

5 Keys to Getting the Respect You Deserve as a Quality Professional

Unparalleled quality products and services will help to continually produce financial success, lower costs and lead to greater productivity. Exceptional quality does not just happen and businesses who create a strategic process to embrace quality enjoy the results. All too often leaders do not understand the significant role of the quality professional and merely focus on building revenue. Quality that gets to the root cause of issues and resolves problems creates greater consistency in meeting customer's needs. Quality professionals are key in creating processes that not only reduce costs but sustains the integrity of the product thus maintaining the reputation and integrity of the company.

Here are 5 keys to helping leadership understand the role quality plays in customer satisfaction and the bottom line.

Key 1: Learn the business:

Improve your understanding of the relationship between quality and the bottom line. Most business leaders have a keen interest in metrics and quality professionals can help make the connection between high quality and organizational effectiveness. Quality professions can highlight the influence reducing costs can has on revenues, by shining a spotlight on different projects. After understanding the overall business side of the organization then take time to determine how your work influences those arenas. Learn to speak the language of business in a manner that executives will begin to take notice.

Key 2: Position Quality as a Business Partner:

Don't talk about being a business partner, educate leadership about the ways your work is a significant contributor to the overall effectiveness of the organization. As a quality professional you have a duty to help, and support leaders to deliver quality initiatives within your organization. When leaders understand how a quality product or service can help to differentiate your business, leaders can begin to make the correlation. Not only can quality initiatives affect the bottom line they can dramatically break down silos by focusing on the overall system of product development. Quality products and services help to build relationships with your customers that can weather mishaps and create loyal customers. A good way to begin is through educating leadership to help them start thinking of your role in a different light. Start to position quality as a source of expertise and decision making with respect to organizational reputation and how your work influences the bottom line.

Key 3: Create Ah-hah Moments:

Use questions to change leadership's mindset when it comes to your role in the business and get them thinking. Too often leaders have no idea regarding the true costs of quality issues when problems are averted. He/she only focuses on money lost when problems arise. Ask questions regarding what it would have cost your company had an issue not been resolved. Help them to understand how the processes utilized by your department worked to resolve issues that would have cost the organization n thousand and sometimes millions of dollars.

Key 4: Cultural Mindset:

Once you begin to gain credibility as a partner then use your expertise to educate leaders on the role of creating a culture of quality. New technology empowers customers to seek out and compare products and services from around the globe. For this reason, quality has never been more important. When customers are unhappy, he/she can use social media to air their grievances or displeasure with a service. Help leaders understand the importance of creating a culture of quality and strategic communication processes that reinforce the importance. In a true culture of quality, employees not only follow quality guidelines but consistently work to raise the bar on the quality customers receive. The role of culture in attracting and hanging on to customers starts with all employees understanding their role in the overall goals of the company. According to Harvard Business Review. "a company with a highly developed culture of quality spends, on average, \$350 million less annually fixing mistakes than a company with a poorly developed one.

Key 5: Helping to Maintain an Emphasis on Quality:

With all leadership has on their plate it will be up to the Quality Professional to help keep an emphasis on quality. This means working with leadership to consistently communicate ways leadership can keep the benefits of quality in the forefront. This starts with behaviorally defining the behaviors your organization requires to create a quality project or services. Learn to empower employees to observe and report standards that fall outside of the guidelines. Find ways to highlight teams and individuals that exemplify those behaviors to reinforce and support a culture of quality. Be consistent and continue to help leaders make the link between quality, people and profitability. people and productivity. With your focus on quality and helping to create awareness on the impact you will receive the respect you deserve as a quality professional. With a little insight and a strategy, you can change the way in which leadership views your role in the organization.



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Speaker, Author, Communication Expert

Beth Sears, the North American expert on interpersonal and organization communication, has been called the Transformation Titan. She has spent over 30 years integrating best practices with real life experience to help organizations become more productive and profitable. Using her unique approach, Beth has helped leaders to clarify their vision and create language that inspires and engages their workforce, resulting in collaborative, focused teams.

An inspiring international speaker, Beth is sought after by organizations and associations for events, and creative leadership seminars. She has been invited back to speak at the International Conference on Knowledge, Culture and Change in Organizations at Oxford University and then again at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. The facilitation of offsite retreats, improving workplace communication through understanding, empowering through coaching and leadership development have been numbered among her work. She enjoys integrating her education with her real-world experience, to improve the lives of others, and the organizations in which they work. A recent client stated, "Beth helped "us get over a "hurdle that has plagued our company for many years ... The skills that Beth has are remarkable to get to the root cause and to get everyone to participate."

Beth holds a Ph.D. in Communication and is a graduate of the prestigious Million Dollar Consulting® College. Beth has been adjunct faculty for Cornell Industrial Labor Relations School for 18 years and taught graduate courses in the School of Business at Nazareth College, and the Communication Department at the University at Buffalo. She has been quoted in the Wall Street Journal, PR News Employee Communication Guidebook, and ANZI Insights a professional development series from The Australian and New Zealand Institute of Coaching. She has authored several hundred professionally published articles and her monthly newsletter is a fantastic resource for thousands of business owners.