

Abstract

This document presents the findings of sabbatical leave study on the implementation of Total Quality Management (TQM) in engineering and construction organization in the local construction industry. The experience of the engineering and project management departments in Saudi Aramco were selected as a case study. Saudi Aramco is one of the leading national companies in Saudi Arabia. Its experience in implementing TQM has been a success. Interest in establishing a quality management program arose as an avenue for reducing costs. The training process took a top-down approach from manager level to unit head and through division head level. The company invested a lot of time and money in the education programs, especially for upper management. The education programs were very effective.

The implementation stages are documented and the obstacles associated with TQM implementation are highlighted. The departments reported several benefits. Some of these benefits are: developing greater understanding of expenditure processes and improving the quality of these processes; achieving labor savings due to the streamlining of project review processes; improving efficiencies; reducing cycle time; increasing awareness of quality through the company; improving communications; and increasing the level of customer satisfaction.

However, skepticism is one of the major challenges in the TQM implementation process. The fear of the TQM implementation impact (i.e. job security), and score keeping are some of these challenges in TQM implementation.