

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL QUALITY
MANAGEMENT IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN AIR FORCE

by

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THESIS DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my wife Sandra and two sons Reinhardt and Bernardt for their moral support and love without whose patience and encouragement this research would not have been completed. This work represents a personal goal and an example to my two sons to persist beyond concept; to never give up. Everything is possible for you. I love and respect you.

DECLARATION

I declare that “**A framework for the implementation of Total Quality Management in the South African Air Force**” is my own work and that all the resources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

J.J. Oschman

Date

SUMMARY

The quest for excellence in institutions is nothing new. Most of the twentieth century saw management sciences grappling with the question how to improve the productivity and general health of institutions through sound management principles and practice. In recent research, proponents of Total Quality Management have identified it as an essential strategy of successful institutions in a highly competitive and rapidly changing business environment.

The overall aim of this study is the development of a framework for the implementation of Total Quality Management in the South African Air Force. As a first prerequisite, a theoretical and conceptual analysis is undertaken of Total Quality Management as it is discussed in a vast volume of published literature. In the process, Total Quality Management philosophy and principles are described within the context of organisational theory, mainly based on so-called quality guru prescriptions. The variety of definitions of Total Quality Management is studied to find an appropriate definition for this study. The primary and supportive Total Quality Management dimensions are identified in the available literature, and integrated into a framework, which is called the "Total Quality Management telescopic framework" for the purposes of the study. This framework is formulated for use in the development of an appropriate methodology to implement Total Quality Management in South African Air Force Bases. As a basis for the understanding of the empirical part of the thesis, the context and nature of the SA Air Force are also discussed, followed by the self-assessment methods already in use in the institution.

The Total Quality Management telescopic framework is meant to provide a mechanism for the adoption of a systematic and ordered approach to the implementation of Total Quality Management in SA Air Force Bases. To achieve this objective, a structured questionnaire survey is undertaken to establish the nature and extent of Total Quality Management as an internal organisational arrangement for personnel in SA Air Force Bases. The framework developed from the study of the available literature is used as a basis for the survey research, which attempts to

determine the main hypothesis of the study: "The attitude of personnel of the South African Air Force Bases towards the primary and supporting dimensions of the framework for the implementation of Total Quality Management is positive."

With the aid of computerised reliability analysis (Alpha Cronbach) for the test, the above hypothesis is proven to be true on a statistical basis. The attitude of personnel at SA Air Force Bases towards the nature and scope of Total Quality Management is that it enables them to perform their daily tasks better, and that they accept the Total Quality Management effort positively, in spite of specific deficiencies, which the study has brought to light. With these deficiencies as a guide, recommendations are made for their elimination. The research undertaken during the course of writing the thesis has led to the deduction that the greater the extent to which Total Quality Management principles is applied, the greater the improvement in work performance among personnel.

KEY TERMS

Total Quality Management

Leadership

Strategic planning

Empowerment

Teamwork

Continuous improvement

Customer satisfaction

Employee satisfaction

Change management

Culture forming

Communication

Training

Self assessment

Processes

Systems thinking

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