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“No one has to change. Survival is optional.” Dr. W. Edwards Deming

Dr. W. Edwards Deming's principles support the global success of Toyota, Proctor & Gamble, Ritz Carlton, Harley-Davidson, and many other leading organizations. His teachings are essential for the effective application of Six Sigma, Lean Manufacturing, Loyalty / Net Promoter and other quality improvement, customer retention and business growth methods.

Deming's 14 Total Quality Education points were created for the White House Task Force for Education in 2000 and presented to a congressional committee by Libyan Labiosa in conjunction with her position on the board of the National Learning Foundation within the United States Department of Education.

The 14 TQE points are as meaningful today as they were a decade ago. For education to be meaningful in a rapidly changing world, it must adapt. We are in a globalized society and the worldwide education system must adapt to fit the times ahead. To date the results have not been encouraging.

There is an international test from the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that measures average mathematics literacy, reading literacy, science literacy, and problem-solving scores of 15-year-olds from over 50 industrialized countries. The highest possible score is 1000.

Currently the highest scoring nation in the world is Finland with an average score of 550 and the USA is in 29th place with an average score of 483.

In the USA, Massachusetts is the highest scoring of all 50 states with only 44% of its students at performing grade level in 4th and 8th grade. Washington DC is dead last with less than 10% of its students performing at grade level.

It is clear that Deming's 14 points of Total Quality Education bear taking another look at in a time where the best scoring nation in the world is only at 55% and the best scoring state in the USA is at 44%. As Deming so eloquently puts it in his quote at the beginning of this article, we have no less than our survival at getting our educational systems right.

ICAL's Fourteen Points of Total Quality Education (Adapted from Deming's Total Quality Management principles)

One:

Create constancy of purpose toward improvement of education and learning with the aim to prepare learners to be productive in a changing world.

Two:

Adopt a new philosophy. We are in a new information age. Western educators must awaken to the challenge, must learn new responsibilities, and take on leadership for change.

Three:

Cease dependence on testing to achieve quality. Eliminate the need for testing as the only way of measuring quality. Ensure that quality is always present in the classroom.

Four:

End the practice of awarding students on the basis of grades. Instead minimize competition with others. Move toward a goal of learning as a long-term reward in itself.

Five:

Improve constantly and forever the system of education and learning to improve quality and student productivity.

Six:

Institute interactive and creative teaching and learning.

Seven:

Institute leadership. The aim of leadership should be to help people do a better job. Leadership of educators is in need of overhaul, as well as leadership of students.

Eight:

Drive out fear so that everyone may work effectively for themselves and their community.

Nine:

Break down barriers between administrators, teachers, parents and students. People in education must work as a team to foresee problems in the educational process.

Ten:

Always expect the best from students.

Eleven:

Eliminate minimum requirements for achievement. Each student assumes a proactive role in his/her education.

Twelve:

Remove barriers that rob the students of their right to pride in achievement. The responsibility of educators must be changed from sheer information giving to ensuring knowledge through use of global teaching strategies.

Thirteen:

Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement.

Fourteen:

Put everyone in the system to work to accomplish the transformation.