

## **Quantum Quality, Beyond Entrepreneurship**

In 1980, at a graduate program, I had the privilege to design and offer what was probably the first comprehensive course given on the philosophy of quality. Students loved the course, the material and the topics. The working definition coming from the literature was that of quality as a set of philosophies and concepts by which strategic planning and management systems can be directed to the efficient achievement of the organization's objectives to assure on going, comprehensive customer delight and maximum stakeholder value. This is accomplished through the continuous improvement, change and transformation of the quality system, which at the time we were making the empirical point that consisted of the social system, the technical system, the management system, and the educational system.

The course was called An Introduction to the Comprehensive Philosophies of Quality, and it was part of a required course of Administrative Behavior: Social Bases of Decision Making. As part of it we covered the experience of the Tavistock Clinic in England as a center from which the action research approach developed. Action research was define as collaborative, client-consultant inquiry consisting of preliminary assessment, data gathering from the customer setting, data feedback to the customer group, data exploration and action planning by the customers, and sustained action. The Tavistock Center was founded in the 1920s to provide psychotherapy, based on psychoanalytic theory that had been developed from the treatment of battle neurosis in World War I. Using a kind of clinical approach, social psychologists such as W.R. Bion, John Rickman, and especially Eric Trist developed their concepts of group dynamics and behavior, and related findings to organizational settings.

Trist, using studies of work and the need for group restructuring in coal mining operations, FOUNDED THE SOCIO-TECHNICAL APPROACH TO WORK AND ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN. He did a number experiments in work redesign and use semi-autonomous work team! He was influenced in his work by systems concepts of Von Bertalanffy and Andres Angyal, and by Lewin, Likert and others in the United States. Robert Blake and Warren Bennis among others, studied at Tavistock!

Coming back to that early course, the term of Quantum Quality was introduced, to describe the comprehensive process for achieving breakthrough in customer delight through increased personal and organizational commitment to quality. Students came to understand quality not only through the use of technical tools like statistical process variation but also in moral-emotional terms such as pride in craftsmanship and satisfaction in delighting customer and the community in general.

The four dimensions of Quantum Quality, as later on William Miller, Quantum Quality: The Innovative Resolution, developed so well, were already integrated in this course. LEARNING, INTEGRITY, CREATIVITY and SUSTAINABILITY. (As a matter of fact, while writing this article, I am being interrupted by an eager student of those days requesting a recommendation letter!)

The first thing is the first! Formal individual learning contributes to performance improvement and creates the learning community necessary for adaptation to changing organizational pressures. (This is important because by the end of this decade no developed country will have more than one-eighth of its workforce in the traditional roles of making and moving goods. This is the call of Karen E. Watkins in *Sculpting the Learning Organization*, making the point for learning different kinds of works, preparing different kind of workers,

technicians and professionals and designing different kind of organizations. The purpose is to continually improve organizations that support people who engage in profound learning and design meaningful work to satisfy multiple customers! Students were also exposed to the thinking of the great Dr. Martin Landau, exclaiming that “IT TAKES A LOT OF PROFOUND LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE TO BE A MORAL HUMAN BEING. It was Landau who made the early point that while designing or redesigning organizations it was very important to create a robust infrastructure of a learning system.

THE IDEA IS TO ENSURE THAT INDIVIDUALS HAVE BUDGETS FOR ENGAGING IN PROFOUND LEARNING AND THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAS SERIOUS POLICIES THAT REINFORCE KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AD TEACHING OF OTHERS.

With respect to integrity the aim is to enhance the design of meaningful work, and fair treatment, promote ethical work culture standards that help individuals to become better individuals. Ethics is not for punishing, stigmatizing or harassing people, but for inviting them to create the conditions of QUALITY OF LIFE. The only way to do this is by profound education! In quality culture employees feel that they are leaving a legacy for future generations.

Addressing the creativity challenge was an invitation to all employees to creatively analyze their daily work to eliminate all sorts of irrationality, waste and inconsistencies.

The psychology of sustainability meant considering the personal stage of readiness of people to absorb and sustain new work challenges.

Finally, it is like James Collins and William Lazer instructed in Beyond Entrepreneurship: “By showing respect for others, an organization itself becomes respected”.