

# Ley Hill Solutions

## Newsletter - September 2011 (extract)



### Quality Guru Series 10. Philip B Crosby

Philip Bayard ("Phil") Crosby, born in 1926 in Wheeling, West Virginia, was a businessman and author who received world-wide recognition for his concepts of "Quality is Free" and "Zero Defects". He initially trained as a podiatrist, like his father, but soon discovered this was not his field and instead went into manufacturing industry where he became a quality engineer. In 1957 he was offered a job as a senior quality engineer with the Martin Marietta Company in Orlando, who produced, amongst other things, the Pershing Missiles. He stayed eight years at Martin Marietta, during which time he developed his "Zero Defects" concepts, also writing articles for various journals and beginning a speaking career. As the quality control manager of the Pershing missile program, Phil Crosby was credited with a 25 percent reduction in the overall rejection rate and a 30 percent reduction in scrap costs.

In 1965 ITT (International Telephone and Telegraph) hired him as vice president in charge of corporate quality. During his fourteen years there he worked with many of the world's largest industrial and service companies, finding that his pragmatic management philosophy worked in a wide variety of situations. In 1979 he branched out on his own, publishing his first business book, *Quality Is Free* and setting up the management consulting company Philip Crosby Associates, Inc. with its headquarters in Winter Park, Florida and a global clientele.

*Quality Is Free* gained instant recognition because it addressed the crisis in North American quality. During the late 1970s and into the 1980s, North American manufacturers were losing market share to Japanese products largely due to the superior quality of the Japanese goods. Phil Crosby's response to the quality crisis was the principle of "doing it right first time" (DIRFT) i.e. "zero defects". His belief was that an organization that established a quality programme would see savings returns that would more than pay off the cost of implementing and running the programme, hence "quality is free".

He defined quality in simple and absolute terms, so anyone could quickly establish whether or not quality existed anywhere in the workplace. His approach soon developed wide appeal internationally and across a range of businesses, from multinational corporations to small, family-owned businesses and not-for-profit organizations.

He remained in Winter Park until his death in August 2001, aged 75 and [Philip Crosby Associates](#) is still successful today, although now based in Boston.

His quality improvement process is based on his four absolutes of quality:

- The definition of quality is conformance to requirements (requirements meaning both the product specifications and the customer's requirements)
- The system of quality is prevention
- The performance standard is zero defect
- The measurement of quality is the price of non-conformance

His fourteen steps to quality improvement are:

- Management is committed to a formalised quality policy
- Form a management level quality improvement team (QIT) with responsibility for quality
- improvement process planning and administration
- Determine where current and potential quality problems lie
- Evaluate the cost of quality and explain its use as a management tool to measure waste
- Raise quality awareness and personal concern for quality amongst all employees
- Take corrective actions, using established formal systems to remove the root causes of problems
- Establish a zero defects committee and programme
- Train all employees in quality improvement
- Hold a Zero Defects Day to broadcast the change and as a management recommitment and employee commitment
- Encourage individuals and groups to set improvement goals
- Encourage employees to communicate to management any obstacles they face in attaining their improvement goals
- Give formal recognition to all participants
- Establish quality councils for quality management information sharing
- Do it all over again - form a new quality improvement team

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