

Total Quality Management (TQM) Assignment

What is TQM?

The management philosophy that is based upon knowing the needs of each client and allowing those needs to drive the legal organization at all levels of activity, from receptionist to senior partner.

TQM Philosophies

1. Management has an overriding duty to ensure the law firm provides quality legal service.
2. Quality service involves every person in the law firm and everyone must be involved and committed.
3. Quality service is based not on management's or our own perception of quality, but on the perceptions of the client.
4. Quality service depends on the individual's, the team's, and ultimately the organization's performance.

Instruction

First, we have a discussion as a class about what companies they can think of that have great quality management versus companies that do not. It gives a good baseline for what qualities to think of when doing the project.

I then give the 'Disney example.' We discuss (at length) the Disney trash cans and how much effort Disney put into ensuring TQM of such a seemingly non-obvious thing to a guest in their park. Can you imagine if we did that to aspects within a law office?

Split up the students into breakout rooms of about 4-6 people and have them TQM an aspect of the law office for about 30 minutes. Ask that they come up with a fake law firm for purposes of this assignment (area of law; rough size of firm; type of clientele), as this will help them will determining HOW to TQM the way they choose during this assignment. Each breakout room has one aspect which could be:

- Reception
- Client communication (pick either email or telephone)
- Bills to client
- Filed documents (whether physical or electronic)
- Meeting space
- Reception area
- Client disengagement

Once the breakout room is closed, the group will report on their TQM aspect to the class.