

QP REVIEWS

Innovation Generation

Peter Merrill, ASQ Quality Press, 2008, 242 pp., \$45 list, \$27 member (book).



In his book, *Innovation Generation*, Peter Merrill focuses on innovation's role as the missing link to achieving prosperity and how it can be woven into the fabric of

an organization. The book's framework is based on three elements: process, people and implementation.

Early in the book, Merrill introduces a concept through which he categorizes people into one of four basic types: creators, connectors, developers and doers. The results of this 12-question process offer insight to team members about where they might best contribute to the innovation process.

I particularly enjoyed the premise in chapter four that "the idea of a lone genius is a common myth about innovation" and that most innovations come from a collective base of knowledge. My experience supports that.

Merrill establishes a core principle that people and knowledge sharing build the culture. He spends considerable time trying to convince managers that the people side is important and must be cultivated to build trust and a shared vision.

In chapter 17, he establishes a relatively simple organizational assessment that covers the six aspects of innovation: leadership and strategy; knowledge management; process and system; people involvement; culture; and results. He maintains that these six aspects are keys to establishing and maintaining an innovative organization.

This book is user friendly, doesn't get overly academic and is a valuable resource for upper management that wants to focus on innovation and knowledge sharing as core competencies.

Reviewed by Bill Baker
Speed to Excellence
Santa Fe, NM

The Making of a World-Class Organization

E. David Spang and Debbie J. Collard, ASQ Quality Press, 2008, 96 pp., \$40 list, \$24 member (book).



This extraordinary, albeit brief, book provides leadership and management solutions, as well as insights into creating business excellence. The authors describe how

they took two divisions of Boeing—airlift and tanker, and aerospace support—from unsatisfactory and mediocre levels to excellence, achieving Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards for each division.

When the authors began their task in 1991, the airlift and tanker division was looking to cut 10,000 jobs. Seven years later, after implementing the Baldrige criteria, the company was recognized as a world-class organization.

Both divisions raised their Baldrige scores by 400 points during their improvement efforts. The keys to this success are first described in detail and then summarized at the end of each chapter. The book also provides tools, techniques and advice on making your organization more effective and profitable, with improved customer and employee satisfaction.

The authors do not avoid the tough questions they encountered, such as "Why should I care about Baldrige?" They discuss their experiences with supportive employees and those who felt, "I don't have the time for all this soft stuff." They show how they dealt with those who provided "lip service and malicious obedience," and delve into how to avoid "initiatives du jour" and other pitfalls.

The authors reveal how they motivated leadership and employees, and built relationships with unions. Perhaps most important, they discuss how they coordinated a process improvement toolbox that included Six Sigma, lean, benchmarking, balanced scorecards and other approaches under the Baldrige framework.

Whether you are new to the Baldrige criteria, a veteran or simply want insights into effective leadership and management to create a world-class organization, this is a must read.

Reviewed by Denis Leonard
Business Excellence Consulting
Bozeman, MT

Handbook of Software Quality Assurance, fourth edition

G. Gordon Schulmeyer (editor), Artech House, 2008, 464 pp., \$99 (book).



The new edition of this handbook boils down the 21 chapters found in the previous iteration to 17 chapters, reflecting a thorough revision that brings

the handbook completely up to date. In a sense, condensing the material makes the book a completely new offering.

Topics covered by the 16 authors include: organizing for quality management, software quality assurance activities, Capability Maturity Model Integration and process and product quality assurance, software quality assurance (SQA) for small projects, quality management in IT, SQA metrics and software reliability engineering. Schulmeyer's excellent editorial work is evident throughout. He has crafted a unified, state-of-the-art publication, with a variety of perspectives that cover the most important aspects of modern SQA.

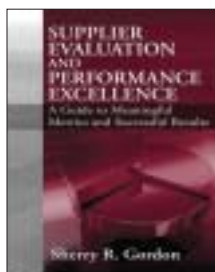
The book targets engineers interested in ASQ's software quality engineering (CSQE) certification, which has an entire chapter devoted to it, and software quality managers and engineers looking for practical and field-tested methods and tools. In addition, the examples and topics covered would provide software quality researchers and students excellent background information.

The fourth edition of the *Handbook of Software Quality Assurance* should find a ready place on bookshelves of practitioners and universities alike, regardless of whether they already have previous editions.

*Reviewed by Ron S. Kenett
KPA Ltd.
Raanana, Israel*

Supplier Evaluation and Performance Excellence

Sherry R. Gordon, J. Ross Publishing, 2008, 222 pp., \$59.95 (book).



This book takes on supplier evaluation and performance, and, as its subtopic indicates, provides a guide to meaningful metrics and successful

results. For the most part, it does what its title implies.

Gordon defines and outlines the process used to achieve supplier performance as supplier performance management (SPM). She does a superb job of taking the reader through the entire process, from development to implementation.

Gordon's approach to handling the always-confrontational nature of customer-supplier relationships is particularly interesting. She freely admits the customer is not always correct when it comes to information communicated from the customer to the supplier. This assertion alone makes the book a breath of fresh air.

This book has one of the better discussions of the metrics that are needed to measure suppliers. Gordon has experience in this realm, gleaned from founding a company that provided supply management software solutions to customers.

Another excellent feature of the book is how it links supplier measurements to an organization's business goals and objectives,

which is what some standards require for metrics and continuous improvement activities in the purchasing department.

The process outlined is very detailed and is more suited to larger companies with enough resources to implement SPM as described by Gordon. That doesn't mean, however, that the ideas found in this book are not applicable to all organizations, no matter the size.

*Reviewed by Wayne Sander
Dove Quality Consulting
Dousman, WI*

RECENT RELEASES

The New Art of Managing People

Phil Hunsicker and Tony Alessandra, Free Press, 2008, 357 pp. \$18 (book).

Business Is Hard ... Failure is Optional

Sam Khoury, For CEOs Only Inc., 2009, 89 pp., \$19.95 (book).

100% Leadership

Gabriel Hevesi, Enna, 2008, 130 pp., \$21.99 (book).

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