

Chapter Three: **Research Plan**

The study has two objectives, as stated in chapter 1. The original operational plan to fulfill these objectives is outlined below. The first objective is accomplished by evaluating the following research statements during meetings with Company officials.

1. To what extent is upper management committed to TQM implementation?
2. What, and how effective are the TQM education programs for the upper-level management?
3. What are the components and the functions of the quality steering committee?
4. What are the vision and mission statements?
5. What and how effective are the employees' education in the concepts of TQM, policies, the implementation plan, and the improvement of job and leadership skills?
6. How effective is the quality improvement team?

To a large extent the obstacles that may be encountered in implementing TQM are dependent on the culture of a company and its size. The author spent nine months working with the Saudi Aramco Engineering Administration Area. He was assigned the responsibility of Quality Coordinator for the Inspection Department (ID). His responsibilities were to coordinate the department's quality improvement initiatives, development of the Department quality manual, coordinate the updating of Department procedures, and coordinate the Department quality council.

Beside the nature of the author assignment, the information was primarily collected from the Inspection Department customers survey, which was conducted by the author, and several presentations and/or discussions with the followings Company officials:

- 1) Mr. A. Al-Ganam, Senior vice-president of the Engineering and Operation business line,
- 2) Mr. S. Al-Shefan, Vice-President of the Engineering Administrative Area,
- 3) Mr. A. AL-Sulaim, previous Quality Coordinator of the Engineering and Operation Business Line,
- 4) Mr. S. AL-Mubayedh, previous Quality Coordinator of the Engineering Administration Area