Council Identifies Ways to Improve Quality Discussions

Members of the Quality Council recently identified several ways to improve the Quality Discussions. These discussions, held every six months, were established to share information about Weber Quality Improvement (WQI) efforts. The next set of discussions, scheduled to be held in December, will be improved in several areas. Many of the improvement opportunities came from informal discussions with Administrative Services employees.

- The group size for most of the Quality Discussions will be smaller -- less than 25 employees -- and more sessions will be held.
- In most cases, the locations for the discussions will be closer to the work site. For instance, instead of holding two large sessions in the Smith Auditorium, several sessions might be held in the Administration Building, University Police Building, and in Printing Services.
- An agenda will be published before the meeting so that employees can come prepared to discuss the identified issues. In addition, employees will be given the opportunity to add to the agenda.
- If questions cannot be answered during the Quality Discussions, assignments will be made to address the issues identified. Answers will be provided in the Quality Newsletter, during a future Quality Discussion, or through your Department Director.

Quality Discussions are one method to promote two-way communication about WQI efforts within the division. The Quality Support Office is also available to answer your questions. Call or write to Cherrie Nelson with your questions or comments (extension 7496 or mail code 1006).

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The Pareto Principle

“This principle is sometimes called the 80/20 rule: **80% of the trouble comes from 20% of the problems.** Though named for turn-of-the-century economist Vilfredo Pareto, it was Dr. Juran who applied the idea to management. Dr. Juran advises us to concentrate on the ‘vital few’ sources of problems and not be distracted by those of lesser importance.”

-- Peter R. Scholtes, *The Team Handbook*

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Tool of the Month

**Pareto Chart**

**Purpose:** To help determine which problems to solve in what order.

**Description:** A Pareto Chart, named after Vilfredo Pareto, shows sources of problems in order from most to least significant. Check Sheets are often converted into Pareto Charts.

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**Procedure:**
1. Select problems to be ranked.
2. Select unit of measurement to be used for comparison, such as annual cost or frequency.
3. Select time period to be studied.
4. Gather data on each problem.
5. Compare cost or frequency of each problem.
6. List problems from left to right along horizontal axis in order of decreasing cost or frequency.
7. Above each classification, draw a rectangle representing cost or frequency of problems in that classification.
The day shift officers and dispatcher in the Police and Public Safety Department are now functioning as a self-directed work team. A self-directed work team is a small group of employees who have day-to-day responsibility for managing themselves and their work. Members of these types of teams typically handle job assignments, plan and schedule work, make job-related decisions, and take action on problems.

This team activity supports the community policing program that the Police Department is implementing.

The Old Approach

The old or traditional approach to policing involved officers reacting to calls. This approach didn’t include any analysis or assessment, so there was no opportunity for officers to solve problems.

The New Approach

The new community policing approach is more proactive and is based on forming a partnership between the police and the campus community. Officers are assigned to a specific area of responsibility and are expected to solve problems as well as respond to calls. Officers no longer assume they know all the problems. They identify and solve problems through involvement of the campus community members.

"I’m excited that the day shift officers are using the self-directed work team approach to implement community policing," stated Lee Cassity, Police Chief. "When you move decision making down in the organization, it provides officers with a sense of ownership. It also gives them more control over their own destinies. They move beyond 'report makers' to problem solvers."

According to Cassity, the day shift officers recently had the opportunity to put the self-directed work team concept to a test. When a suspected pipe bomb was found in a car on campus several weeks ago, the incident was addressed through a "whole team effort." The officers worked together to arrest the suspects, evacuate the surrounding area, secure the scene, and coordinate with bomb demolition experts.

The day shift officers will be conducting interviews within the next eight weeks to get input from the campus. This is the next step in establishing a partnership between the police and the campus community.