1992

PANEL 6 TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS FUNCTION: RESEARCH ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

John J. Burbridge Jr.
Loyola College in Maryland

Follow this and additional works at: http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis1992

Recommended Citation
http://aisel.aisnet.org/icis1992/26

This material is brought to you by the International Conference on Information Systems (ICIS) at AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). It has been accepted for inclusion in ICIS 1992 Proceedings by an authorized administrator of AIS Electronic Library (AISeL). For more information, please contact elibrary@aisnet.org.
Panel 6

Total Quality Management and the Information Systems Function: Research Issues and Challenges

Panel Chair: John J. Burbridge, Jr., Loyola College in Maryland

Panelists: Gabriel A. Pall, Juran International, Inc.
           Robert M. Parent, The Conference Board
           John P. Thompson, McCormick & Company

Throughout the world, a quality revolution is taking place. Global competitiveness is being impacted by the quality of the goods and services of nations and firms. In the United States, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award has been established to recognize those firms that have both a quality first strategy and successfully deployed quality approaches. Obviously, this is an attempt by the United States government to improve the nation’s competitiveness in the global marketplace.

As firms strive to deploy quality throughout the firm, the information systems (IS) organization must respond. But what exactly is meant by IS quality and how can it be deployed throughout the IS organization?

During the past few years, the David D. Latiano Center for Executive Studies in Information Systems has looked at this issue and has developed an approach that begins with an understanding of the customer perspective with respect to the products and services of the IS organization. To address both external and internal customer needs, the management of the IS function must recognize that it is a business within a business. The IS organization has also associated products and services. These products and services include application software, end user computing, transaction processing and telecommunications services. Interestingly, the delivery vehicles for such products and services are varied, leading to the necessity for different processes.

This process orientation is critical to building quality into the IS function. The concept of quality process management is inherent to the deployment of quality. The purpose of quality process management is to eliminate nonconformances by adopting a continuous improvement approach to processes. This process approach is critical in the never-ending journey to zero defects. A major thrust of many IS organizations today is business reengineering. Quality process management is integral to re-engineering efforts.

The purpose of this panel is to first examine the concepts of quality, particularly as it pertains to IS organizations. A CIO who also is serving as the champion of quality within his organization will make some short comments on managing the IS function as a business within a business, its customers, and products and services. An architect of quality process management will discuss the application of this management approach to IS organizations. Finally, an individual who has served as Vice President of Quality for Honeywell and is currently involved with coordinating the activities of The Conference Board on quality will address some future challenges.

After the speakers have presented, the moderator will begin a discussion of potential future research associated with quality efforts within IS. A significant amount of time will be allocated for questions and comments from the audience. An outgrowth of this discussion will be a direction for applied research for the application of total quality management within the IS organization.

286