Implementation of Quality Control Circle Concepts Into American Industry

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Abstract
In light of the growing worldwide competition among industrial manufacturers as developing nations become more technologically viable, it becomes imperative that we, as a nation, become more conscious than ever of quality and productivity. Our most serious competitors, the Japanese, have developed a nationwide sense of quality consciousness and have evolved a management and manufacturing system to achieve their goals of superior quality that is currently unrivaled. One important element of their productive system is the concept of Quality Control (QC) circles; generally described as a problem solving group of working people, who as members of a team, identify, solve, and implement solutions to work-related problems. Circles have served to tap a vast reservoir of energy, productivity, and ingenuity among the Japanese workforce, aiding them in their quest for manufacturing and quality superiority. We must learn more about these circles, what they are, how they operate, what they can do for us, and how we, as a nation can apply them to our manufacturing problems. They have already been successfully transplanted into America by many firms and are achieving excellent gains in productivity, quality, and worker-management relations.

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Control can be defined as "a process by means of which we observe the actual performance and compare it with some standard". If there is a deviation between the observed performance and the standard performance then it is necessary to take corrective action. The term "Quality Control" has variety of meanings. The concept of TQM is closely related to the concept of quality circles which is very popular and also successful in Japan. Quality circles are work groups that meet frequently to study the ways and means to improve quality, reduce cost, eliminate wastages and solve other production problems. Here, employees are associated with quality, cost, efficiency, productivity, consumer service and satisfaction.