

# Productivity in the 21st century

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The late W. Edwards Deming emphasized, in his book, *Out of Crisis*, that quality need not suffer in the wake of productivity, nor should productivity suffer in the wake of quality. Indeed, if productivity is to take place, there has to be matching quality. If economic stability is to be achieved in the 21st century, the global workforce has to be armed with a new mandate.

The problems that the world community has faced in this past decade are very apparent. Europe and the West have had to face the economic boom in the Pacific Rim. The fact is, economic power has truly shifted from Europe and the West to Asia.

There have been various concepts put forth by management consultants and theorists to achieve global productivity. One of these concepts is called Reengineering, which was created by two United States consultants, and has enjoyed a degree of worldwide appeal, especially in Europe. Reengineering is simply the changing of operational metaphors and redoing strategies that have been in place to insure maximum efficiency. Unfortunately, although Western corporations and businesses have spent millions on reengineering projects, reengineering has proven to have serious downfalls: it has resulted in layoffs, and has actually failed to deliver its promises of enhanced quality and productivity. In fact, its creators have admitted its failures, and are now emphasizing the process aspect of reengineering.

What many scholars have failed to recognize is that, as we enter the 21st Century the workforce will not

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training, unless they understand the dynamics of symbolism and the resulting metaphors and superstitions that result from symbolic activity. Metaphors and myths are synonymous. What is symbolic is anything which implies something more than its obvious and immediate meaning. In other words, a symbol is that which possesses specific connotations in addition to its conventional and obvious meaning. A symbol implies something vague or unknown or hidden from us.<sup>1</sup> Symbols have traditionally been thought of as a necessity of human thought by scholars throughout the world. This is not true. Symbols and symbolic behaviour are counterproductive and have caused distress in the workforce for centuries.

The global workforce and management must realize that if economic stability is to be achieved in the 21st Century there has to be a radical change in the way we do business. That radical change is the discarding of symbols and symbolic behaviour, which means the discarding of decisions based on metaphor or

Symbols, which have their origin in Africa, have been used throughout the world. However, Africans have used symbols and symbolic behavior in a very aggressive way, and this has resulted in symbolic behavior that has been entrenched in mythology, superstition and ritual. That has also been the case with Asia, Europe and Latin America, but to a lesser extent. Where you have heavily entrenched symbolism and mythology, you have severe conditions of poverty, non-productivity behavior, and an inability to make decisions based on reality.

It must be emphasized that the economic and cultural conflicts around the world are conflicts based on symbolism and the acting out of its mythology. You will find that in Africa with the conflicts in Rwanda and Zaire; in Europe with the conflicts in Ireland between the Protestants and Catholics; and throughout Asia with the conflicts between different religious and ethnic factions. What I am saying here is that these conflicts will persist

ongoing mythologies. In fact, racism is a result of mythological thinking, and the West uses this myth to try to continue its worldwide domination. The West is very nervous about China and its growing economic potential. You must realize that countries that have people of color pose a great threat to the white economic populace, who have been accustomed to having complete economic control of the world.

That is why it is extremely important for China and the rest of Asia to realize that it must form strong links with geographical areas like Africa. That is indeed the West's worst nightmare. Joint ventures have already been formed at a high rate between countries like Malaysia and Zimbabwe, and numerous other Asian countries are involved in economic ventures throughout the continent of Africa. This is an exciting phase of global business transactions, for it combats the various European economic blocs. One cannot avoid the issues of racism and religious conflicts, for they impede productivity around the world and have a severe effect on economic stability that continues to bewilder and perplex the world's top economists. This refusal to deal with these sensitive issues continues to raise havoc on the world economy. In the United States, these issues are so sensitive that in some quarters it is forbidden to discuss them. That is why the United States and Europe are in such a great state of denial. And this is why it is so important for China, and the rest of

Asia, and indeed, Africa, to understand and realize the dynamics of symbolism and its resulting mythology.

In my book, *An African Answer*, I describe the phenomenon of symbolism and its resulting effects, and what has to take place for that symbolism and symbolic behavior to be eliminated. What I have proposed is a Symptomatic Thought Process in place of the symbolic thought process. I will give a short elaboration of my theory.

When the Western scholars Freud and Jung reached their conclusions on the behaviour of people the world over, they balanced the dynamics of symbolism and symptoms. It has been generally accepted that symbolism and symbolic behavior take precedence over symptoms and all other entities. This was particularly the conclusions of the physician, Carl Jung. Symbols are always a complete substitute for what is real. They have no connection whatsoever, physical or otherwise, to what is real. They are a complete substitute. On the other hand, symptoms have a real and paramount connection to all things that are real. Indeed, symptoms are a natural outgrowth of not only what is real, but a necessary connection to the realities of the universe in a way that symbols can never be.

For instance, we know that if you have a cold, you will have a runny nose, perhaps watery eyes, and a cough. These are considered symptoms of a cold. Medical science and other disciplines have proven beyond a doubt that symptoms are indeed a natural and normal process. I am here to tell you that symbols lack that process and therefore must be discarded. Symbols have no useful service in the issues of productivity, quality and in-

and productivity. This is a complete reversal of what has been taught and practiced for millenium.

For China to continue its great economic growth, we must find ways to understand the destruction that symbolism has caused and its resulting mythology. If we are to understand the behaviour of people the world over, we have to understand the dynamics and phenomena of symbolism.

People in various areas of the world do not understand the phenomenon of symbolism and its impact on their everyday life. In my book, *An African Answer: The Key to Global Productivity*, I explain the dynamics of symbolism and mythology. Improvements must be made. It is imperative for those people who are in charge of human resources to comprehend the destructive nature of symbolism and its ensuring result: the making of decisions based on myth.

I realize that this will be an arduous task. For it means changing attitudes that we've held for so long. However, what has to be stressed is that no other theories or management concepts have worked. If we continue on this path of conflict, disrespect and intolerance of other groups who are different from us, we will be headed toward global barbarism and destruction. We have to realize that basically, we are all the same, and that has been verified by the top anthropologists in the world. We are, indeed, basically the same. It is clearly understood that human life began in Africa and spread throughout the entire universe. With that diffusion of ideas and concepts, Africans and Asians must seek closer ties. We must destroy the myths of the world that keep people apart and cause conflict

## MASALAH SEMASA MEMPERKENALKAN KUMPULAN QC - CARA ATASINYA

Kumpulan QC sering menghadapi kesukaran pada setiap peringkat perkembangannya, samada sewaktu mula diperkenalkan, perkembangannya dan juga pembesarannya. Jika masalah-masalah ini tidak diatasi, aktiviti-aktiviti kumpulan tidak akan dapat berkembang lagi. Ketua-ketua kumpulan harus memberi perhatian kepada keadaan-keadaan yang sentiasa berubah supaya aktiviti-aktiviti tidak gagal. Sekiranya terdapat pertukaran kakitangan atau pekerja-pekerja baru, langkah-langkah harus diambil untuk menyesuaikan keadaan dengan perubahan.

Terdapat sepuluh perkara yang dapat menentukan bahawa pengenalan yang berjaya.

**Budaya dan suasana korporat mestilah diberi pertimbangan.**  
Oleh sebab aktiviti-aktiviti Kumpulan QC adalah pendekatan baru dan revolusi atau "breakthrough" dalam amalan woksyop, usaha memperkenalkan aktiviti-aktiviti ini tidak selalunya berjalan licin. Aktiviti Kumpulan QC bukanlah kaedah yang diadakan cuma untuk menjalankan kawalan kualiti tetapi merupakan konsep revolusi pengurusan. Oleh itu, adalah tidak bijak untuk mengenepikan amalan dan budaya tradisi. Aktiviti-aktiviti ini mesti diperkenalkan dengan berhati-hati, digalakkan dengan penuh kesabaran dan dengan daya usaha yang berterusan.

**Kesabaran, berhemah dan usaha yang berterusan**  
Berikan masa yang secukupnya dan cuba dengan berbagai cara untuk memperkenalkan aktiviti-aktiviti ino. Bersabar dan jangan putus asa. Sentiasa maju ke depan dan cuba cara yang berhemah, kerana kadang-kadang kita perlu bertolak ansur atas satu perkara untuk menang dua perkara lain.

**Libatkan orang-orang yang berpengaruh**  
Di mana-mana woksyop ada orang yang telah lama bekerja. Mereka mempunyai pengalaman, kemahiran dan kuasa. Mereka berpengaruh. Cuba libatkan mereka dan dapatkan bantuan mereka untuk mempromosikan aktiviti-aktiviti anda.

**Dapatkan penyokong Kumpulan QC dalam setiap bahagian dan kedudukan organisasi syarikat**  
Jika terdapat sekumpulan pekerja dalam organisasi yang ingin menyokong Kumpulan QC. Mereka membantu dalam mempercepatkan perkembangan pergerakan ini. Selalunya penyokong-penyokong ini dari peringkat pengurusan atau kakitangan. Mereka boleh membantu dalam menjayakan aktiviti kumpulan QC.

**Perkara-perkara formal mungkin boleh dibuat kemudian**  
Pada peringkat permulaan memang agak sukar untuk menyediakan format jadual aktiviti, laporan, manual Kumpulan QC dan buku-buku panduan. Dokumentasi dan lain-lain perkara yang bercorak formal boleh ditunda sehingga aktiviti-aktiviti berjalan dengan licin.

**Organisasi sebagai alat yang berkesan**  
Pendaftaran di syarikat atau di Ibu Pejabat dan penglibatan dalam mesyuarat promoter kumpulan QC atau perjumpaan ketua-ketua mungkin dapat memberi faedah. Elok juga mendaftar atau bergabung dengan kumpulan-kumpulan sukarela yang dikelolakan oleh