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Synergy – Production and Quality Working Together

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What is Synergy?

It depends on the situation.

- **Organizational Synergy** occurs when people and processes merge seamlessly to continuously expand the ability of the organization to deliver products and services to its customers, while maintaining competitiveness. <https://www.socialsynergetics.com/site/org-synergy>
- **Synergy** - the interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects.
- 2+2=5 effect
- $\text{H}_2 + \text{O}_2 \rightarrow \text{H}_2\text{O}$ (for all you Chemistry nerds)



In our situation, what does it mean?

- Laboratory Operations, IT, Project Management, Quality Assurance, Sales, etc. working to produce something greater than the sum it is parts.
- The tricky part is the how to. 
- Here is what I think is needed to get the job done. That is, a QA person's perspective.
- **P.S.** - it is always easier talking about this in a presentation than doing it in the laboratory!

Build a Quality Culture

- What is the culture of your organization?
- For example, does Laboratory Operations, QA, or Project Management work well together with a **shared vision** or are they at odds with each other?
- If **at odds**, realize this situation did not happen overnight and it will take a concerted effort to right the ship. “Decisions made yesterday are today’s problems.”
- Management through **demonstrated leadership** must foster a **culture of quality (set of group values)** and **continuous improvement** that benefits the success of the organization.
- Key to this is **changing human behavior** and inviting **peer engagement** to address challenges, issues and to solve problems. Employee **empowerment** is another key to maintaining a Quality Culture and improving the laboratory’s various systems.
- Once the quality culture is established be it strongest advocate!

You Can't Have This



Foster Communications

- Create effective **communications channels** within and outside the laboratory and keep them open.
- Actively **engage others in decision making**, especially if it impacts on them. Especially front line staff that interact with customers.
- Management get out of your office and walk around. Engage co-workers and find out how management might help people do their jobs better or improve things.
- Get to understand the other person's perspective. **Seek constructive feedback and welcome pushback.**
- Forge positive work relationships and earn others trust.
- **This never ends! It is always a work in progress.**

Teamwork

- Need to create a **shared vision** and out of that **build common goals**.
- Build a management team that has **common values**. What is right and wrong, the culture of the organization and underlining principles by which the management team works.
- Build a management team that recognizes someone else's strength is a complement to another person's weakness.
- Clarify roles, responsibilities, interdependencies, hand-offs and how best to work together. Again, embrace **empowerment!**
- Make sure the management team has **complementary talents**.
- Remember, **team members help each other!**

“To build a strong team you must see someone else's strength as a complement to your weakness not a threat to your position or authority.”

Christine Caine



You Don't Want This

- Management by Intimidation
- Management by Command and Control
- My Way or Hit the Highway
- You are with Me or Against Me
- Organizational Mediocrity



Integrate!

they all can contribute to organizational synergy and achieving the shared vision

- **Planning:** Strategic, Budgetary, Marketing & Sales, Production/Operations, Quality Assurance, etc.
- Training and Mentoring
- IT solutions (e.g., Qualtrax®)
- Solicit Customer Feedback
- Quality Management System
 - Audits, Corrective Actions, Complaints, Management Review, Risk Management, Change Management <https://asq.org/quality-resources/change-management>
- KPIs, Performance Indicators and Metrics for:
 - Sales, Production, Financial, Quality Management System, Customer Satisfaction
- Continuous Improvement <https://asq.org/quality-resources/continuous-improvement>
- New Work Process (ties together sales, production, project management and quality assurance)



What else can provide positive Synergy: best practices to embrace

- Budget Cycle (engage stakeholders)
- Focus on Client's Needs
- Entrepreneurial Spirit
- Collaboration
- Taking Care of Employees
- Career Paths
- Sharing of Knowledge
- Cost of Poor Quality
- Promote leadership at all levels
- Any activity that brings people together.



"Your most important assets aren't your clients; its your loyal employees. If you take care of your employees, they will take care of your clients."



There is no magic bullet

- Quality Culture
- Communications
- Teamwork
- Integrate
- Other systems and practices that support positive synergy in your laboratory.

Questions

Thank you for your participation.

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Other Talks

