

NONSUBSTITABLE ROLE OF THE QUALITY SYSTEMS IN THE ADVANCEMENT OF CZECH ORGANIZATIONS OF AGRIBUSINESS

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The motto of the European Quality Charter is the quality understanding as the basic source of the European competitive advantage. The creation and sustainability of this fundamental part of the Czech agribusiness organizations' competitive advantage supposes creative development of the quality systems. The author explains the initiative role of the quality systems, which were established on the basis of ISO 9000, in opening the continuous improvement process of the organizational effectiveness and gradual change of the organizational culture. The author, who interprets his own research results and discusses the model of the transformation organizational change, proves, that top management do not appreciate enough the change of the infrastructure layer and especially of the value layer with implication of not setting high value to the role of the quality systems in the change process. He emphasizes, the key change role of the organizational culture, which he considers as the critical factor of the successful revitalization of the Czech organizations majority. The necessity of the future development of the quality systems e.g. TQM, including the quality assurance systems in the sense of the open concept, which pervades all the organizational processes is stressed in conclusions.

European Quality Charter; competitive advantage; agribusiness; quality systems; ISO 9000; organizational effectiveness; model of transformation organizational change; value layer; continuous improvement process; organizational culture; total quality system

INTRODUCTION

The European Quality Charter was signed on 23 October 1998 in Paris in the common congress of EOQ and EFQM which under the name European Quality Convention was organized by the French Society for Quality MFQ. Presidents of **European Union**, **UNICE** (Union of Industrial and Employers' Confederations of Europe), **UAPME** (European Association for Craft and SME), **MFQ** (French Movement for Quality, **EFQM** (European Foundation

for Quality Management) and **EOQ** (European Organization for Quality) participated in the festive signing.

The motto of the Charter is understanding of the quality as a basic source of the European Competitive Advantage. "The chain of quality" unites and connects all economic and social aspects. Thus, the quality is the concern of everybody and requires his/her personal engagement.

Signers undertake to: generally support approaches to the quality in entertainment and public sector; to develop education to the quality on all levels of education; to develop present understanding of quality methods and instruments and to make it accessible to everybody; to disseminate actively experience from the quality sphere; to support image of "European quality" worldwide; during the year to endeavour to continuous quality improvement; to engage in the European Week of the Quality (annually in November) to present accomplished activities, current initiatives and future projects.

Systems of quality

More and more attention paid to the issue of quality and particularly to the building of the quality systems in organizations of production and non-production spheres in the European Union, United States and Japan has its real reason which is still unappreciated by the management of a lot of Czech organizations. It is also proved by the results of the first phase of the research (Palán et al., 1998).

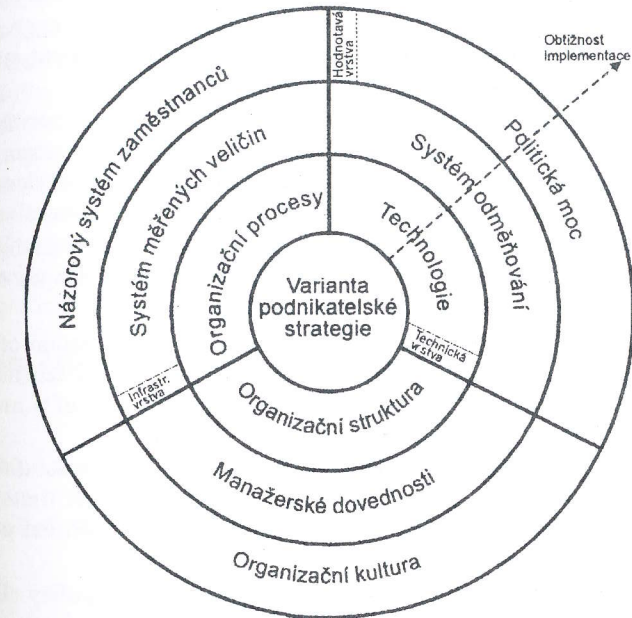
The building of the quality system, though in its basic form corresponding to the specification of the standard ISO 9000 (Fiala et al., 1998), requires inventory of existing processes, organizational structures, supporting systems and procedures at its beginning and end is always external, eventually internal customer. Built-in system of external and internal audits creates prerequisites for starting the process of continuous improvement of organizational effectiveness. Certification of the quality system according to the ISO 9001/2/3 is an important signal for external business environment and creates an important component of competitive organizational advantage.

Management of Czech organization does not often realises and sufficiently appreciates an important aspect of the functioning quality system which is **the start of gradual change of business culture**. It is a priori a change of conceptual stereotypes of employees, creation and fixation of new models of behaviour of orientating employees and working teams to continuous quality improvement of the work, creation of prerequisites for harmonic co-operation and business thinking. Why is this aspect so important?

Let us think about the holistic model of transformation organizational change (the author defines organizational change as any formal and purpose-

ful change of organizational system. Transformation change has a character of radical developmental change comprising the whole organizational system) – Fig. 1.

The change of **technical layer** takes place in relatively simplest way. It includes **organizational processes, technology and organizational structure**.



1. Model of transformation change

Hodnotová vrstva	= Value layer
Názorový systém zaměstnanců	= Opinion system of employees
Systém měřených veličin	= Measurement system
Organizační procesy	= Organizational processes
Infrastrukturální vrstva	= Infrastructure layer
Organizační struktura	= Organizational structure
Manažerské dovednosti	= Managerial skills
Organizační kultura	= Organizational culture
Technická vrstva	= Technical layer
Politická moc	= Political power
Systém odměňování	= Remuneration system
Technologie	= Technology
Obtížnost implementace	= Implementation difficulty

Most of organizations start the process of transformation changes of redefinition of organizational process of rationalized purposeful introduction of modern information technologies. Organizational structure should then naturally reflect requirements of efficient functioning of organizational processes. It is formed as a consequence of primary target process approach to functioning of organization.

The change of infrastructure layer which stabilizes and strengthens desired new models of functioning of organizational processes. Basic aggregated factors of this layer are **the system of remuneration, measurement system quantity and managerial skills**.

A lot of our organizations were faced to successful transformation of technical layer but were not able to connect these positive changes with desired and needed changes in the layer of infrastructure. It is evident that absence of rightful remuneration of new behaviour is strongly demotivating.

Similarly a critical factor is the proper measurement system (indicators which must objectively monitor quantitative and qualitative changes of organizational processes).

Transformation of organizational processes connected with creation of process teams brings a requirement for change of used managerial techniques. For example, empowering of working teams leads to the need of a marked change of management style of a manager.

The value layer is on the highest place. Just its change is the most difficult in the whole transformation process and requires also the most time. It is formed by three aggregated factors: **organizational culture, political power and opinion system of employees**.

The change in organizational culture and organizational policy closely connected with it, as it seem to be, is a critical prerequisite of successful revitalization of majority of Czech organizations.

The above-mentioned assertion documents very well the preliminary diagnoses of unnamed organization (The basic methodological approach is based on the theory and practice of action research – variants of participation research, when research team actively co-operates with the managerial team, i.e. they gives a common definition of the problems with which they want to deal, they together define methods of the data collection and they together define hypotheses of relevant studied situations – Palán, Kotvová, 1998): **Preliminary diagnosis of the present state of studied company and proposal of working hypotheses to remove found faults.**

The studied joint stock company represents a business healthy modern agribusiness with optimized structure of enterprise processes, relatively good technological structure and suitable organizational structure.

Top management of organization succeeded in relatively short time of three years to realise successfully transformation change of operational basis of an enterprise. The change of remuneration system has already been partially connected with this first phase of transformation change, the change of system of indicators and managerial skills forming the so-called infrastructure layer. The least touched value layer represented by organizational culture, political power and individual opinion system of employees and management. The most difficult task of all to change successfully the above “infrastructure and particularly value layer connected with it“.

It follows directly from the above analysis that one of strong aspects of studied society is its competent top management, moreover, relatively handy and employees equipped with necessary abilities and innovative enterprise climate. The above-mentioned strong aspects are a good prerequisite for successful realisation of connecting phase of successful implementation of started transformation changes. It is the only way how to create a strong enterprise able of continuous regeneration which can successfully compete in stronger and stronger competitive environment.

Working hypothesis

Goals

- to familiarise with the quality system based on ISO 9000,
- system of total quality management,
- award of the Czech Republic for quality, European award for quality.

Action

Two-day course for top management directed to the problems of building of the quality systems according to ISO 9000, explanation of the principles of the system of total quality management (Irwin, 1990) (acronym TQM) and its role in the process of continuous improvement of business processes with a special emphasis to the change of organizational culture! Discussion of the relationship of ISO 9000 and the TQM system. The roles of national awards for quality, including familiarization with the methodology of self-evaluation.

(The author further presents only hypothesis relating to the quality issue.)

Discussion of the working hypothesis

An opinion of top manager of an unnamed agricultural enterprise who said literally “here is no place for change“! became an alarming opinion of the author.

The role of another alarming impulse was played by author's personal visit to executive director of "the Association for awards of the Czech Republic for quality" (The Association for award of the Czech Republic as a non-governmental and non-profit organization which has been established to support and to assert ideas of quality through the program of national Award of the Czech Republic for quality. Since 1993 it has been dealing with the testing of the quality of Czech products and services.) It was there where the author found that till now no agricultural enterprise did not receive "the Award of the CR for quality", i.e. a national equivalent of the European Quality Award (EQA). Holland enterprises operating in agribusiness were in similar situation in spring of 1998. It was confirmed to me by Mr. Gerrit W. Zigger, manager of quality department and management of supplying chains of the State Institute for Management Quality of Agricultural Products whom I met at the inspiring IIIrd International Conference on "Management of Chains in Agribusiness and Food Industry", organized by Wageningen Agricultural University. It should be completed by the fact that a lot of products of agribusiness enterprises were bestowed with the title Czech Made.

A last alarming impulse was the finding that majority of interviewed managers had not a clear notion about the key role of the quality systems in the process of continuous increase of business effectiveness, including the system of total quality management.

CONCLUSION

An important role of quality systems (established on the basis of ISO 9000) consisting in establishment of prerequisites for continuous effectiveness of organizations and above all for transformation of business culture leads in further development to establishment of the systems of total quality management with built-in institutes of continuous improvement in the form of internal audits performed by top management, innovators' groups (preliminary project teams) and quality circles.

Dr. A. Blanton Godfrey, chairman and CEO of prestigious Juran Institute, USA, presents the TQM system "as dynamically developing concept to ensure global competitive advantages" (international seminar organized by the Czech Society for Quality with the title "Leadership for the Century of Quality" on 2-3 December 1998 in Prague). Open system concept allows a flexible adaptation and revitalization of system-oriented instruments, such as reengineering methods.

Successful implementation of the quality policy, as well as sophisticated, well thought quality management by business entities of agribusiness presupposes also establishment of "the quality assurance systems" to ensure wider

and wider offers of quality and safety foodstuffs produced with respect to the purity of environment (Palán, 1999).

We all wish that the Czech Republic should be not only beautiful but also prospering country. Ambitious and open concepts with strong synergetic effect are needed for it. The quality concept perfusive through all processes of our social and economic being is that fundamental!

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Nezastupitelná role systémů jakosti v rozvoji českých organizací Agribusinessu. Scientia Agric. Bohem., 30, 1999: 239-247.

Mottem **Evropské charty jakosti**, která byla v Paříži 23. října 1998 podepsána prezidenty EU, UNICE, UAPME, MFQ, EFQM a EOQ, je chápání jakosti jako základního zdroje evropské konkurenční výhody.

Vytvoření a udržení této základní složky konkurenční výhody v českých organizacích Agribusinessu předpokládá tvořivý vývoj **systémů jakosti**. V práci je dále vysvětlena iniciační role systémů jakosti vytvořených na bázi **ISO 9000** (Fiala et al., 1998) v zahájení procesu trvalého zlepšování efektivity organizace a postupné změny podnikové kultury.

Management českých organizací si často neuvědomuje a dostatečně nedoceňuje důležitý aspekt funkčního systému jakosti, kterým je **zahájení postupné změny podnikové kultury**. Jde a priori o změnu myšlenkových stereotypů zaměstnanců, vytvoření a fixaci nových vzorů chování, orientujících zaměstnance a pracovní týmy na

trvalé zlepšování vlastní práce, vytváření předpokladů pro harmonickou spolupráci a podnikatelské myšlení.

Autor na základě poznatků z výzkumu (Palán et al., 1998) a diskuse modelu „transformační organizační změny“ dovozuje nedocenění změny infrastrukturní a zejména hodnotové vrstvy s implikací nedocenění role systémů jakosti v procesu změny organizací vrcholovým managementem.

Model transformační organizační změny je tvořen třemi vrstvami: technickou, infrastrukturní a hodnotovou vrstvou. Úspěšná realizace transformační změny předpokládá dotaženou implementaci všech relevantních faktorů (viz model transformační změny – obr. 1), tj. očekávanou projektovanou změnu ve všech vrstvách modelu.

Nejvýše je umístěna **hodnotová vrstva**. Právě její změna je v celém procesu transformace nejobtížnější a vyžaduje také nejvíce času. Je tvořena třemi agregovanými faktory: **organizační kulturou, politickou mocí a názorovým systémem zaměstnanců**.

Změna organizační kultury a s ní úzce spjaté organizační politiky je, jak se ukazuje, kritickým předpokladem úspěšné revitalizace majority českých organizací.

Výše uvedené tvrzení autor dokumentuje výsledkem **předběžné diagnózy** nejmenované organizace (Palán, Kotvová, 1998), na jejímž základě byla zformulována níže uvedená pracovní hypotéza doplněná diskusí.

Pracovní hypotéza

Cíle: – seznámení se systémem jakosti na bázi ISO 9000,

– systém komplexního řízení jakosti,

– cena České republiky za jakost, Evropská cena za jakost.

Akce: Dvoudenní kurz pro vrcholový management zaměřený na problematiku výstavby systémů jakosti podle ISO 9000, výklad principů systému totálního řízení jakosti (Irwin, 1990) (akronym TQM) a jeho role v procesu trvalého zlepšování podnikových procesů se zvláštním akcentem na změnu podnikové kultury! Diskuse vztahu ISO 9000 a systému TQM. Role národních cen za jakost, včetně seznámení s metodikou sebehodnocení.

Diskuse pracovní hypotézy

Alarmujícím výrokem se pro autora stal názor jednoho vrcholového manažera výše nejmenovaného zemědělského podniku, který doslova řekl: „Tady se již nedá nic zlepšovat!“

Role dalšího alarmujícího impulsu sehrála autorova osobní návštěva u výkonného ředitele „Sdružení pro cenu České republiky za jakost“ (Sdružení pro cenu České republiky za jakost je nevládní, nezisková organizace, která vznikla za účelem podpory a prosazování myšlenek kvality prostřednictvím programu národní ceny České republiky pro jakost. Od roku 1993 se zabývá i ověřováním kvality českých výrobků a služeb.) Tam se autor dozvěděl, že zatím žádný zemědělský ani potravinářský podnik nezískal „Cenu České republiky za jakost“, tj. národní ekvivalent **Evropské ceny za jakost (EQA)**. V podobné situaci byly na jaře roku 1998 také holandské

podniky operující ve sféře agribusinessu. Potvrdil to osobně pan Dr. Ir. Gerrit W. Zigger, vedoucí oddělení kvality a managementu dodavatelských řetězců státního institutu pro řízení kvality zemědělských produktů, na **III. mezinárodní konferenci na téma „Management řetězců v Agribusinessu a potravinářském průmyslu“**, pořádané Wageningen Agricultural University. Pro úplnost je však třeba říci, že celé řadě výrobků podniků agribusinessu byla propůjčena značka **Czech Made**.

Posledním alarmujícím impulzem bylo zjištění, že většina dotazovaných manažerů neměla jasnou představu o klíčové roli systémů jakosti v procesu trvalého zvyšování podnikové efektivity, včetně systému komplexního řízení jakosti.

Rozvoj systémů jakosti (na bázi ISO 9000) povede v dalším vývoji k vytvoření **systémů komplexního řízení jakosti** se zabudovanými instituty nepřetržitého zlepšování v podobě vnitřních auditů prováděných vrcholovým managementem, zlepšovatelství skupin a kroužků jakosti.

Úspěšná implementace politiky jakosti a tedy i sofistikovaného, dobře promyšleného managementu jakosti podnikatelskými subjekty agribusinessu předpokládá také výstavbu „**systémů zaručené jakosti**“ pro zajištění stále širší nabídky jakostních a zdravotně nezávadných potravin vyprodukovaných s ohledem k čistotě životního prostředí (Palán, 1999).

Evropská charta jakosti; konkurenční výhoda; agribusiness; systémy jakosti; ISO 9000; efektivita organizace; model transformační organizační změny; hodnotová vrstva; proces trvalého zlepšování; organizační kultura; komplexní řízení jakosti

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