

Strategy Development

A. General Approach Strategies.

The ten fundamentals to our general approach strategies are:

1. Team-based Collaborative Efforts. The fundamental unit of change in all organizations is at the team level. Team size is less important than the context for problem identification, problem solving, and solution implementation. Selected people chartered to tackle important issues, and then unleashed to implement their solutions, provide a powerful structure. Truly collaborative efforts incorporate the best thinking of everyone involved. Teams can be comprised of members from a horizontal, vertical, or diagonal “slice” of the organization and may even extend beyond traditional boundaries. When properly prepared to do so, teams will accomplish astounding results.

Leading teams and managing team leaders effectively, without the use of traditional authority, is a new worklife culture requirement.

Metrics (Alignment):

- 1a. How many teams are routinely facilitated?
- 1b. How many team members, as a ratio, believe their views are accommodated (not necessarily accepted) in the team dialog process?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Alignment):

- 1a. Team recommendations are normally implemented.
- 1b. Teams have wide latitude to redefine problems.
- 1c. Teams are comprised of people who volunteer.
- 1d. Teams are adequately resourced to achieve their purpose.
- 1e. Teams are NOT dominated by those in authority.
- 1f. Team initiatives are well orchestrated by a central authority.

2. Data-Driven Decision-making. Decisions made based on current and relevant data yield improved results. Intuitive decision-making isn't wrong, but should not prevail altogether. Our experience has been that decisions made at higher levels in an organization are required to be more data-driven because they often must bear the intensive scrutiny of external stakeholders. Bringing more data-driven decisions to all levels of an organization improves overall organization performance. People at every level need the tools to make this fundamental a reality.

Leaders and top managers must know how to obtain and use relevant, reliable data within the context of collaborative decision-making.

Metrics (Information):

- 2a. How many team activities were pursued directly as a result of data points?
- 2b. How many organization development team decisions were communicated to the organization's general population that included the source data that initiated the team effort?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Information):

- 2a. Decisions are made based on reliable data.
- 2b. As relevant data becomes available it is easily "injected" into the decision-making process.
- 2c. Data that can aid in decision-making is easily obtained.
- 2d. Data used in decision-making is collected from those people the decisions will impact.
- 2e. Decision-makers have the best information available when making important decisions.
- 2f. Decisions are made following an open collaborative process.

3. Maximum Involvement. Every stakeholder in a system must have some part to play in any change effort if it is to be successful. Many would suggest this is an impossible target - there will always be some people who will do nothing. Our system allows for minimal involvement as an acceptable possibility for those who do not want to participate directly in group activities. We provide clients with ways to offer incentives for involvement early on, and a tool to track metrics for participation. We offer Internet access to reports about events, so those who do not want to attend may find out what happened. We also publish a periodic **FIND OUT! Newsletter**, tailored specifically to the client workforce, about their change initiative.

Leaders must learn to use new methods to elicit the participation of every member in their organizations.

Metrics (People):

- 3a. What percentage of organization members have participated on organization development problem solving teams in the pervious year?
- 3b. What percentage of organization members respond to anonymous requests that would invite participation?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (People):

- 3a. Everyone is aware of the current status of important projects impacting him or her.
- 3b. Ad hoc projects regularly involve "fresh" volunteers.
- 3c. Sooner or later everyone serves on an important project team.
- 3d. People understand, first hand, the frustrations of initiating important change initiatives.
- 3e. Important change initiatives involve everyone in some way.
- 3f. "Volunteer" requirements are spread across everyone in the organization.

4. Learning-focused Activity. *QWLC* uses a tool that helps people learn from every

event, whether it is a one-hour meeting or a five-day workshop. Our goal is to embed a short but formal “clinic” routine, which will become a part of everyone’s learning regimen. Individual skills are improved as a result of this mechanism, and organizational performance and productivity are improved.

Leaders must be vulnerable to making mistakes and learning from them as a model for others to emulate.

Metrics (Skills):

- 4a. Ratio of team activities that undergo rigorous clinic?
- 4b. How many teams of those actively engaged in problem solving publish, “lessons learned” so that other teams will benefit from their learnings?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Skills):

- 4a. All activities have a built-in component that fosters learning.
- 4b. People often question each other’s decisions as a way to learn.
- 4c. “Routines” are often improved as a result of learnings.
- 4d. Leaders provide a model for honest and open feedback.
- 4e. People are receptive to open dialogs that help generate improvements.
- 4f. Time is regularly set aside for the express purpose of learning ways to improve.

5. Parallel Organization Development. Aside from the formal organization structure, *QWLC* develops a parallel organization through a “loose-tight” structure of teams, whose members come from a diagonal “slice” of the organization. People learn in this parallel structure, create the *worklife culture* they desire, and carry that experience back to their formal structures. This seeds the client system so that the organization changes incrementally as a result.

Leaders must learn to share their authority appropriately if the full range of organization talent is to be focused on continuous improvement.

Metrics (Organization):

- 5a. How many parallel organization teams are currently active?
- 5b. What is the meeting rate and duration of each parallel organization team?
- 5c. What is the ratio of recommendations accepted and implemented by management for each team?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Organization):

- 5a. Teams have a formal structure that is known by everyone in the organization.
- 5b. Some teams have nearly complete authority to implement their recommendations.
- 5c. The rules adopted by teams creep into routine work in the formal structure.
- 5d. Leading the organization through cross-functional teams is normal.
- 5e. Most teams have members that cross organizational boundaries.
- 5f. Real team work is the way work is done in this organization.

6. Leadership with Followership Development. Traditional leadership training does not involve those who are expected to follow. Leaders are often in a learning cocoon with other leaders, where followership is talked about in abstract terms. *QWLC* believes that leaders can best be developed when followership is prepared along the same track. Learning can then take place within the realistic context of the workplace, not the traditional abstract cocoon. Some events will be conducted with leadership and followership separately, while other events will include both groups together.

Leaders must inspire the willingness of followers to rally around a common understanding of future challenges.

Metrics (Leadership and Management):

6a. What is the monthly ratio of events/meetings that are conducted with attendance of management/supervisors versus general attendance?

6b. What is the ratio of participation (as measured by actual person/dialog) of non-supervisors versus supervisors?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Leadership and Management):

- 6a. Having leaders and followers learn together is productive.
- 6b. Followers that learn leadership skills are better prepared for advancement.
- 6c. Leaders gain special insight from followers that help them learn in ways they might not otherwise learn.
- 6d. By learning together, both leaders and followers benefit.
- 6e. Followers are able to inject realism into leadership training.
- 6f. Leading is more effective when followers' feelings are understood.

7. On-site and Off-site Event Design. The *worklife culture* change effort is programmed to take place both at the normal work site and at off-site locations. Some client or community facilities can be used for this purpose.

Leaders must provide new opportunities and fresh perspectives by a change in surroundings.

Metrics (Facility):

7a. How many organization development people/events are conducted each month in an "outside" facility?

7b. What is the ratio of inside versus outside organization development events each calendar quarter?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Facility):

- 7a. The facility we use for organization development activity meets our needs.
- 7b. We use a variety of effective locations for our organization development activities.
- 7c. We use a combination of on-site and off-site locations to maximize our learning.
- 7d. Off-site locations are used effectively to achieve organizational changes.
- 7e. We use a variety of on-site conference or meeting rooms to meet our organization development needs.

7f. Our organization-change design incorporates on-site and off-site locations.

8. Literature Research. *QWLC* has an extensive organization development library and is a member of a wide range of professional organizations, each having their own publications. As new materials are received, they are systematically reviewed and used as a potential resource for our own Technology – we strive to keep it fresh and vibrant at all times. We also suggest reading selections for members of our client organizations as specific materials become relevant to their progress. Continually reviewing the latest and best materials allows us to offer a Compatibility Guarantee that assures our organization development Technology integrates with whatever current venue is popular in the client organization.

Leaders must constantly look for and find fresh ideas and approaches that can be imported to save their organizations from unnecessary trial and error.

Metrics (Technology):

8a. How many reference materials are introduced into the organization each month dealing with cultural capacity issues?

8b. How many books and other publications are read by managers, supervisors, or general population employees each month from sources outside your industry that deal with universal organizational capacity issues?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Technology):

8a. I have documentation that lets me know we are on the right track.

8b. When confused about our course, I have literature available that helps me clarify the rationale for our actions.

8c. I am reassured by popular literature that our current course of action is right for us.

8d. I am confident that we're on the right track because of the literature we receive.

8e. We are involved with preparing literature that will help others learn from our experience.

8f. Our experience is well documented so that learning is enhanced.

9. Systemic Interventions. *QWLC* takes a whole-organization view of planning changes. We know that solving one problem can create others, so we take great pains to determine the implications of changes in advance in order to minimize the potential disruption to on-going work and existing plans. We believe that collaboratively designed methods will constitute a new way to accomplish current and future work without unnecessarily adding additional work to the formula.

Leaders must think about their whole organization as they consider changes with far-reaching impact, so as to balance stability with change chaos.

Metrics (Environment):

9a. What percentage of the membership of organization development teams are comprised of individuals from each organizational element?

9b. What percentage of the membership of customer service teams are knowledgeable of the services offered by the entire organization?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Environment):

- 9a. We pay attention to issues that have a broad impact.
- 9b. We think through the implications of a change before we implement it.
- 9c. We try to understand the “root” origin of an issue as part of our problem solving efforts.
- 9d. We evaluate change efforts as they are implemented.
- 9e. Changes are well planned and implemented.
- 9f. If something is not going as planned, we determine how to correct it.

10. Comprehensive Validation. Experience has taught us that an organization must be prepared to validate changes or people will not believe they are occurring. This often means that new conditions are “captured” through stories or through documentation (or both) that can be used to amplify positive changes early. This important validation effort accelerates changes, and contributes to more accurate return-on-investment calculations.

Leaders must find out what works well and what doesn't – then adjust to achieve maximum impact.

Metrics (Environment):

- 10a. How many all-personnel pieces of literature have been published that contain information related directly to cultural capacity improvement issues?
- 10b. What is the ratio of words used for cultural capacity improvement issues relative to routine communications?
- 10c. By count, how many agenda items at routine meetings are devoted to cultural capacity improvement issues?
- 10d. What is the ratio of “air time” consumed by cultural capacity improvement issues at routine staff meetings?

Suggested Follow-through Survey Items (Environment):

- 10a. Positive shifts in the way we do business are “traced” to a root initiative.
- 10b. “Best practices” are widely broadcast to assure everyone understands what works well.
- 10c. Stories are retold frequently throughout our organization that attests to achievements.
- 10d. Our change-management success stories are well known by most people.
- 10e. People know what causes positive changes in our system.
- 10f. We repeat what works well as a way to make continuous improvement.

B. UHS Element Strategies.

Note. Some of the suggested strategies outlined here will have to be tailored to the specific situation at an individual facility.

1. Environment. Everything outside the organization having an influence on it is in the environment. Too often people in organizations today believe they have little or no influence on their environment. They believe they are at the mercy of people in Washington, or Richmond, or even the Central Office, who know little about their true circumstances but make decisions they will have to live with whether those decisions are effective or not. Also in the environment, and one of the most important elements of it, are the organization's customers. Workers deep in an organization may be closer to the customer and know what the customer really wants more than was the case only a few decades ago. In any event, the environment is loaded with people of profound influence over the organization's future. People in the organization who do not believe they can influence people in the environment must undergo an essential shift that will cause them to be more responsive to their environment. Specific strategies include:

Example - Cutting Edge. (*Generic Item – My organization tends to be at the cutting edge within our industry.*) **Find and publicize noteworthy initiatives that demonstrate that your organization is unique and ahead of others. Initiate projects that will continue to move the boundaries toward uniqueness within the field.** Everyone wants to be a part of the excitement that comes from breaking new ground – being the first and best at something. Today, few people really distinguish themselves by risking the potential of failure to be singularly unique – at the cutting edge. It may be easier than you think to excel.

Example - Reputation. (*Special Item -- The reputation of XYZ is continuously improving.*) **Take specific actions to improve the reputation and publicize the results.** People in service organization are often the last to toot their own horn. Yet others will seldom do it for them. A sound approach to marketing the strengths of an organization to develop confidence and bolster a reputation is essential.

2. Leadership and Management. Although leadership and management are two different things, an organization must have both attributes working in harmony to be most effective. Leadership, among other things, challenges people to change in ways that would meet the new demands that will be placed on the organization. Management, on the other hand, is concerned with making those adjustments and pursuing those processes of change in the most efficient manner possible. Workers have an intuitive sense about the capacity that can be achieved when the best combination of leadership and management are harnessed and engaged in everyone's best interests. Workers have high expectations for those in positions of authority in organizations today. They expect more of their leaders and managers than many are capable of delivering. People in organizations often will commit more time, when their full contribution allows for talents not included in their core job responsibilities.

Example - Understanding. (*Generic Item – The leadership of my organization understands how the organization works.*) **People in top positions must visit workers locally to demonstrate interest in understanding that will lead to help in solving local problems.**

People at the top of any organization chart have strict demands placed on their time and attention. Yet line workers want more than ever to be understood from the local perspective that only a visit will satisfy. Leaders can assign “local tour” responsibilities to a member of their staff to assure this happens but must treat this calendar commitment with every respect afforded any other commitment if it is to work well.

Example - Initiative. (*Special Item – I am allowed to try new and innovative ideas to improve performance.*) **Determine and implement ways to reward acts of initiative that are aligned with the organization’s overall direction and publicize the results.** When people hesitate to do the right thing, it can mean that they are unsure of what the right thing is. It may also mean that they are not confident the organization will support doing the right thing as they see it. In either case, hesitation costs the organization innovative solutions and the ability to learn through active experimentation. Taking the initiative is easier when coworkers are supportive of the effort. In fact, without coworker support, an initiative may be crippled entirely. The lack of innovation through initiative is a near guarantee that results will suffer in the long run.

3. People. People’s natural attributes determine their success in life and often their success at work. Certainly having the right skills (covered in the next category) is important. Natural attributes such as cooperativeness, cheerful disposition, talent for paying attention to details, willingness to change, a natural curiosity, and the like, are often of greatest importance. Some of these attributes can be measured while others are entirely subjective and relationship dependent. In any event, the natural attributes that people bring with them to work every day create the margin that separates the highly success organization from one that is barely meeting the grade.

Example - Potential. (*Generic Item – Individuals are retained in the organization based on their ability to contribute to the success of the organization.*) **Provide a means for everyone to make their best contribution to the well being of the organization through a network of talent-engaging tasks that operate continuously.** Success will come in many disguises.

People have talents that are unknown and largely untapped by leaders and managers in organizations yet will fill the void between marginal achievement and excellent performance. Often the traditional job environment doesn’t allow for the full range of talent to be demonstrated, so the skilled leader will make use of innovative team approaches to tap into this storehouse of hidden talent. Much of the work done by managers ought to be done by teams of people in a more grass-roots approach. This will free managers to manage.

Example - Workload. (*Special Item – The workload of employees is appropriate.*) **Examine workload that may no longer be necessary or may be unnecessarily redundant and seek ways to “officially” eliminate or lessen workload.** Although habit is often a good thing, it can also cause people to continue doing things that are no longer important to others. People have an idea of what it will take to achieve the level of quality they expect, yet others may be willing to

accept a lower level of quality in a lower priority area in order to achieve a higher level of quality in a higher priority. Until priorities are known and agreed to, it is difficult to adjust workload accordingly.

4. Skills. People require the necessary skills to feel competent to do the job expected of them. Skills may be acquired through formal education and training, or they may be acquired through on-the-job experience. Skills are also acquired informally through the organization's informal network. Skills may also be acquired through the coaching process, which is often a preference for senior executives. People also learn how to succeed in an organization based on the influence of the organization's culture. In any event, skills are acquired through some external means, rather than being a part of ones natural attributes or tendencies.

Example - Development. (*Generic Item – Members of the organization are trained and developed for additional duties and increased responsibilities.*) **Provide opportunities for people to enroll in courses that will develop their career potential and assign them added duties that will enable them to hone skills needed for alternative assignments.** People need to feel a sense that career advancement is a possibility. When their organization takes an interest in preparing them for advancement it provides security and motivation. In addition, a variation in duties provides stimulation for many people that might otherwise become bored with routine duties. Cross-training is one possibility, staff rotation is another common approach.

Example - Accountability. (*Special Item – Members of the work group are trained to perform tasks for which they are held accountable.*) **Engage in a process that will determine if people have the full skills inventory they will be held accountable for performing and provide the opportunity for those skills to be upgraded in the event of a shortfall.** Few things can frustrate workers more than being held accountable for doing a job when they are not afforded the opportunity to learn what it takes to do it successfully. If, for example, workers are expected to be innovative, yet they are not comfortable in working beyond set limits, they will naturally be resistant to trying new tasks. Too often people will perform well at what they believe they will be held accountable for, yet shy away from more innovative work.

5. Organizations. The way people are organized into work groups is one element that will determine their effectiveness as they work together. Formal structures are often defined with clarity around who a person reports to at the next higher and lower level. Informal structures are often less clear, yet account for an enormous amount of work getting done on a daily basis. As teams are introduced into the parallel structure of an organization the issues surrounding reporting relationships becomes clouded. A person serving on a team may take actions for the good of the entire organization yet not necessarily be in the best interest of the work group to which they are assigned - it is this assigned work group, however, which promotes and rewards the individual. Typically, organization structures ought not to inhibit people from crossing boundaries to pursue the highest quality work possible, yet it is common for work groups to become extremely territorial in nature and guard the resources within them, often disregarding the common good.

Example - Linking Interface. (*Generic Item – My work group leader interfaces well with the next higher level in the organization.*) **Intentionally engage in activities that develop relationships that will strengthen the linking of each work group with those above and below them.** People generally are uncomfortable when an obvious conflict exists between their supervisor and the next higher link in the supervisory channels. Workers prefer the security that emerges from harmonious relationships. When supervisors are “at war” with one another, subordinates are often confused and resort to doing only the safe work that both supervisors would consider common ground.

Example - Cooperation. (*Special Item – There is much cooperation between work groups.*) **Determine significant structural relationships that may be unclear or are not working as they should, and engage stakeholders in facilitated dialog that will clarify and/or modify those relationships into ones of higher performance.** When formal relationships in an organization are strained, for whatever reason, those that surround those strained relationships suffer also. Work effectiveness and efficiency is eroded severely. The time and attention required to restore effective and efficient working relationships within the formal structure are worth the investment.

6. Alignment. Alignment defines the “fit” between what I do every day and the vision for the organization years down the road. Alignment defines, among other things, the effectiveness and efficiency of priorities, strategies, missions, values, vision, and purpose. Proper alignment enhances the consistency of decisions made by someone in one part of the organization with another decision maker far removed. Normally, alignment issues are nested so that elements of alignment apply to the entire system while sub-elements of alignment apply to the smallest part of the system. Alignment unites a system while lack of it will tear a system apart. An organization’s soul emerges from its alignment.

Example - Consistency. (*Generic Item – Decisions are reasonably consistent across all levels of my organization.*) **Determine what they are and breathe life into the normative values that are inherent in decision making and use those values as a yardstick for consistency.** Normative values drive decisions. If different normative values are at work in different parts of the organization one can expect decisions to be inconsistent. Inconsistent decision making is not necessarily a bad thing. It may be perceived to be a bad thing, however, if decisions concern unilateral policies like promotions, for example.

Example - Contribution. (*Special Item – What I do every day contributes to the mission of XYZ.*) **Verify the missions of the system with the work force. Determine if tasks people are being held accountable for are aligned with the verified missions. Adjust either missions or tasks to achieve alignment.** The fast pace of change in organizations today accounts for many people being burdened by tasks that may no longer be relevant to current goals. Habits are formed and people retain work that is no longer necessary. Or someone may require work when the results of that work contribute only marginally to the overall results being sought. It is essential that tasks be reviewed regularly to determine if they continue to make a contribution to the really important goals of the organization. In complex organizations, this may involve a new partnership between operating elements and central office decision-makers.

7. Technology. Each organization develops written materials that define how the organization runs as it fulfills its unique purpose. This written material constitutes the organization's technology. At IBM, for example, they defined how to make a personal computer. Their technology was "how to build a computer" not the computer itself. The computer became the result of the IBM technology. An organization's technology is a unique fingerprint that reflects the values of those who invested heavily as the organization was born. As the organization ages, new people throw out what no longer works for them and reinvent what will work for them. This way, technology remains fresh. Yet, as technology changes, some in the organization will become frustrated over changes made for no apparent reason.

Example - Currency. (*Generic Item – My organization takes advantage of breakthroughs in improved techniques.*) **Determine if important discoveries in one part of the organization are being used universally. If they are not being used, take action to make sure everyone who can use the new methodology has been made aware of it.** In many organizations innovations or economies are not readily shared among people who can take advantage of them. In many cases, tips and techniques are more accidentally shared during lunch than are shared formally through a deliberate network. As lessons are learned, there ought to be a mechanism for improvements to be shared.

Example - Guidelines. (*Special Item – Written guidelines are available to assist me in understanding how to do my job.*) **Determine if every job has a current and clear set of guidelines that will enable the incumbent to be successful.** If gaps exist or new procedures have been adopted, guidelines may require being updated. Many people think that more senior employees don't need this kind of guidance, yet they often prefer it and our experience leads us

to believe that more senior people are apt to perform by rote all too often. The guidance need not be extensive, and may be nothing more than an expansion on a person's position description or a clarification of the most important aspects of the job.

8. Information. Information flow channels data, information, knowledge, or wisdom from those that have it to those that need it to excel in their work. As simple a concept as that might be it is difficult to implement in practice. We are convinced that what many organizations categorize as a communications problems is really an information flow problem with a forum at the root of a solution. A forum need not be large numbers of people in the same room at one time. The notion of a forum is to be deliberate about including the right people in dialog about the right topics on a regular basis. Many people also think that information flow means people at the top of the organization chart giving more information to workers down the line. That might be part of it, but another important part is the information flow that occurs from the bottom of the chart (close to the customers) to those at the top of the chart so that better decisions can be made that effect them.

Example - Vision. (*Generic Item – I get information that lets me know I contribute to achieving the organization's vision on a regular basis.*) **Find ways to link a person's work contribution to the organizations vision and share that information with them on a regular basis.** Keep informal notes that allow you to know this is happening. People want to know things about

happenings within their organization. Specifically, they want to know that the efforts they make contribute to overall success. Written communications, even an informal note, are treasured more highly by many. An investment of time to sit and really talk about important topics of special interest to both parties is a significant commitment.

Example - Insights. (*Generic Item – My thoughts are solicited concerning the needs of XYZ.*) **Ask people their opinions. Collect information through formal and informal surveys. Post results. Make something happen as a result of what people tell you. Tell them that you made something happen as a result of their input.** We always give our survey clients a piece of advice. Do something! When you ask people for their advice, be prepared to take a certain amount of that advice or stop asking for advice. The other, more destructive way to stop the cycle is to ask for advice and do nothing with it.

Soon people will catch on and stop providing you with their opinions because they will observe you not following through.

9. Facilities. Facilities are an incredibly important element in the work capacity equation. People with the right amount of space, close to those they need to work with, appropriately decorated, and suitably comfortable will out produce those without these conditions every time. A major complaint from many is that people don't have enough space to do the work expected of them. Too often the amount of space is predicated on a person's stature in the organization (and we are not suggesting that this system be abolished) rather than on the demands required of the job. The height of the ceiling can effect how a person thinks!

Kinesthetic thinkers pay a great deal of attention to physical layout and spatial considerations. Other modalities (visual, auditory, or digital) are less concerned with these matters. The space must fit the needs of the people and tasks of those who occupy it.

Example - Safety. (*Generic Item – I feel safe in my workplace.*) **Get at the root of the feelings and fix those obvious things that are often easily fixed first and quickly. Work on the more complex issues as required.** Safety is often as simple as locks on the doors, or lights in the parking lot. In some cases, safety is a more complex issue and may involve interpersonal relationships. These cases must be treated carefully but directly to assure that fear at work is completely abated.

Example - Appropriateness. (*Special Item – My work space supports the type of work I am expected to perform.*) **Develop review criteria for workspace internally. Review the space needed for the type of work people are performing. Adjust work space accordingly if appropriate, otherwise clarify the restrictions with everyone concerned.** Our experience is that workspace is rarely ideal. Within the bounds of a realistic approach, however, it is possible to make adjustment that will improve a person's potential performance and productivity by making simple and locally authorized changes.

10. Equipment. Having the right “tools” for the job is an imperative for all workers. The right tools vary from a massive multi-million dollar piece of machinery to the right type of pencil to get the job done. Employees are constantly frustrated with not having the latest labor-saving device to be most productive. The fastest possible computer with the latest software is often overwhelming for many workers. Yet keeping pace with the fastest computers in an industry that reinvents itself almost monthly seems impossible. We often suggest establishing a “currency index” that will allow people to specifically stay current with the latest and best equipment to do the work required of them. If the “currency index” falls below a certain level, it’s time to upgrade.

Example - Serviceability. (*Generic Item – The equipment available to me to do my job is entirely serviceable.*) **Prioritize equipment needs and engage a process to obtain and place into service high priority items.** Having old equipment does not necessarily mean work can’t be accomplished adequately. It might be better to have older equipment, for example, if servicing it can be accomplished easily and with less expense as long as satisfactory results are obtained. People too often associate older equipment with an inability to obtain desired results. Given that this perception may not be true, it will be wise to determine the actual status and take actions based on clear priorities.

Example - Computers. (*Special Item – Computer equipment supports the organization’s needs.*) **Determine computer-oriented needs that are not being satisfied with current equipment, and develop and implement a plan to procure the needed equipment.** People will become justifiably frustrated when the tools they need to perform their job well are not available. An even greater frustration sets in when needed equipment has not even been

identified, and actions taken to procure it. In some cases, needs can be satisfied when funds suddenly become available and the needs have already been well documented. In many organizations, a list of “Unfunded Requirements” is maintained so that any financial windfall can be more quickly acted upon.

C. Item Strategies.

The following are illustrations of specific item by item strategies:

Item: 1 **The quality of my work is valued by my department.**
AS0001

Remediation: Three concerns must be dealt with while remediating this item: appropriate task assignments, distorted value, and appropriate response to high value contributions.

First, using RGB Technology, the appropriate assignment of tasks according to one’s natural predisposition must be validated. Too often, skills are the primary (and occasionally the only) criteria used for assigning a person to a particular job. Too often people may be qualified to perform tasks but not

well suited to doing their best work in a particular job. "Job fit" must be a first line of remediation.

Second, People often believe they do a better job (provide higher value) than they actually do provide. It is typical that employees are infrequently counseled on marginal job performance and therefore believe they are doing better than they actually are doing. Review records to determine if actual coaching and counseling has taken place. Seek a long-term resolution through "tightening" the process of employee feedback on job performance. Many employees will rightfully become resentful if the workload becomes or is not balanced because some coworkers do not pull their weight while others are overworked.

Third, It is imperative that supervisors, managers, and coworkers acknowledge the hard work that people do contribute to the success of a work unit. Examine if this acknowledgement is realistic (drive out superficial recognition when possible).

Item: 2
LM0059

I am confident that management decisions are made with everyone's best interests in mind.

Remediation: As much as managers want their employees to have confidence in their judgement, they often do little to cultivate that confidence assuming that it is not their job to do so. Few things could be further from reality. Too often decisions are made that impact the workforce and decision-makers do little to inform those impacted as to the process used or the information available as those decisions were made. What results from this inadequate process is that people are informed of the decision, but not informed of the key factors that played into the decision. It is sad to report that in some cases managers make poor decisions and do not want to be exposed to the "heat" of having to explain how they arrived at the decision they made.

Consider the following options to improve scores and capacity in this area:

First, Defer to a facilitated group decision-making option whenever time permits. Managers often decide too many things that ought to be decided by others - especially others closer to the work. Insist that the group entertain many options and make their recommendations formally. If members of the group are not accustomed to this brand of open decision-making, engage a facilitator to help.

Second, take the time to gather input to a decision from among those who will have to implement the decision. Do this in an open meeting with all concerned when possible to eliminate the suspicion that input may be

manipulated.

Third, inform those impacted by a decision of the process used and the information available that influenced the decision.

Fourth, stabilize decision so that they will not be revisited too frequently, yet let people know that decisions are subject to change to justifiable reasons. Gather commitment for implementation to give a new process or procedure a fair chance to work before injecting the chaos that often comes with an overturned decision.

Item: 3
PE0032

Promotions are handled fairly.

Remediation: People normally desire to know what it takes to get promoted or advance in one or more of several areas (pay, position, benefits, stature, visibility, etc.). Being "promoted" may mean official advancement or it may mean being given more prestige than coworkers by supervisors and management. In any event, promotions are considered desirable. People want to know that their advancement opportunities in their organization are not impeded by unfair practices similar to the "good old boy" network. If they have a sense that promotions are or might be impeded, they will begin to withhold valuable discretionary labor or knowledge - the organization suffers a loss when this occurs.

Several courses of action can be applied if this item is low:

First, Improve the flow of information concerning promotions. Fight the impulse to inform people ONLY when they become eligible for promotions.

Second, celebrate when people are promoted and broadcast through an appropriate medium what criteria was used to discern the person who was ultimately promoted.

Third, give everyone who is otherwise eligible the opportunity to compete for promotion when promotions are available.

Fourth, prepare people for their next advancement on a routine basis to improve the pool of eligible candidates. If there is a specific "track" of education, experience or performance that must be achieved to enhance potential, make sure that "track" is well publicized.

Item: 4
AS0003

People in our organization rely on each other to get priority tasks done.

Remediation: People are rarely hired to work in isolation. The complexity of modern organizations demands that collective skills be engaged to solve complex problems, especially under more urgent conditions. If people cannot rely on one another to get their work completed, the result is normally workload imbalance. People avoid those who they cannot rely on in given conditions and often "do it themselves" before trying to improve someone else's performance. Our language even supports this phenomena, "If you want it done right, do it yourself!" Unfortunately, if that practice prevails, some will end up doing too much, others not enough, and resentment abounds across both polarized groups.

Two courses of action are obvious:

First, if there are those who cannot be relied upon for some correctable reason, take action to engage those individuals in some form of remediation (training, practice, mock events, etc.) to improve reliability on priority tasks.

Second, inform those who are required to participate in priority task completion that they will be required to participate in task design at an acceptable level of collaborative task performance. Focus on streamlining the task to accommodate the level of reliability available.

Item: 5
TE0014

The method of documentation for my department is efficient.

Remediation: The mantra, "The job's not done until the paperwork [or computer file] is done!" is probably more true now than when the thought originated. The level of complexity, the level of potential distraction, combined with daily technological advances often makes it difficult to achieve desired success. Yet there is often little choice - documentation is required at every turn.

Two possible solutions emerge:

First, work (involve those who must use the documentation process) to improve the efficiency - eliminate redundancy, narrow the scope to the minimum required.

Second, be sure that everyone involved in a documentation process understands the requirements.

Item: 6
LA0034

My work areas are adequate.

Remediation: The topic of work area adequacy normally involves the layout and quantity of space provided to get the job done successfully. As people are inconvenienced by an inadequate space, they begin to hold back on the speed and effectiveness of the tasks performed (intentionally or without intention). The rationale is clear, "If the organization wanted me to be at peak efficiency, they would provide the necessary space and configuration necessary."

Four possibilities may improve these conditions if scores are low:

First, create new better-aligned space. This is likely difficult to accommodate quickly, but can be accomplished over time. As organization grow expansion and the development of new facilities is always a consideration as timing and funding issues are resolved.

Second, eliminate or reduce the amount of "clutter" or close-at-hand storage in the current space. Consider alternative furniture arrangements or storage facilities whenever possible to reduce congestion.

Third, consider the movement of functions to alternative locations that are not essential to collaboration. Move functions closer to the source whenever there is a choice. When possible and feasible, consolidate functions to reduce congestion at an over-crowded location.

Fourth, consider outsourcing the function altogether when efficiency, cost and other considerations are favorable.

D. Tailoring the Strategic Approach

1. Timing. There are five broad types of activities scheduled. It will be up to each client (or potentially each Leadership Team) to determine when each activity will be performed.

a. Orientation and Awareness Activities. This may be special or routine meetings, publications, or bulletin board displays. *QWLC* will publish a FIND OUT! Newsletter on request (no more frequently than monthly) to assure each individual in the organization is informed of happenings. There is no particular schedule for the activities.

b. Data Collection and Feedback. Data Collection will normally be completed with Data Breaks or Fairs scheduled soon after all the data entry is completed. Coaching Labs can be scheduled at any time when Coaching Lab slots are available. Typically, these Labs are for Leadership Teams, and take approximately two hours. The *QWLC* calendar can be consulted for scheduling purposes. Normally Monday afternoons or Friday afternoons are ideal opportunities.

c. Education and Training. There are four groups that require special training in this approach:

1) Coordinator training is approximately 3 hours long and is typically conducted several times each year. See the *QWLC* Calendar for dates.

2) The Leadership Teams receive special training as required. .

3) Cultural Facilitator training occurs on schedule each calendar quarter. See the *QWLC* Calendar for specific dates. During summer months, supplementary offerings are also available.

4) Those that will serve on the Evaluation Team will also receive an orientation.

d. Team-based Practicum. Each Leadership Learning Team will select one or more areas for improvement and schedule time for improvement teams to meet and conduct their business.

e. Evaluations. The Evaluations Team may meet to determine the evaluation design and conduct and report evaluations.

2. Selection of People for Teams. People will be selected for teams based on criteria established for each team. Criteria will be released to the Coordinator in advance of the requirement for selections. It would be appropriate for a roster system to be used so that every individual in the organization will eventually serve on a team.

3. Scope. The scope of each initiative will be determined locally. Initial scope includes all employees. Subsequent scope may be expanded to other stakeholder groups.

4. Hoopla! Each client will determine the level and manor of publicity directed at this project. We encourage each client to be inventive and have some fun with these activities. Celebrations are appropriate as victories are achieved.