



**Ten Minutes of Your Time. Lasting Business Impact.**

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"The chief lesson I have learned in a long life is that the only way to make a man trustworthy is to trust him; and the surest way to make him untrustworthy is to distrust him and show your distrust."

**- Henry L. Stimson**, Former US Secretary of State

### **What's On My Mind This Week**

#### **A Matter of Trust**

*By Kevin Weiss*

*CEO*

*Philip Crosby Associates and The Capability Group*

If trust is the foundation of successful business relationships, we have a lot of room for improvement. We may feel our work is flawless, but if customers find otherwise, complaints, apprehension, and detailed inspection begin. To discover how much confidence people *really* have in you, just see who's checking your work.

Checking the output of others may be standard practice, but it's a major flaw in how things are produced. It increases cost, shifts responsibility for quality from worker to inspector, and erodes the customer-focus of employees. Worst of all, since screening for defects doesn't address their cause, it virtually guarantees problems will continue.

With all these drawbacks, inspection thrives because it is an easy - and seemingly logical - course of action. Therefore, the mindset of finding and fixing errors spreads quickly through an organization and requires an organization-wide effort to eliminate it.

#### **Losing Credibility**

How do we lose credibility with customers? It starts with how we handle a single defect. Our products are examined as they are used, and when there are problems, we find out through complaints and returns.

To demonstrate our commitment to customer satisfaction, most of us follow the Four R's of Service Recovery - Repair, Replace, Refund and Repent. But since we haven't addressed the cause of the problem, defective goods and services continue to arrive, leaving customers to doubt both our competence *and* sincerity.

Convinced errors will continue, clients start checking incoming orders and separating



trust her output and save the cost and hassle of checking her work. These lower-cost, defect-free products and services are the foundation for creating loyal clients.

This approach also builds the foundation of a customer-focused organization, because responsibility for meeting customer requirements remains with the employee. Ann knows which requirements her process impacts, and ensures they are flawlessly met. Because she is surrounded by similarly motivated and trustworthy people, she develops a great sense of pride in the organization's products and services, and an ever-increasing commitment to maintain that trust with her customers.

A culture of prevention is fundamentally different than one of inspection. It creates individual accountability to meet customer requirements, but demands a collective responsibility to support individuals toward that goal. It requires teamwork to collaborate on larger issues, and analytical skills to identify individual root causes. Since it is a change in philosophy for most companies, it requires a commitment from management to create and maintain.

Once created, a preventive culture makes managing the enterprise much easier - and much more profitable. Consumers quickly realize the ease of doing business with our highly customer-focused and accountable organization - and the hassle of doing business with our inspection-based competitors. The result is greater market share and loyalty from our customer base, because people have the confidence to invest in our business relationship.

After all, they know we can be trusted.

### **Take Ten Minutes**

Consider your current organization and answer the following questions:

- As a customer, how much confidence would I place in my company's products and services?
- Where and why does my company inspect?
- How does this undermine accountability and pride in my organization?
- What changes are necessary to create a preventive culture in my company?
- How would this enable us to become more customer-focused?

### **Change Starts Here**

[Quality Without Tears](#) is the classic handbook for those charged with causing quality to improve. [Order your copy today.](#)

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### About *Take Ten Minutes*

*Take Ten Minutes* is a publication of [Philip Crosby Associates](#) and [The Capability Group](#).

The premise behind *Take Ten Minutes* is simple: take ten minutes to refocus and recommit to business improvement. *Take Ten Minutes* features quotes and interviews to inspire you. We also pull articles from today's headlines as examples of the power of the preventive culture (or the deep problems caused by not having one).

As the name suggests, *Take Ten Minutes* is relentless with the editing razor and keeps each issue tight - each issue should take you no more than ten minutes to read, start to finish. You'll reap even bigger rewards if you kick in an extra ten minutes to discuss the ideas with a colleague or to take an idea found here and plan to roll it out in your organization. We hope *Take Ten Minutes* becomes the business improvement equivalent of your running partner, providing the inspiration you need to lace up and "just do it" on those weeks when the couch seems oh-so preferable.

We hope you enjoy *Take Ten Minutes*. As Philip Crosby said, improving your business "is a journey that never ends." So let the journey...*continue!*

Please send story ideas or comments to our [editor](#).

### About Our Companies

In today's marketplace, only capable companies will survive and thrive. The overarching goal of [Philip Crosby Associates](#) (PCA) and [The Capability Group](#) (TCG) is to give companies the culture, tools, methodology and results-focused support to become 'Capable Organizations' - useful, reliable, adaptable, and ever-focused on achieving customer success.

PCA and TCG deliver on this goal by first working with clients to assess where they are on the maturity spectrum and where they want to go. For companies early in the process, we work hand-in-hand with management to install a culture of prevention - the culture that has been championed by the PCA side of our business since quality management guru and PCA founder Philip Crosby published *Quality is Free* in 1979. Over the past two decades, Crosby's techniques have been implemented by many of the Fortune 500, as well as small and mid-sized companies seeking excellence.

Once the foundation of the Capable Organization is present, TCG steps in to help clients take their efforts to the next level by further reducing costs, enhancing quality and promoting growth. TCG was founded by Kevin Weiss, who was a Quality Leader and Master Black Belt for General Electric when that company first implemented Six Sigma - a program CEO Jack Welch has attributed with "changing the DNA of GE". With a proprietary Cost-Quality-Growth™ Model

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created based on the knowledge that GE's success was due to much more than a typical Six Sigma deployment, TCG has helped shape Cost-Quality-Growth™ Programs for companies such as Shimano, American Express and Sony.

Along the journey to the Capable Organization, PCA and TCG provide a comprehensive set of training programs and materials as well as consulting and assessment services to accelerate progress. Products and services range from courses and CDs geared towards the education of hourly workers to intensive seminars for managers and executive teams.

For more information, email Chris Johansen of Philip Crosby Associates and The Capability Group [chris.johansen@capabilitygroup.com](mailto:chris.johansen@capabilitygroup.com), or call 617-716-0214.

Or go to:

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