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To: ASCE Collaborate

From: W. M. Hayden Jr., Ph.D., P.E., CMQ/OE, F., ASCE,

*“Management Quality by Design, Inc.,* ™” Consultant/Facilitator, and,

-Denise M. Hayden, BS,MS, RN, CPA, Editor

**Re: Memo to Executive & Senior Firm Managers[[1]](#footnote-1)**

* Initial Prior Post:

*“One set of process steps to first learn “How did we get where we did not intend to be?” would involve the application of the Fishbone Analysis.”*

* **Fishbone Analytic Process PRIOR to Constructing Diagram™**

I thought it might be interesting to share an experience I had some years ago.

CAVEAT: This happened in California at least 27 years ago, with a group of mainly 120 or so civil engineers. I worked closely with another expert to facilitate this crowd of golfers![[2]](#footnote-2)

So, the pressure was on *“to get it done!”*

1st, we had to get everyone to agree on one unacceptable outcome of a project. Amazingly, they respected the process rule *“No cross talk.”* They sat at roundtables, 8 to 10 per table.

2nd, Then they were directed to forget whatever process or steps were involved and to just start listing individual causes/reasons, based on their real-world project experiences for the unacceptable project outcome

3rd, Participants wrote their causes/reasons individually on yellow post-its, NLT 3 words, no more than 5, in caps. Each table’s post-its were viewed for clarity and spelling at their table by the group.

4th, Prior to the participants going to the wall, the 6 to 7 major process categories labels were placed on the top of the wall, about 15 to 20 feet apart.

5th, The only initial post-it on the wall requirement was to do so orderly, **IN SILENCE**,[[3]](#footnote-3) vertically under whichever of the 6 to 7 categories they choose.

6th, Once done, they were asked to leave the room.

7th, Then my co-facilitator and I, with 2 or 3 invited *“Volunteers,”* proceeded to re-order some of the post-its up on the wall into more apparent (IOHOs) logical groupings.

8th, When invited back into the room, the participants were instructed to sit at their table and listen to the instructions for their next steps:

1. In groups of no more than any 15 persons, go to the wall with the re-ordered post-its. Stand back about 10 feet, and IN SILENCE view the posts.

* N.B. *“Silence included no laughing, winking, pointing, or grunting.”*

1. When queued, start to review, and then as desired re-order the individual posts under one or more of the overall groups, i.e., *“People, Methods, Measurement, Equipment, etc.”*
2. Any person may move another’s posted order of one post, one time. If the other person disagrees, then make a duplicate post and label them as 1 of 2 and 2 of 2.
3. After they used their group’s allotted time, they were seated and the next group of 15 repeated the same process.
4. Once each person had their first *“Trip to the wall,”* the entire group was adjourned for still more coffee.

9th, Then my co-facilitator and I, with the *“Volunteers,”* proceeded to re-order the post-its up on the wall into more logical (IOHOs) groupings.

10th, When invited back into the room, the participants were instructed to sit at their table and listen to the instructions for their next steps:

* Re-Run prior steps 8a. to 8e.; and then steps 9. and 10.

Once the group process runs were completed (All of this utilized about 5 hours and massive urns of coffee!) we reminded them to take pictures of the wall before leaving!

**Reflection:**

Well, if you have read . . .not skimmed. . . this far, given you are civil engineers, you will be able to see potential improvements to the above process. I would expect no less! And it would be a benefit to all for you to post your thinking!

Stay Healthy!

Cheers,

Bill

p.s. To those who say *“You’ve got to be kidding! I don’t have time for this!”,*

I remind you presently make the time to *“do it over. . . and over . . .”* until it gets past reviews.

Then, of course, you may have upset your client who may not return nor recommend you, de-motivate your people, and at project acceptance and completion, you may not realize your budgeted project profit.

If asked, I would say it’s what all professionals need to do, starting *“Yesterday!”*

***“You see something, say something!”***

***“SPEAK TRUTH TO POWER WHEN YOU FEEL OR SEE IT!”***

And I acknowledge that what stands in the way is not knowledge of a situation, but **F E A R!** What you then suffer is the *“Fear of silence.”*

Dr. W. Edwards Deming advised top executives to:

***“DRIVE OUT FEAR”*** from their firms.

But you need not take this advice.

*"You don't need to change – your****survival is not mandatory****."*

-W. Edwards Deming

1. Please copy and send this to each and all of your firm’s managers . . .now! [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. So now you know why they were so very cooperative! [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This requirement turned out to be the most challenging for a group of civils at a resort! [↑](#footnote-ref-3)