

Team A Collaboration for Week 3

This week, there was quite a bit of discussion regarding total quality management, division of labor, and planning functions of management.

Anthony started the discussion of with this post: "I am glad to see mention of "Total Quality Management" (TQM) The company I work for attempted this philosophy in the early 1990's but did not give it the proper time to enable it to work. I think TQM is a good process no matter the organization structure that a business employs."

Cody responded with a question about why Anthony's company did away with TQM and if they might ever see it return.

Anthony responded with a detailed response that can be summarized like this: "In reality, TQM takes a solid 10 years to implement successfully. The result is a highly trained and involved employee group that maximizes efficiency, adapts to change, and looks out for the benefit of the company and especially the customer. This process becomes refined, more proficient, and more cost effective as work groups and teams become more adapt at problem solving and applying new processes. My company never gave this type of benefit the time to succeed."

Then the discussion switched gears and started to focus on division of labor. Anthony, again, started us off with the thought about the way his company does things: "The company I work for seems to be heading away from traditional "division of labor" processes in line with differentiation. Instead they are hiring and training managers to apply multiple skill sets in order to cut back paid positions to increase profits. I am not sure this is a positive way to operate as it often leads managers toward burn out levels and in turn apathy because they feel their situation has set them up for failure."

This started the ball rolling. Many companies are now using one manager to do the job that was previously staffed by other employees. A common consensus among our team was that this causes a lot of burned out employees and that makes it hard for people to enjoy their job and do it well, which in turn backfires on the company that instituted this in the first place. Sometimes saving a buck or two doesn't actually save the company anything.

Lastly, we discussed strategic planning and how the long term goals of a company are implemented, as well as discuss why such big companies wouldn't have had strategic plans in place to protect against the recession. Casey's response was: " I think that with our economic situation, most businesses feel the ebb and flow of the economic fluctuations. Sometimes, even the best made plans cannot make up for unexpected downturns. With such big

companies, and most of the original owners not even involved in business decisions anymore, the big executives are not willing to take pay cuts to keep the business from running into the ground.”

All in all I think that we all have a firm grasp of last week’s objectives as well as week three objectives. There were some pretty hefty conversations about these concepts that helped us all come to a better understanding of what they mean and their functions.