Total Data Quality Management (TDQM)

*If we don't change our direction, we'll end up where we were going*” - anon

Managing a TDQM Strategy

Implementing this TDQM strategy will ensure your business reduces the avoidable wastes in time, money and company reputation caused by defective data. Prevent the poor decisions made – often with a high level of certainty – which result from a lack of Total Data Quality Management (TDQM).

This action checklist provides guidance on mapping a strategy for those seeking to introduce TDQM to their organisations for the first time to streamline their data quality processes.

A TDQM strategy combines the `hard' edge of data quality (its tools and techniques) with its `soft' side: the cultural changes required to achieve success. For the „soft side” read DQ Globals: “Talk to the hand!! Coz the business isn't listening!!” white paper.

This checklist is intended as an aid to your initial thinking. Introducing TDQM is a significant strategic change which will require appropriate research and planning.

Definition:

*“Understanding the problem, is the first step to providing the solution”* anon

TDQM is a philosophy of managing your data; it gives everyone in the organisation responsibility for delivering quality to the final customer, quality being described as “fit for purpose”.

TDQM views each task in the organisation relating to data, as fundamentally a process. A data flow where there is a customer/supplier relationship with the next process stage. The aim at each stage is to define and meet the customer's requirements in order to maximise the satisfaction of the final consumer at the lowest possible cost.
Advantages of TDQM:

"Quality is free...what costs money are the bad quality things – all the actions that involve not doing jobs right the first time" – Philip Crosby

- It significantly improves the quality of a business’s data and hence provides the foundation for informed decision making.
- There is a major decrease in wasted physical and intellectual resources.
- There is a leap in productivity as staff re-purpose their time for value add work.
- As the data is improved, the information is improved; there is a long-term increase in productivity, leading to sustained competitive advantage.
- The workforce becomes more motivated, as employees carry out more productive work and avoid de-motivating data scrap and re-work.

Disadvantages of TDQM:

"Attack the 20% of problems, that cause 80% of the issues" - Paretos Principle

- It requires a change of mindset and an investment of management and staff time.
- You can gain some very quick wins, however, it is not a quick fix: TDQM takes time to implement and is in fact a perpetual process.
- It can become bureaucratic and mechanical, and lead to an emphasis on consistency of procedures rather than a focus on the data quality goals.
- It will only help if the organisation is heading in the right direction; it is not a tool for turning the organisation around.
Action checklist:

1. Establish a planning team for TDQM journey:
   - You will need a quality team to drive through the changes. In a small organisation this will be the senior management team; in a larger one, it will comprise senior managers representing the major functions. Ensure all interested parties are included.

2. Develop the Business Case by:
   - Conducting an organisational assessment of current levels of data waste
     Quantify the quality failures by securing from heads of departments an assessment of current levels of data waste.
   - Establish the current cost of waste
     Work out how much is currently spent on rectifying internal failure and external failure. Include appraisal costs - the time and money spent on inspection and checking.

3. Draw up your TDQM strategy using DQ Global’s G.R.O.W. Methodology

   **G = Goals**
   
   “Know where you want to be going, otherwise any road will lead you there” - anon
   
   - Define the goals of the TDQM strategy.
   - You will need to set both short- and long-term targets and establish measures of success both in business.
   - Use the results of the waste audit to draw up your TDQM strategy.

   **R = Reality**
   
   “Knowing where you are: RAF Pilot:

   Data – currently at 10,000 ft.
   Information – 10,000 ft above sea level. Knowledge – Mountains are 12,000 ft high. Wisdom – climbing to 15,000 ft.

   - Establish the stark reality of where you are; without knowing where you are you have no datum from which to plan for the TDQM journey.
   - The cultural shift (hearts and minds) needed to create the right environment for quality.
   - The resources available which can be applied – people, process & technology.
   - The time frames and constraints.
O = Obstacles

“Unless you can see your goal, everything will look like an obstacle” - anon

- General induction and training of all employees in the principles of TDQM and a get it right first time culture.
- Development of managers, supervisors and team leaders in the ‘soft’ skills needed to implement TDQM.
- Job specific training in new techniques associated with TDQM.
- Additional training in customer relations

W = What Actions

“Success will never be a big step in the future, success is a small step taken now” - Jonatan Mårtensson

- It’s all about taking purposeful actions.
- Establish an education and training programme for the staff and plan for external facilitation and training.
- Set pragmatic priorities for the introduction of TDQM.
- Select key processes for early analysis and improvement.
- Focus on the 20% of actions which will have 80% of the impact.
- Take the NIKE approach “Just Do It!”
- Apply TDQM - M.E.T.R.I.C.S = Measure Everything That Result In Customer Success
Summary: Do’s and Don’ts for mapping an effective TDQM strategy

“Rope is easier pulled, than pushed” - anon

Do:

- Secure top management commitment from the very beginning.
- Ensure that this “Top Level” commitment is repeatedly reinforced to pull the strings.
- Encourage all employees to make suggestions for improvement, especially those at the sharp end.

Don’t:

- See TDQM as a quick fix
- Bring TDQM in at the same time as several other major new initiatives
- Use TDQM (or even appear to use TDQM) as a means of downsizing.

DQGlobal offer a wide range of products and services to help with the implementation of the Total Data Quality Management (TDQM) process. Our products can analyse your data to identify the root cause of your data defects.

DQ will also highlight any non-value-added process steps and suggest ways to eliminate the waste. This will drive a right-first-time process and culture, help prevent poor quality data, and enable your people to be more effective in their day to day roles.

Our products are designed specifically to fix the root cause of data inaccuracies rather than patching over the problem at the end of the process. This allows you to take ownership of the problem and rectify it, making sure that your data is fit for business.

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