to ISO 9001, however, using the standard will foster trust that the product or service is in line with consumer expectations.

The Indian Answer to Standardisation and Quality

India has an extensive repertory of voluntary and dedicated standards bodies that ensure that our products and services are of top quality and conform to international standards. The Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is the National Standard Body (formerly ISI) that has published more than 1500 standards covering every aspect of economic activity excluding drugs and pharmaceuticals, environmental (ambient and emission) norms and grading of agricultural products.

BIS is responsible for developing standards, marking and quality certification of goods, promoting

> **ISO 9001 is a standard that sets out the requirements for a quality management system. It helps businesses and organizations to be more efficient and improve customer satisfaction.**

standardisation and quality control and all other related matters. This covers an umbrella of activities like providing safe, reliable and quality goods; minimising health hazards; promoting exports and imports substitutes; controlling proliferation of varieties etc., through standardisation, certification and testing. The quality check activities cover 14 different sectors.

The main activities of BIS include:

- Standards formulation
- Product certification
- Hallmarking
- Laboratory services
- Training services
- Consumer affairs

In fact, only the standards published by BIS are granted the status of Indian Standards. The Product Certification Scheme is regarded as one of the biggest around the world, with around 26,500 licensees covering no less than 900 products.

The BIS Certification signifies a third-party guarantee of quality, safety and reliability of products. It is granted by the BIS after conducting a safety test of the product according to the defined Indian Standard and furnishing of required documents. BIS standards and certification not only benefit the consumers and industry, but also support various public policies in areas like product safety, food safety, environment protection, building and construction and consumer protection.

While BIS registration is mostly voluntary, the Indian government has mandated that compulsory certification is

BIS standards certify the quality of all our consumer goods

- **Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) –** Develops standards for the quality of air, water quality criteria from different sources, emission norms for vehicles, emission norms and sound levels for diesel engines and generator sets, etc.

- **Directorate of Marketing and Inspection (DMI) –** AGMARK - Develops grading standards covering 164 commodities in categories such as pulses, cereals, essential oils, fruits and vegetables.

- **Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) -** Develops standards for food items and regulates their manufacture, storage, distribution, sale and import.

required for products which impact the health and safety of consumers. This is bifurcated into:

- ISI (Indian Standards Institute) Mark Scheme – for products such as cement, electrical appliances, baby food, etc.

- Compulsory Certification Scheme (collectively referred to as 'Standard Mark') - mostly for IT/electronic products like circuit breakers, voltage switchgear, set top boxes, microwave ovens, smart watches, laptops and mobile phones

A company holding the BIS Certification can use the ISI/Standard mark on its goods, showing that it meets the Indian Standards.

BIS is a founder member of ISO and stays actively involved in development of International Standards - either as Participating or Observer Member on various technical committees, sub-committees, working groups, etc.

Apart from BIS, there are many more standards bodies in India, like:

- **Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE) -** Develops energy performance standards for appliances and energy conservation building code.

- **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) -** Develops standards for drugs and health care devices/technologies.

Apart from these, there are many other certification schemes as well. For instance the ZED certification is a holistic evaluation and certification system to assess Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) on 50 parameters related to quality, productivity, energy efficiency, pollution mitigation, financial status, human resource, design, IPR both in product and process etc. The aim is to urge the industry to manufacture goods that have 'Zero Defects' and also have 'Zero Effect' on the environment.

The maturity assessment model is designed to enhance the competitiveness of MSMEs. The parameters will motivate them to improve their processes and move up the rating scale. The ratings are valid for 4 years with regular surveillance audits carried out by the Quality Council of India.

Score	Ratings
2.2 - 2.5	Bronze
2.5 - 3.0	Silver
3.0 - 3.5	Gold
3.5 - 4.0	Diamond
4.0 - 5.0	Platinum

Conclusion

Standards are the backbone of a healthy economy as they set the stage for quality and productivity. India also needs to build on these two pillars of quality and productivity to attain manufacturing excellence. This will foster a quality-driven mindset that will build credibility and lead to global acceptance! ◗

Payal Agarwal
Editorial Consultant

" Manufacturers need to consider the larger impact of their actions just as consumers should regard the effects of their choices. Now, we have to not only think about sustainability but also start acting responsibly. Everyone should always bear in mind that quality has a direct positive impact on sustainability! "

– *Payal Agarwal*

Sustainability Through the Lens of Quality

There is a studied shift in the way the world perceives quality

QUALITY IS A broad concept that can be defined as the ability of a product or service to meet the needs and expectations of the consumers while being reliable, viable and safe. However, quality is dynamic, with the parameters expanding and developing constantly. Today, it is not just about utility and availability, but encompasses the long-term effects of these products and services on the environment, the economy and the society. Indeed, quality goes beyond merely what is produced or delivered to the consumers; it also encompasses the total lifetime impact on the world's resources.

As consumers, we have always concerned ourselves with purchasing, owning and using different products or services. We have not been overtly bothered about what we are doing to our planet and will our actions allow future generations to thrive.

> We are primarily a wasteful generation! There are more phones than people on Earth. 99% of the things we buy are discarded within six months of purchasing without the material being recovered.

Sustainability is more than a catchphrase now. The United Nations defines sustainability as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs.

And this sustainability is intrinsically interlinked with quality. It goes without saying that things that are of good quality will also be long-lasting. They will not need to be replaced soon, thus eliminating waste as well. And sustainability is all about the ability to exist over long periods of time or always be in existence. It is concerned with protecting the resources by eliminating wastage and promoting efficiency.

Accordingly, this year, the World Quality Week – which celebrates the quality management profession – is focused on the theme of 'Sustainability: Improving our Products, People and Planet' in a bid to champion quality management for the benefit of society. This is based on the concept of quality's role in sustainability and its environmental, social and governance (ESG) impact.

ESG includes:

- Customer and consumer attitudes
- Investor attitudes and requirements
- Pressure group activity and influence
- Government policy
- Regulations

Pillars of Sustainability – The Bigger Picture

Environmental – Humans are the stewards for preserving the planet, its nature and resources including the animals and habitats. Global warming, climate change and depleting water/minerals/fossil fuels reflect the unimpeded human impact on the environment. The move should be towards conserving resources, reducing carbon footprint, using sustainable materials, avoiding plastic packaging, etc.

Economic – Economic growth and technological advances should be balanced with responsibility to avoid imbalance of wealth, poverty, population explosion and other grim repercussions. The crisis can be avoided by controlling overconsumption, moving to mindful purchases, reducing waste and creating jobs. This involves proper governance, compliance and risk management in sustainability strategies.

Social – People and communities form an integral pillar in sustainable living. Slave labour, unfair wages, poor working conditions and other humanitarian issues of the society at large come into play when considering the social significance of quality.

Therefore, for achieving true sustainability, both production and consumption patterns have to change.

Embracing Sustainability

The current COVID-19 pandemic has spotlighted the need to re-evaluate current working methods and approaches. Sustainability is all about meeting the needs of the consumers and other stakeholders, but without compromising on the needs of our planet. The companies should focus on quality products, services and processes while prioritising value and other ESG factors on their business agenda. This will become a business opportunity for innovating and improving products and services, thus working as a source of competitive advantage. It will have an impact on decision-making and also influence stakeholder value.

For this, companies have to stop focusing only on inspection and management systems for maintaining quality and embrace the challenge of 'green' and 'lean' production and delivery to ensure quality from end-to-end.

It follows that sustainability has to be embedded in the corporate culture and supported by a robust quality management system which will enable them to meet environmental and social standards. In fact, the principles and methods of quality

Conquering the new frontier of sustainability in quality

management play a critical role in the sustainability agenda.

Moreover, environmental and social sustainability has to feature at the core of values and value propositions of the business. Quality controls, quality improvement and quality management has to pervade the processes, the supply chain and even the collaborations.

Therefore, the creation and delivery process should include

| CQI recommends that quality management professionals can empower their organisations to:	
Recognise	environmental and social concerns, and how they affect the quality you need to deliver to your customers
Embed	sustainability needs and expectations in processes and plans through your organisation's management system and operational governance
Innovate	by designing products and services that are commercially viable and sustainable
Monitor, measure and report	how you are using sustainability to improve your business and reputation
Meet	important sustainability requirements and targets
Continuously improve	your sustainability performance under your leadership

repairing, reusing and recycling to ensure better quality and longer-lasting products. It begins with responsible sourcing, adopting green methodologies, using renewable energy, reducing waste in the processes and providing recycling wherever possible. It incorporates eco-friendly designs, energy efficiency and management procedures.

But sustainable quality management is not just limited to the design phase and the product assembly line. Open and seamless communication between employees, with the management and also suppliers will build stronger and lasting relationships throughout the organisation and its stakeholders.

Industry 5.0 and the Circular Economy

While Industry 4.0 focused on increasing productivity using technology, it failed to address climate change and other pressing global challenges in the production and supply chains. Industry 5.0 incorporates the concepts of a human-centric approach, sustainability and resilience by way of the circular economy. In fact, recovery from the current pandemic crisis relies on building a sustainable and resilient economy.

"Industry 5.0 recognises the power of industry to achieve societal goals beyond jobs and growth to become a resilient provider of prosperity by making production respect the boundaries of our planet...."
European Commission
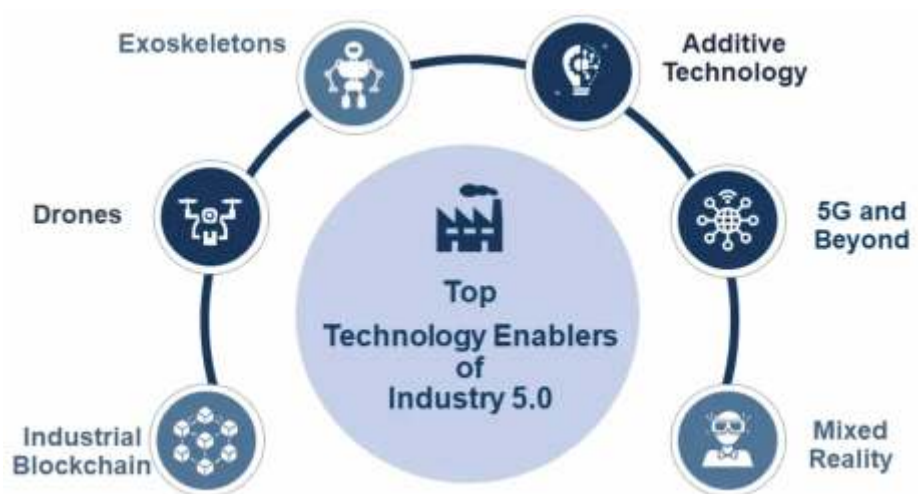
Evolving on the framework of Industry 4.0, its latest counterpart seeks to address the human and environmental challenges of the 21st century that manifest as impeding costs to the society at large. The solution surfaces in the form of transitioning to a circular economy.

Till now, production has always been concerned with taking raw materials from the environment and turning them into new products, which are used and then discarded as waste. This linear process of 'take-make-consume-dispose' will cause the finite natural resources to run out eventually while waste continues to accumulate, thus burdening the planet on both counts. In contrast, a circular economy is based on relocating the waste that figures at the end of the supply chain back to the beginning - in effect, the 'raw materials' for new products come from old products, be it for product design or other uses.

Therefore, the Earth's resources are used much more efficiently as everything is reused, re-manufactured, recycled or at least used as a source of energy. This circular process makes manufacturing sustainable and the environmental impact is reduced even as efficiency increases at all stages of the economy. Here, the manufacturers can call on technologies such as artificial intelligence and additive manufacturing to optimise resource efficiency and minimise waste.

While manufacturers focus on efficient use of resources, they will also be able to cut costs, become competitive and turn profitable. The sustainability also makes them more resilient to financial crises, pandemics and other upheavals.

Therefore, Industry 5.0 shifts the relationship with technology by using it to benefit the planet!

In fact, the circular economy is at the heart of the United Nation's

Sustainable Development Goal 9 that calls for inclusive and sustainable industrialisation. Along with this, we also need sustainable decision making throughout the value chain to truly achieve the ideals of a zero-waste economy.

Driving Sustainable Quality with Quality Consciousness

As consumers, we have to consciously consider the larger impact of the goods and services we choose, especially the longterm damage of our choices on the environment. We should deliberately move away from the use-and-throw approach and gravitate towards care-share-repair solutions in the form of quality products and services and focus on total product lifecycles. Keep in mind that quality is always a sustainable choice – it not only eliminates waste and improves efficiency, but also encourages corporate social responsibility practices.

> We are using resources as if we had two planets, not one. There can be no 'Plan B' as there is no 'Planet B'! – *Ban-Ki-Moon,* former Secretary-General of the United Nations

Rising to the Sustainability Agenda

Governments and regulators also have to enter the sustainable quality game with standards as they are the route to promoting sustainable growth. They should implement protocols for manufacturers to embrace responsible design as well as delivery. Other guidelines can include extended warranty standards, disclosing social and environmental information, ensuring recyclability wherever possible, making products that are repairable and upgradeable, ensuring durability and so on.

We also need rules and regulations to encourage and promote the development of a circular economy. It can be in the form of financial incentives – low tax rates on recycled products and higher on

Quality management plays a crucial role in sustainability

virgin raw materials - to accelerate the uptake of circular economy business models.

Sustainability Reporting (SR) is a crucial tool for making companies accountable for their impact on the communities and environments where they operate. The Indian government also introduced SR norms to scrutinise the activities of organisations under the different dimensions of sustainable development and communicate their social and environmental effects to the society. While this was a voluntary exercise earlier, before being limited to the top 100 companies, in May 2021, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting requirements for the top 1,000 listed entities (by market capitalisation) in the country. They have to submit a Business Responsibility and Sustainability Report (BRSR) - voluntary in financial year 2021-22 but mandatory from 2022-23.

Accordingly, these companies are required to provide an overview of their material, environmental, social and governance risks, opportunities and approach to mitigate or adapt to the risks along with the financial

implications. This will cover resource usage (energy and water), air pollutant emissions, greenhouse emissions, transitioning to circular economy, waste generated, waste management practices and bio-diversity."The future is not a printed report - there is still far too much greenwash, too many collections of nice stories, too little of commitments to the future. Materiality cannot be determined only in the eyes of the reporting company" - Ernst Ligteringen, Chief Executive Officer of Global Initiative Reporting

"The future is not a printed report - there is still far too much greenwash, too many collections of nice stories, too little of commitments to the future. Materiality cannot be determined only in the eyes of the reporting company" - Ernst Ligteringen, Chief Executive Officer of Global Initiative Reporting

ISO 14001:2015 provides practical tools to enable organisations to enhance their environmental performance by managing the environmental responsibilities in a systematic manner, thus contributing to sustainability. It is applicable to the environmental aspects of the activities, products and services of the organisation from a life cycle perspective. The requirements and expected outcomes of the environ-mental management system include:

- Enhancing the environmental performance
- Fulfilling the compliance obligations
- Achieving the environmental objectives

Conclusion

Quality that lasts is what makes it sustainable. And sustainability cannot be just a PR exercise anymore. Companies can no longer get away by doing lip service to the environment or the economy. Providing sustainable products and services has evolved into a strategic position now. ❯

Quality Management – Fostering a Mindset of

QUALITY

Are you bothered by negative customer reviews or a high customer churn rate? Are the same mistakes in delivering value happening again and again? Does the left hand not know what the right one is doing and vice versa? What the organisation needs is a well-planned and executed quality management system to manage both product and process quality helmed by the right people.

ANALYSIS   **EVALUATE**   **IMPROVE**   **PROCESS**   **APPROVAL**   **RESULT**   **CUSTOMER**
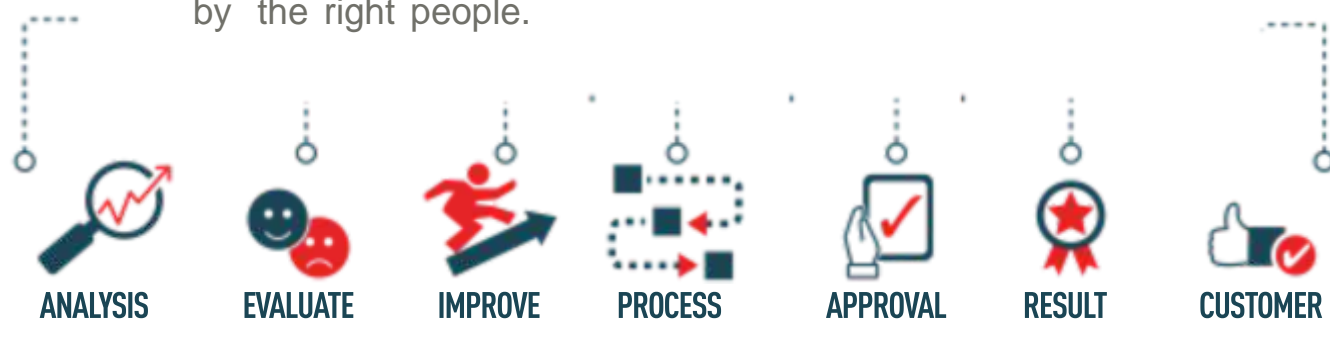
QUALITY IS AT the heart of business success. This core benchmark defines whether a product or service is fit for the purpose and meets the customer's expectations or not. This is not a one-off exercise. The products and services have to keep fulfilling the consumer's perception of quality each and every time. If a company fails to respond to the customer's need even once, he or she is likely to look elsewhere for a similar product or service and may even find something that actually exceeds expectations!

Then again, quality cannot remain stagnant or rests on its laurels. It has to not just stay that way, but keep getting better and better so as to enhance customer satisfaction if the organisation is to survive, grow and thrive.

However, delivering a quality product or service cannot hinge on a single person or the same person all the time. It calls for a systematic approach for ensuring quality across the value chain. The processes and procedures that drive quality in an organisation have to be documented and circulated throughout the organisation to ensure that it delivers quality consistently and continuously.

And this is what a quality management system is all about. A framework of organised structures, methods, techniques, policies and resources is used to ensure that every time something is done, the same information, methods, skills and controls are applied. In case of any issues or opportunities, the details will be fed into the

system, thus warranting continuous improvement. This way the activities will be coordinated and directed to not only meet customer requirements, but also improve its effectiveness and efficiency. It also includes methods by which the organisation can ensure that its responsibilities, schedules, relationships, contracts and agreements are on par with environmental, food and product safety standards.

In the beginning, quality management was limited to reducing defects and delays in the production line. With increasing specialisation and globalisation, the scope and breadth of quality has also changed dramatically. It has leapfrogged from the coordination of capital and materials to collaboration of people and processes. In recent years, quality management has evolved into a broad discipline that encompasses many other big picture factors like privacy, transparency, environment quality and sustainability.

There are many aspects of quality management; it covers:

Quality planning – This is concerned with developing the right goods, services, systems and processes required to meet consumer expectations.

Quality control – This is all about avoiding defects, meeting specifications and maintaining standards.

Quality assurance – This deals with systematic monitoring to ensure that everybody is doing everything properly to maintain the desired level of quality.

Quality improvement – This covers removing that which is not working properly, correcting errors and refining the process to become better and achieve perfection.

Implementing a quality management system will enable the organisation to both meet the customers' requirements (translates into growth in customer base, sales and repeat business) and the organisation's requirements (translates into business expansion, profits and success). The benefits include:

- Defining, controlling and improving processes
- Preventing mistakes and rework
- Improved productivity
- Lower costs
- Reduced waste
- Effective use of company resources
- Meeting government regulations and requirements
- Facilitating and identifying opportunities
- Higher customer loyalty as their needs and wants are consistently fulfilled
- Engaged staff, increased morale and lower turnover rates
- Open communication and active participation from employees on all levels
- Flexible and quick reactions to opportunities and obstacles

- Better management decisions based on data and evidence (and not conjecture)
- Setting organisation-wide direction
- Generating consistent results
- Company growth and expansion

Establishing a Quality Management System

The first step is to define the parameters of quality. What qualifies as an acceptable level of quality will differ from organisation to organisation bouncing off the type of product/service, needs, goals, strategic direction, values, etc.

There are various quality management system (QMS) regimes like Total Quality Management (TQM), Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), Six Sigma and Standardised Systems, each with their own abilities, advantages and disadvantages. While the latter covers different types of standards, the international standard, ISO 9001:2015, has emerged as the most prominent approach to quality management systems.

It specifies the requirements for a QMS that organisations can use to develop their own programs. They should meet all criteria and pass detailed audits to gain the certification and benefits thereof. In some industries, the standard can be a requirement too.

The basic steps are:

- Design
- Deploy
- Measure
- Improve
- Build
- Control
- Review

Based on the plan-do-check-act (PDCA) philosophy, this allows for continuous improvement of both the product/service and the QMS.

Plan - Establishing what is going wrong, extent and causes along with ideas to eliminate the problems thus improving operations and processes.

Do – Testing the identified solutions on a small scale, thus minimising disruptions to routine activities.

Check - Identifying control indicators for testing to establish the quality of the output. Potential problems arising from the change will also be identified at this stage.

Act – Implementing the successful changes in activities and processes on a large scale.

This loop works continuously with feedback. The above cycle will be repeated in case a test returns unsuccessful results. It can be implemented in any type of organisation to reap the rewards of improved products/services, satisfied customers and employees, and heightened financial performance.

Irrespective of the type of quality management system, the key components will be the organisation's quality policy and quality objectives, a quality manual, quality procedures and instructions, quality data management,

Quality management professionals are the lynchpin for attaining the long-term benefits of client happiness

quality testing and analysis, internal quality processes and improvement opportunities.

Quality Management Professionals – the Agents of Change

Executing an effective QMS is by no means a quick or simple task. It takes time and resources to successfully develop the required processes and implement the tasks. There will be a lot of changes in the behaviour and culture of the organisation permeating the sales, design, development, production and delivery departments. Therefore, the stewardship of professionals - who are equipped with the appropriate knowledge and tools – is essential to drive the change.

The first task of any quality manager, engineer or director is to devise the company's quality procedures, standards and specifications based on the touchstones of company goals and beliefs on the one hand and customer requirements and expectations on the other. They will also identify the appropriate standards for business performance and assure that they are met.

Once the quality policies and processes are in place, they will be turned into action. This is done by training employees about the quality specifications and how to maintain them while gaining their cooperation and assistance for implementing the QMS. There will be constant supervision, reviews and audits across business functions and hierarchies by coordinating with other managers and leaders in the organisation. This way quality professionalswill promote communication and

interaction throughout the organisational structure, leading to a unified and robust approach.

Yet, the internal work remains secondary – the prime focus is on putting the consumers first - understanding the customers' perspective of quality products/services, involving the customer in the quality process, sharing the process of improvement and collaborating with customers to learn about the issues or problems they have before working together for resolution in the form of improved product and service offerings.

The quality management personnel will also maintain documentation, monitor performance, analyse data, track customer complaints and suggest changes based on specific issues or trends so as to achieve excellence. In addition to this, they will liaise with external elements like the certification body to ensure continued compliance and reporting.

Therefore, the quality management team becomes the focal point for the successful functioning and interaction of the quality management processes while driving a culture of improvement in the organisation.

Conclusion

Indeed, every organisation needs a formal quality management system - in the form of an integrated management philosophy and set of practices – that will emphasise continuous improvement in quality, efficiency, performance and business relationships with the overarching goal of achieving sustained customer satisfaction. ◗

Dr. Alka Mukne
Ph.D. (Tech.)
Board Member-PSAIIF

Making Quality
A Non-Negotiable
Paradigm for
Consumers

QUALITY

...is everyone's responsibility.

(Deming, W. Edwards)

"There are different certification marks to assure consumers of the quality of the products and services they consume. However, how far is the public actually aware of these parameters and using them to guide their purchasing decisions is the looming question? Measures are needed to make consumers aware of what they should expect and demand in the marketplace!"

– Dr. Alka Mukne

AS CONSUMERS, WE often complain about quality. People bemoan the low quality or poor quality in varied terms and regret buying the product or service. However, why don't we pay as much attention to this quality parameter, or the lack thereof, at the purchase stage itself?

In day-to-day life, we cannot actually decipher the quality, performance or durability of something merely by looking at it. Moreover, the Indian market is deluged with an overdose of products and services. We are spoilt for choice with numerous products of the same type and features. Little do we realise that some of these fail on the quality scales while some may even be duplicate or counterfeit. At times, the packaging or design spells quality while the goods inside fail to live up to the mark.

Quality Assurance Standards

It is the duty of the state to ensure that its people can decipher the quality and value of the products and services available in the market. Accordingly, the Indian government has also instituted various standards to protect the interests of the consumers.

These quality assurance standards denote that the product or service meets specified requirements – in terms of the material used, suitability for the intended purpose, reliability, safety and so on. Apart from the most common ISI mark (by Bureau of Indian Standards) for majority of the industrial and consumer goods, BIS Hallmark (for gold and silver jewellery) and AGMARK (for agricultural products), there are many more compulsory/voluntary certifications like:

FPO Mark – It guarantees that the processed fruit product was manufactured in a hygienic 'food-safe' environment and is fit for consumption. It is applicable to packaged fruit beverages, fruit jams, squashes, pickles, dehydrated fruit products and fruit extracts.

Eco Mark – It signifies that the product conforms to a set of standards to have the least impact on the ecosystem. It is given to products like paper, soaps and detergents, batteries, electrical and electronic goods, cosmetics, plastic products, etc.

Star Mark – It depicts the energy efficiency of an electrical appliance. The more the number of stars, the lower is the energy consumption.

Non Polluting Vehicle Mark – It certifies that the new motor vehicle conforms to the relevant version of the Bharat Stage emission standards and will not excessively pollute the environment. It has to be replaced by a Pollution Under Control certificate after a PUC test every six months.

AYUSH Standard Mark – It indicates that the herbal products comply with the domestic regulatory requirements for safety, efficacy and non-toxicity.

Textile Marks – There are various certification marks that symbolise the quality and reliability of textiles, like Handloom Mark for genuine handloom products, Silk Mark for assurance of pure silk and Wool Mark to assure that the material is made from 100% pure new wool.

Handloom Mark   Indian Handlooms   Ministry of Textiles

Consumer Awareness of Standards

While the standards are in place, consumer awareness about the same is another questions altogether! A 2020 study on 'Consumer Awareness on Quality Assurance Marks' collected data from 600 respondents in two districts of Telangana - Mahabubnagar and Hyderabad.

The study clearly reveals that the general awareness level is moderate with only 42% and 53% of the respondents of Mahabubnagar and Hyderabad districts being fully aware of quality assurance marks respectively.

Raising Consumer Awareness on Quality

The consumers have to be educated and motivated to check the quality of the products and services they consume, while being vary of the possible deficiencies in them. For this, they need reliable, exhaustive and easily accessible information about the different characteristics that define good quality in commodities and also how to exercise due vigilance.

It is a fact that while many consumers are not aware of the certified products, most of them also fail to grasp the importance of checking the MRP, date of manufacturing and expiry and ingredients at the time of purchase.

Promoting awareness and skills of quality checks will equip the citizens with a discerning eye and empower them to demand their rights as consumers. This begins with teaching people to appreciate quality – give weightage to the usability, efficiency, longevity and security of the products. This will develop an expectation of quality when shopping before transforming into a demand for quality. When quality products and services drive customer satisfaction, companies that fail to deliver will lose the patronage and fall by the wayside.

The government can facilitate this through pamphlets, documentaries, advertisements in print, electronic and social media and other mass communication channels. Seminars, group discussions and motivational campaigns can be organised for groups of potential customers in both urban and rural areas. Publicising success stories of consumers can also be helpful. Consumer education about rights and responsibilities

Consumer Awareness on Quality Assurance Marks

Mahabubnagar   Hyderabad
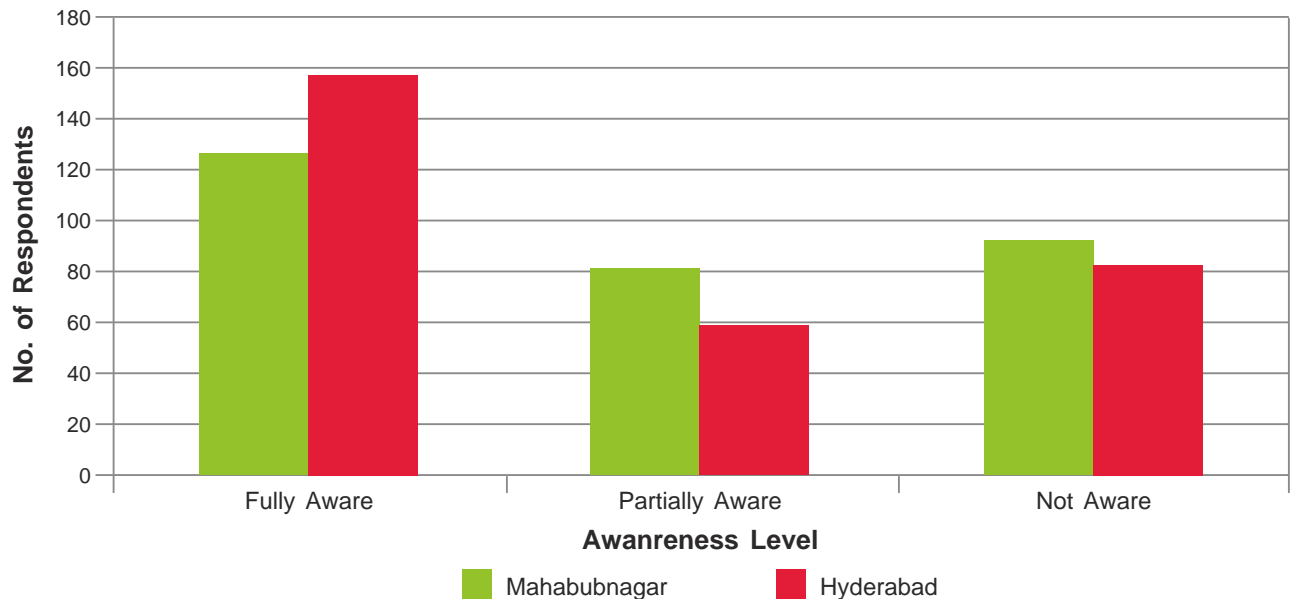
should be introduced at the school and college level.

Apart from generating awareness about the quality rationale, the authorities have to establish regulations for safeguarding the rights of the consumers while providing legal remedies whenever there is a need. The Government of India instituted the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 expressly for this purpose with legal recourse in the form of a three-tier machinery at the district, state and national level. This was recently replaced by the updated Consumer Protection Act, 2019 which among other things, provides for protection against false or misleading advertisements – this is one of the root causes of wrong purchase decisions riding on the manipulative enticement and deceptive allure depicted in the commercials.

Again, awareness is needed about these redressal mechanisms to increase their uptake in the society. Moreover, while people are generally aware about consumer courts, the time, effort and expenses required makes very few actually adopt this route for their grievances. Keeping these channels accessible and affordable is crucial.

Paving the Way for Responsible Consumption

It is only when consumers start considering quality parameters in their purchase decisions will they reject substandard products or services (like defective home appliances or medicines beyond expiry date) provided by any manufacturer in the market. The suppliers will have no choice but to mend their ways and improve the quality of their offerings if they are to survive.

This kind of knowledge will further help the consumers in the following ways:

Protect against exploitation – Companies will realise that they can no longer take the customers for granted by providing them poor quality, substandard or fake goods. It will shield users against other common malpractices as well.

Control consumption of harmful goods – As consumers start shying away from low quality products and services, they will be insulated from the potential harm to their health and wellbeing.

Maximise satisfaction – While consumerism is peaking, satisfaction

from the products and services is abysmally low, primarily due to the rampant cheating and other derelictions. When consumers shift to quality purchases, they will definitely get full value and satisfaction for their money.

Healthy society – As the markets start pushing quality products and services, the world will become a more robust, safe and secure place.

Here it should be noted that it is not just the responsibility of the authorities and the market to educate consumers and make them aware of the importance of quality. Consumers should also make efforts to obtain the necessary information about the products and services and exercise due caution by making informed choices. Stay alert, exercise restraint and make conscious efforts in this regard.

Conclusion

Consumer decision making drives the quality of products and services in the market. We should base our choices not just on our budget and preferences, but also take the quality parameters into due consideration. Quality is not just a right, but a duty as well! ◗

MR. ASHOK KUMAR JAIN

(Fellow American Society for Quality (ASQ), Certified Quality Auditor (ASQ)) shares his studied views on building a culture of quality in the organisation. He is currently the Principal Adviser, Quality Council of India and Former Executive Director, BHEL.Mr. Jain has varied accomplishments to his credit, chief among which is developing the concept and detailed structure of ZED (Zero Defect Zero Effect) and organising a validation study of effectiveness of Quality Management System as per ISO 9001 for NABCB. A strategic planner and champion of change, Mr. Jain's colleagues describe him as a Quality Guru!

Customer Success Is Our Success - A Mantra For Success

Grahak Safal Hum Safal!

BUSINESS APPROACHES ALWAYS have been focused on customers' needs in all ages of civilisation. Processes have been changing, technologies have been changing, growth strategies have been changing, but the planning of processes has always been centric to customers' delight. Gandhi ji had very rightly said:
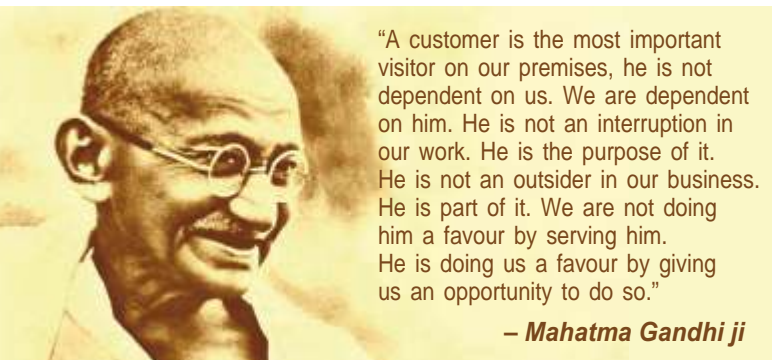
"A customer is the most important visitor on our premises, he is not dependent on us. We are dependent on him. He is not an interruption in our work. He is the purpose of it. He is not an outsider in our business. He is part of it. We are not doing him a favour by serving him. He is doing us a favour by giving us an opportunity to do so."

– Mahatma Gandhi ji

Customer-Focused Culture

So, any organisation can be successful only when their customers are successful. We are the master of our products or processes and accordingly we must ensure that our products or services add value to our customers. We have to establish a truly customer-focused culture throughout the organisation and not just in the customer-facing departments.

Everyone at our company must be empowered to act on behalf of customers and acknowledge that they all have a role that impacts the customer's behaviours and attitudes. We, with years of industry knowledge and skill based business solutions, bring high return on investments for our customers by understanding the requirements, needs and expectations.

Identifying and meeting our customer needs is a key to our continued business success. Listening to our customers is what determines our business strategies

and drives the work culture. Acting on customer input is what makes the difference in our successful role of serving customers.

Creating and managing the customer relationship is a company-wide task. Company as a whole defines and clearly communicates to every employee what it wants to be the basis of the customer relationship. Acquiring and continuously updating knowledge about customer needs, motivation and behaviour drive our approach toward customer excellence. You do start production or render services with the eye on the demand pattern in the market. You plan accordingly and strive to supply them. This is the basis of all value chains. On the other side, customers seek their desired products or services to satisfy their needs and requirements. They often rely on the available product or service available in the market. They presume that these products or services have been offered are best in quality and meet their expectation level. They feel satisfied if they get their desired products or services up to their demanded quality. With their satisfaction they can move ahead in their life and this will lead to success. Further their purchasing power and demand pattern of such products and services will be positively impacted.

Satisfaction Through Partnership

At a company, partnership is a key component of its strategy for delivering more complete and customised solutions to its customers. Through partnerships we can offer complete network-enabled productivity solutions that drive customer success today and in the future. We must encourage our partners to use customer satisfaction knowledge to manage their businesses and improve our customer experience.

We can promote an environment where customers' opportunities are constantly analysed and maximised by implementing business practices and methodologies that increase loyalty, satisfaction and also retain customer's business over their lifetimes. Customers' demand patterns drive our business strategies to achieve success and excellence in everything we do, and will continue to be our key focus for developing products and services that accelerate their capability to prosper in the business.

Partnership is one of the pillars of growth for a company. Crucial partnerships with industry-leading technology and integrator companies are managed at a company by the strategic alliances team to accelerate new market opportunities and deliver best-in-class products and solutions to your customers.

Instead of the customer going out and trying to fit various solution pieces together, we, with our strategic alliance partners, can anticipate customer needs and assemble those pieces. When the customer has an unmet need outside our area of core competency, we should work with the respective technology units or functional line organisations to evaluate whether a partnership could help us to address that need.

The best partner for a specific market is selected based on the benefits the alliance can offer to the customer, a shareable vision of business, and a commitment of executive and operating resources. Through working in partnership with technology leading companies, we must develop a relationship of trust, teamwork and common benefit is built to deliver more complete solutions to our customers, enhancing productivity and business efficiencies.

Vision, Mission and Values - Fundamental to Customer Success

A company should believe in fostering an environment where highly motivated, action-oriented employees work together to continuously create and deliver high-quality, innovative products and services. The combination of vision, mission, and value statement can explain the corporate quality policy. These fundamentals guide a dynamic roadmap to achieve customers' success and promote continual improvement of the company's quality management systems.

Quality vision and mission of a company can be best explained by promoting customer-focused, prevention-based continual improvement that supports unconstrained growth. This can be accomplished through integration into existing systems, easy access to quality information and deployment through the entire life cycle.

The mantra for quality is to drive further from just customer satisfaction to customer delight by giving something more than the customer's expectation and needs. This process when repeated again and again develops love for your customers. They are not merely a part of your business but become part of the business family. The next stage is to think and work for making the customer successful in his endeavour.

Culture of a company involves several following elements that drive company's business practices and strengthen interaction with external parties:

1. **Quality Team:** Attracting, growing and retaining great talent is critical to sustain in competitive age. A high quality team can help to maintain the company's leadership position and ensures that the company remains one of the best places to work.

2. **Number One Priority:** Customer success should be number one priority. Employees must actively listen, share and explore the customers to provide the best solutions to meet their customers' needs.

3. **Stretch Goals/Continuous Improvement:** The focus on stretch goals is founded on a belief that to be the

Mantra for Quality

Customer Satisfaction

Customer Delight

Love for Your Customer

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

very best, one must continually strive to work smarter and achieve increasing levels of efficiency and productivity.

4. **Teamwork:** Company should rely on teamwork by providing a collaborative environment that thrives on working across geographical and organisational boundaries, sharing information and finding new and better ways to support each other and our customers. Teamwork brings good people and good skills together in ways that it helps the company to continue raising the bar of success.

5. **Empowerment:** The Internet Revolution is about knowledge and how that knowledge is applied. It's about economies of skill and empowerment. At a company, empowerment should be a part of workculture. All employees must be empowered to make decisions that achieve results.

6. **Fun:** It is also important to develop an environment that enables the employees to enjoy what they do. By providing a framework of learning, opportunities, teamwork, and development, company can build employee loyalty and satisfaction.

7. **Trust/Integrity/Giving Back:** Company must have an environment of open communication, empowerment, integrity and trust. These values remain at the forefront of company's culture and business decisions. We must maintain our commitment to these values and continue building a culture that understands what is acceptable and what is not. We should never compromise on issues of integrity. We give back to our community. Just as every employee is empowered, companies contribute to the empowerment of our surroundings and global communities to help people lead rich and rewarding lives. Through education, technology and charitable giving initiatives, employees can make great strides to help others in need.

8. **Drive Change:** We must measure ourselves against both our internal goals and against how well we execute the opportunities in the market. One of the keys to company's success is ability to listen to its customers and react quickly and effectively to meet their needs. Only by continuing to drive change in the industry, we can stay one to two waves ahead of the competition.

9. **Market Transitions:** Part of a business's success has always been based on its ability to take advantage of market transitions, disruptions and inflection points by adding resources and focusing on building relationships.

10. **Open Communication:** Good communications - both internally and with the customers and partners -

directly affects customers' success. Every member of the company's team should be responsible for making communication a priority. This means being a good listener and taking the time to understand and respond to the issues behind the questions and concerns.

11. **Customer Success:** Finally, first priority of a company must be to ensure the customers' success. No matter how good we are, the one thing that can bring us down is getting too far away from our customers. Customers influence everything we do as a company and are critical success factors in fully realising our potential to influence the entire Internet Economy.

A company can also use a series of key quality system components to measure, monitor, analyse and control the effectiveness of the products and services that we deliver to our customers, and the processes that form our business management system. The combination of these tools, processes and methodologies enable the implementation of a close loop system that will add value to our business and stress the importance of optimising the value of each customer relationship.

Building loyalty with customers should be the central role of our efforts. We can use the information obtained from customers to increase loyalty, improve processes, and to better monitor and understand customers' concerns and expectations.

Quality and happiness are synonymous. Wherever there is quality, happiness will be there. When we have quality working, we produce quality products which make our customers happy. A happy customer gives apprecia-tive feedback which make us happy again. We share this happiness with our home, and our families are also happy. This results in successful achievements of our family members. These are circles of Quality and Happiness resulting in excellence both in work as well as in life.

Lastly, customer success is essential to continually improve the effectiveness of our processes and to establish our quality objectives. Complete and reliable information about our customers can be a key for a sustainable competitive advantage. We can create customer delight metrics to monitor customer success and tie a level of employee compensation to achieving those metrics. The analysis of these metrics can be used to determine the goals and initiatives for each year and the strategies that will make us successful in reaching those goals. Selected data can be shared with our partners so that they can also be benefited from our customer insight and enhance services and support.

When our customers are successful in their endeavours, only then we will be successful in our orga-nisation and business. This is the mantra of success. ◗

QUALITY and HAPPINESS

YOU MAKE FAMILY HAPPY
YOU ARE HAPPY
QUALITY WORKING
CUSTOMER FEED BACK
FAMILY MEMBERS ACHIEVEMENTS
YOU DEVELOP HAPPINESS
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION
QUALITY PRODUCT
EXCELLENCE IN LIFE
EXCELLENCE IN WORK

THELASTMILE

Komal Kedia
Marketing Associate

On the Back Foot in
Terms of Product Recalls

" Product safety and quality cannot, and should not, be ignored. Product recalls are a powerful weapon to protect consumer interests. It also induces manufactures to accord top priority to product safety. India needs to establish a comprehensive recall policy and mechanisms that are on par with global practices to ensure absolute product safety. "

— Komal Kedia

A FEW MONTHS back, MG Motor India recalled more than 14,000 of its Hector petrol-DCT SUVs owing to emission-related issues. This was in the wake of a few BS6 samples failing the conformity of production (CoP) tests at the International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT) in Manesar, Haryana. The discrepancy in the hydrocarbon and NOx emissions emerged from a software glitch. The dealerships swung into action and contacted customers with the affected models and the company plans to fix the issue – after getting formal clearance for its proposed solution – by the end of the year.

Such product recalls may sound unusual and obscure in India, but are the norm in USA and other countries!

What is Product Recall?

A product recall is the process of removing certain goods from the market and retrieving them from the consumers when they are found to be defective, unsafe or can harm the users in some manner. The consumers are asked to self-return the item for repair, replacement or compensation at no extra cost. The entire line of products or a certain batch that has problems may be withdrawn from future sale.

Some of the common reasons for recalls include:

- Manufacturing defect in the product
- The product failing to meet a mandatory safety or quality standard
- Fault in the packaging or labelling

Less than 30 product recalls were issued between 2010 and 2017 in India

- Injury caused by the use of the product
- Inadequate instructions or safety information on the product

These recalls may be voluntary – when the manufacturer notices/is informed about a safety concern or even a flaw which can hamper the performance of the product – or mandated by a regulatory body. The consumers are informed about the recall through a public notification, press release and emails, or even telephone calls and personal visits in case of grave risks to the health or life of the users.

Therefore, product recalls serve as an instrument of consumer protection. It is also the ultimate act of establishing quality assurance as it sends definitive signals that the company/supplier takes quality seriously and is ready to make amends, no matter what the cost.

Product recalls are usually associated with medicines, food items, vehicles and children's toys, though any item that is lacking in any manner can be recalled. The process usually unfolds with the manufacturer publicly announcing the danger or drawback of the product while requesting people who have purchased the said item to stop using it immediately – instructions about return/disposal and refund/compensation, if any are specified.

Why is India Lagging Behind?

Recently, the media was abuzz with news that the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) had directed e-commerce giant, Amazon to recall hundreds of thousands of hazardous products that it had distributed

MAJOR RECALLS (2010-2017)

Year	Product	Company
2015	Maggi	Nestle
2015	Knorr	Hindustan Unilever
2015, 2016	Combiflam	Sanofi
2010, 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016	A-Star, Ertiga, Swift Dzire, Swift, Ritz, Ciaz, Alto 800, K-10, Baleno	Maruti Suzuki
2013, 2014, 2015	XUV, XUV500, Scorpio, Xylo	Mahindra & Mahindra
2011	Nano	Tata Motors

on its platform. Why don't such recalls happen more often in India?

Alas, India did not have an explicit product recall policy until recently. Product recall was mostly voluntary, as the authorities could not force any company – except food and nutrition items - to recall defective products without court intervention. Manufacturers – wary of the costs and reputation damage – avoid recalls as far as possible.

The double whammy is that while many Indian manufacturers issue recalls of their faulty products in international markets, they unabashedly continue to sell them at home. For instance, three lots of the famous MDH sambar masala were recalled in the USA after they were found to contain salmonella bacteria. But no such checks – let alone withdrawals – were imposed at home! How can domestic companies comply with import refusals (on quality and safety parameters) abroad but impudently defy the norms in our country?

The discrimination continues as poor quality and deficient products from international companies that have been recalled in other countries find a free – read dumping – market in India.

The Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was silent on product recalls with the liability of the manufacturer/seller limited to the guarantee or warranty provided with the product. Consumers using low quality, underperforming or unsafe products can approach the company, the consumer courts or consumer protection organisations for relief – what follows is a protracted legal battle without any guarantee of a positive outcome. Mass lawsuits – another common phenomenon in the Western world - are largely absent in India.

It is over the last couple of years that we have witnessed growing automobile recalls (voluntarily initiated by companies) and drugs and food recalls (both voluntary and imposed by regulatory authorities). The highlight continues to be the nationwide recall of Nestle's Maggi in 2015 - initiated by FSSAI following the lab reports of lead and monosodium glutamate (MSG) content in the instant noodles.

Better Norms in the Offing

Regulators such as the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) and the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) have been involved with safety and recalls of food, drugs, vehicles and other consumer goods respectively. However, the true harbinger of change is the new Consumer Protection Act, 2019 which

introduced the concept of product liability by making not only the manufacturers, but also the sellers liable for damages for injury caused to a consumer or his property due to their defective or perilous products. It covers both civil and criminal liability while moving from compensatory to punitive damages to the consumers.

Consumers can file a product liability claim against the manufacturer or seller of a defective product for:

- damage to any property, other than the product itself
- personal injury, illness or death
- mental agony or emotional distress due to personal injury or illness or damage to property
- any loss of consortium or services or other loss resulting from a harm referred above

Moreover, the new Act established a Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) with powers to order the recall of goods/withdrawal of services which it finds to be dangerous, hazardous or unsafe.

Even the ISO 10393:2013 provides guidelines to suppliers on consumer product recalls after the product has left the manufacturing facility along with other corrective actions like refund, retrofit, repair, replacement, disposal and public notification.

Challenges Ahead

The nascent product recall culture in India is still crippled by varied challenges. The USA has a robust Fast-Track Recall Program which enables companies to not only quickly and efficiently recall and withdraw defective/unsafe products, but also track its progress through to its conclusion till it is no longer available for consumption.

In contrast, the Indian manufacturers are impeded by delays in identifying both unsafe products and their consumers - this is compounded by critical doubts about how many batches are affected and where these specific lots figure in the supply chain. The lack of structured information sharing among the various supply chain partners was the major hurdle in the infamous Johnson & Johnson faulty hip implant compensation case which made it difficult to trace patients who received the implants. Standards systems and recall data can mitigate the impact of a recall and enable faster tracking of unsafe products.

Moreover, other countries have practices like publishing the names of all brands and products being recalled from the market. Consumers can easily check and track the recalled products which will even guide their future purchases. In India, we mostly stay clueless about the product recalls until the company contacts us directly!

Further, there is a need to enforce product safety certification which can actually help companies avoid recalls as the products have passed safety tests and obtained the requisite safety certificate.

Conclusion

Product recalls drive trust and credibility in the eyes of the consumer. But they cannot be successful without an efficient track-and-trace system and full chain visibility about the product movements. This calls for defining a shared minimum set of requirements by the authorities along with strict implementation of the standards. ◗

CONSUMER EXPRESS

QUALITY is the Essence of Excellence

India has made quantum leaps in terms of quality improvement. This is driving credibility in our goods and services both in the domestic markets and overseas. However, a lot more needs to be done to make quality truly a USP across the board. Some consumers share their views on quality and what is happening in this sphere today.

WHAT IS THE first thing that comes to mind when we think of quality? It is the ability of a product or service to meet our needs in the best possible manner. Therefore, I will buy only from those companies that understand my needs and meet those needs (even better if they can exceed my needs)! Keep in mind that sky is the limit for quality and companies have to keep seizing opportunities to get better and better. The best companies will be those that accord maximum attention to quality. They very well know that the quality of their product or service will impact their brand and its value.

Sumegh Chanania, Hyderabad

We often complain about quality. But what exactly is this quality? It is just a perception in the mind of the consumer, but it is this mindset which is literally driving the world. After all, I will only accept a good or service if I think it is of quality – meets the standards and my requirements as well. This is why companies have no choice but to prioritise the consumers while striving to improve their products, services and processes. It is constant and continual improvements which will create value and increase overall customer satisfaction.

Vineeta Goyal, Mumbai

I am an aware consumer. I know my rights. I will only buy products and services that give me satisfaction. And it is quality which drives my pleasure and choice. I demand a culture of quality and innovation. Today's marketplace is extremely connected – one negative tweet or review can taint the company almost forever. It will be difficult to recover from the condemnation on social media. So better pull up your pants and make quality your differentiator in the marketplace.

Gagandeep, Nagpur

Accreditation with a recognised quality standard builds a reputation for quality. It shows that knowledge and best practices are in place for maintaining highest parameters of quality. It also tells that you put your customers FIRST!

Sami Ahmed, Agra

Quality has never been as crucial as it is now when the world is at a tipping point. The COVID-19 era is focused on manufacturing solutions that can produce high-quality products and services. Quality consciousness will be the mantra in the future. Nothing less will do!

Edlyn Dias – New Delhi

'Quality is never an accident. It is always the result of intelligent effort!'

– John Ruskin, writer

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YOUR OPINION MATTERS

letters to the editor

We are truly humbled by the praise and acknowledgment that is flowing in from varied sources. Please feel free to send in your comments, views or feedback on The Aware Consumer magazine at bejonmisra@theawareconsumer.in – we will publish your opinions and implement your feedback while ensuring that your voice is heard on the right platforms.

(September issue - Mahamana Declarations on AYUSH – A Patient-Centric Initiative for Integrated Medicine)

The national need of the hour is to adopt a pluralistic approach integrating our age-old AYUSH treatment and techniques with more prevalent methods to fill the critical void in long term sustainable healing. Congratulations to Team 'The Aware Consumer' in promoting AYUSH in this context.

– Abhay Kunj Bihari Kejariwal, Delhi

I highly appreciate your monthly contribution in terms of publishing and editing The Aware Consumer, especially pertaining to the field of AYUSH which is need/appeal of the day. The viewpoints vide title 'Indigenous Traditional Medicine System' and 'Health Services Hinge on Drug Quality' really impressed me.

– Muhammad Yousuf Shah

The case for Ayurveda has been hurt by zealots. What you say is very valid. Ancient empirical knowledge needs to be approached in a positive manner. Important thing is to validate it through research, controlled testing and statistical analysis and documentation of case studies. Also testing and standardisation of ingredients, methods and processes of producing the final product, packing etc. Currently, we are mired in anecdotal evidence.

– Prafull Anubhai (prominent Educationist and Management Advisor), Ahmedabad

Thank you, Bejonda both for the publication and the trust. I must compliment you for the initiative and let us hope for a productive outcome.

– Dr. Narendra Bhatt, Mumbai

Dear Bejon ji

It was indeed a pleasure to read the September issue of The Aware Consumer. The issue very rightly focused on Ayush Medicines as an alternative to Modern Medicine practices for managing the Covid pandemic, But for the premature announcement of Coronil as a cure and the controversy that was unnecessarily created, there is little doubt that Ayurvedic treatment would have gained a lot of traction in building immunity and perhaps offering a prophylactic approach to the dreaded disease. The widespread acceptance of Ayurveda and Yoga by modern day practitioners not only in India but also across several developed nations is well documented. The issue suggesting an approach to bring Ayush into the mainstream treatment protocols with its analysis and recommendations is very well appreciated. It is a fervent hope that the policy makers in government and industry pay heed to it.

I commend the contributors and the Editor/s for a very timely and informative issue.

– Rajesh R. Talati, Vadodara

UPDATE ...

Moving a Step Ahead

Our Efforts Sowing the Seeds for Change

IT IS WITH great pride and joy that we inform our readers that the September edition of our magazine dedicated to the **Mahamana Declarations on AYUSH – A Patient-Centric Initiative for Integrated Medicine** is generating momentum at the national level.

An inter-ministerial meeting was held between the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and Ministry of Ayush on 7th October. Senior officials of both ministries discussed the steps and processes for achieving effective coordination and convergence between the two ministries and resolving the pending issues.

The various matters discussed in the meeting include:

- Inclusion of Ayush packages in Atal Bihari Pradhan Mantri Jan ArogyaYojna (AB PM-JAY)
- Integrating Ayush services in service package of Health & Wellness Centers (HWCs)
- Integrating Ayush module into the Community Health Officer (CHO) training
- Support for integrative Cancer Care Centre at NCI, Jhajjar
- Recognising Household as 4th-tier Health Care level
- Integration of Ayush in new and upcoming AIIMS

The Minister of H&FW, Shri Mansukh Mandaviya highlighted the importance of 'Health for All' goal which can be achieved through integration of healthcare systems in tune with the Prime Minister's vision of adopting a whole health approach. The Minister of Ayush, Shri SarbanandaSonowal also referred to the PM's vision while calling for strengthening the process of the integration so that people can reap the benefits of the extended healthcare services to maintain good health.

The Ministries are working on formulating a long-term roadmap to achieve the integration between the healthcare delivery systems which will pave the way for better, accessible and affordable healthcare services to the public at large.

The Ministry of Ayush is reducing the regulatory compliance burden on the ASU drug manufacturers to facilitate ease of doing business by:

- The license application system for manufacturing Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani (ASU) drugs is made online. The manufacturers can apply for the license online at www.e-aushadhi.gov.in. with effect from 1st October, 2021 in a swift, paperless and transparent manner.
- The ASU drugs will have perpetual license with one-time registration fee and online annual self-declaration of compliance.
- The maximum time for granting license is reduced from 3 months to 2 months. ❱

WATCH OUT

for the next issue in December dedicated to National Consumer Day and focussing on Cyber Crimes!

NABH AYUSH ENTRY LEVEL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

TAKING QUALITY TO OUR ROOTS

NABH

is a constituent board of Quality Council of India (QCI).
It is playing a pivotal role at the National level in propagation, adoption and adherence to healthcare quality standards in AYUSH healthcare delivery systems.

With an objective to bring more light to AYUSH related treatments, the Government of India in 2014, formed the Ministry of AYUSH and consequently brought in the National Accreditation Board for Hospitals & Healthcare Providers (NABH) to start implementing quality healthcare standards for hospitals providing AYUSH treatments as well.

In the recent years, there has been a paradigm shift from allopathy system to traditional healthcare. To support this trend, health insurers have started offering AYUSH treatment covers as part of their health insurance policies. NABH Ayush Entry Level Certification Standards provide an objective system of empanelment by insurance and other third parties. These standards also address the need for quality control and quality monitoring in AYUSH healthcare as required by the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PM-JAY) under the Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

NABH AYUSH Entry Level Certification standards are easily downloadable from NABH website.

⊕ www.nabh.co   ✉ nabh@nabh.co

THE AWARE CONSUMER

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