

Answer on Question #40224 – Marketing – Other

Quality Circles are (informal) groups of employees who voluntarily meet together on a regular basis to identify, define, analyze and solve work related problems.

Usually the members of a particular team (quality circle) should be from the same work area or who do similar work so that the problems they select will be familiar to all of them. In addition, interdepartmental or cross-functional quality circles may also be formed. An ideal size of quality circle is seven to eight members. But the number of members in a quality circle can vary.

Objectives of Quality Circles are to promote job involvement, to create problem solving capability, to improve communication, to promote leadership qualities, to promote personal development, to develop a greater awareness for cleanliness, to develop greater awareness for safety, to improve morale through closer identity of employee objectives with organization's objectives, to reduce errors, to enhance quality, to inspire more effective team work, to build an attitude of problem prevention, to promote cost reduction, to develop harmonious manager, supervisor and worker relationship, to improve productivity, to reduce downtime of machines and equipment, to increase employee motivation etc.

Given below are the most commonly used tools and techniques. These are called the old QC tools:

- Brainstorming.
- Pareto analysis.
- Cause and effect diagram (or fish bone diagram or Ishikawa diagram).
- Histogram.
- Scatter diagram
- Stratification
- Check sheet
- Control charts and graphs

New QC Tools

Quality circles started using additional seven tools as they started maturing. These are:

1. Relations diagram.
2. Affinity diagram.
3. Systematic diagram or Tree diagram.
4. Matrix diagram.
5. Matrix data analysis diagram.
6. PDPC (Process Decision Program Chart).
7. Arrow diagram.

Benefits of QC

- Self-development.
- Promotes leadership qualities among participants.
- Recognition.
- Achievement satisfaction.
- Promotes group/team working.
- Serves as cementing force between management/non-management groups.
- Promotes continuous improvement in products and services.

- Brings about a change in environment of more productivity, better quality, reduced costs, safety and corresponding rewards.