

Name

Professor

Course

Date

Operations Management

Operations management is the creation, implementation, and the maintenance of processes that are aimed towards achieving effectiveness. Some of these production processes may be done continuously while others are one time. Operation management coordinates the systemic and behavioral functionality of an organization ensuring that they continue growing healthily and thriving in the activities that they do. According to Anderson et al. (1), operation management leaders who experience a high level of success have a tendency of being the systematic and well-organized types of the world (Anderson et al. 1). This research summary addresses the processes of becoming lean, managing quality, and the creation of a quality organization with the primary focus on one of the world's greatest motor vehicle companies, Ford.

The Ford company is an automaker headquartered in the United States. The automobile firm has gained popularity over the past decades for producing high-quality hardy cars that are fit for any terrain and geographical conditions. Henry Ford founded this renowned company and incorporated it in 1903 ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). Ford has stakes in several other motor vehicle companies such as the Japanese Mazda, UK's Aston Martin, and Chinese Jialing.

Motor vehicle companies, just like health care institutions and other firms in the diverse sectors of the world's economy, have been swift in the adoption of lean practices. Lean manufacturing is the technique used by companies to eliminate waste through noting down the

wastes created through unevenness in workloads and overburden (Anderson et al. 179). The Ford system manufactured standardized products in bulk thereby ensuring high efficiency and low-cost product delivery. Standardization was the main idea behind Ford's manufacturing process making it easy to train workers ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). Consequently, anyone may be in a position to work in this automobile firm. Despite working on standard products, for an institution to become lean, the company must focus on quality and leveled production (Anderson et al. 188-189). Ford company in January 1995 initiated a program called 'Ford 2000' with an objective of developing and implementing the Ford Production System whose vision was a disciplined flexible, and lean conventional production system ("Ford Motor Company Timeline").

Ford also aimed at the employment of people with vast knowledge in the manufacturing processes to focus on quality and implement continuous improvement. The employees under this system were to be a group of empowered and capable people who were ready to learn and work safely together in the delivery of products promptly ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). For an organization to be able to produce quality goods in a prompt manner, the firm's management in conjunction with the employees must be able to know when to work and implement pull (Anderson et al. 190-193). Ford shifted from producing in massive quantity but focused on satisfying the needs of their clients. Therefore, the implementation of FPS was an attempt by Ford to transform itself dramatically to a lean manufacturing system from a mass production system. The firm also came up with a continuous improvement model process that encompassed ten steps that include ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"):

- Kaizen
- Results Process

- Start+up Confirmation
- Continuous improvement board
- Time and Data Management
- Standardized Work
- Basic Administration
- Star Points
- Support Process
- Results process

This model aims at seeking change and the creation of a normalized process and stability to inputs. The final step that Ford had to undergo to become lean was putting it into practice. The company strived at eliminating seven kinds of wastes that included wastages from waiting time, overproduction, product defects, transportation, processing, inventory, and wastes of motion. Ford ensured that by 2003, all its plants had adopted the FPS. The approximate savings that this automaker had achieved after this implementation was \$500 million per annum ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). Ford also planned on the implementation of uniform plant layouts and standard operating procedures.

Quality management is one of the fundamental pillars of improving operations (Anderson et al. 177). The rise of the Japanese automobile company and the massive inversions of the imports in the early 1980's was a significant threat to the American auto industry. Ford was notable in this period for its extensive attempts in quality revival to thrust these 'invaders'. Consequently, Ford came up with Total Quality Management (TQM) processes. The first step of managing quality is to decide what matters before even recognizing the value of quality. For Ford, quality is what mattered when they came up with the TQM. Assessing failure is also

crucial in quality management. Therefore, Ford Used the \$3billion losses gathered between 1979 and 1982 as an evaluation tool for its failure and detect the possible defects before focusing on preventing further losses ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). Frequent setbacks had tarnished Ford's reputation of quality, and the, company was working tirelessly to ensure that it wins back this trust.

Ford had to embrace the six sigma to assist in solving its challenges. At this time, many companies in corporate America used this tool to manage their firms successfully. The adoption of the six sigma was also a problem. However, Ford focused on consistent testing of quality programs to win back global trust ("Ford Motor Company Timeline").

The six sigma assists in minimizing errors to 3.5 defects per million operations while increasing efficiency. This technique helped Ford in focusing more on their clients and developing analytical methods that would guarantee customer satisfaction. The initial Six Sigma projects that Ford underwent revisited the challenges that the automobile manufacturing institution faced in the 1980's and evaluated the lessons learned. One of the key lessons that Ford took into consideration was the significance of working closely with the suppliers on both designing and manufacturing. The firm also learned the need to avoid variances in the process of designing and production. Therefore, the adoption of the Six Sigma was a breakthrough for Ford in the context of quality management as it advocated for a cost-benefit analysis, unlike the Total Quality Management that was cost insensitive. The TQM was deemed as less profit and structured-oriented when compared to the Six Sigma ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). During its implementation, it was Ford's hope that the Six Sigma would assist in solving its quality challenges since it is unapologetically bottom-line oriented. This project could also measure quality and control the entire production process.

The creation of a quality organization is a tedious process that needs high-level expertise as it covers a lot of aspects of operations management. The process of creating a quality organization by Ford was very involving. After the company had noticed that it multiplied failures when adopting TQM, the management had to raise the bar ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). Raising the bar meant coming up with suitable measures to minimize on wastages work in close collaboration with parties with vast knowledge in the industry. The second step of the development of a quality organization after reaching beyond traditional improvement programs is to add a useful tool box (Anderson et al. 225).

Ford successfully defined and analyzed the problems that the firm was facing in the 1980's. The main issue that this firm had was the implementation of an effective solution to the challenges. Even though the company made tremendous efforts in devising methods of managing the quality of their products, the TQM may have been a failure on their side. The tool box that was added was the Continuous Improvement Model followed by the fruitful Six Sigma project. The quality management techniques that preceded Six Sigma may have failed due to the lack of focus as TQM did not pay any attention to the cost of production ("Ford Motor Company Timeline"). The latter methodology overcame obstacles as it was adopted after the firm knew exactly what to do and the company had learned from the experience of failing.

In conclusion, Ford is a good example of a company which has acquired one of the best quality management and organization projects. The company was on the verge of suffering from the critical effects of the rise and invasion of the Japanese automobile company not only in the US but also in other parts of the world. If this company had not carried out an evaluation on the issue and led a quality revival, the firm might have lost its hard-earned reputation among its customers. However, in its quest to manage and organize the quality of its products, Ford

experienced several other challenges. One such problem was the espousal of the Total Quality Management that led to the company suffering many losses. The Six Sigma solved these issues. This paper also addressed Ford's process of becoming lean. Ford massively produced high-quality motor vehicles and reduced on most of its wastages.

Works Cited

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