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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes the experiences of the Massachusetts Quality of Working Life Center in assisting the attempted and actual start-up of a number of quality of work life (QWL) programs in 1976 and 1977 and in providing ongoing assistance. Lessons learned by the three sites the center launched, other sites, as well as those sites that chose not to develop programs are reported. A definition of QWL is provided first. These requirements of a QWL program as learned from the sites' experiences are then discussed: a systems viewpoint; commitment and personal involvement of the top manager and the top union leader; acceptance by the management of the legitimacy of the union; joint union-management ownership; commitment of union and management to human goals and benefits, and organizational effectiveness; realistic expectations; an organizational diagnosis; strategic planning; some structure to make participation work; involvement of middle managers and first-line supervisors; formal training for participants; evaluation; need to be prepared for a union pullout; third party neutral professional consultants; program owned by the inside people; interrelatedness of collective bargaining and QWL; and problems of programs in municipal government. (YLB)

Starting Labor-Management Quality of Work Life Programs

U.S Department of Labor
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Labor-Management Services Administration
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September 1982

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The Division of Cooperative Labor-Management Programs was created by the Department of Labor in 1982 to encourage and assist employers and unions to undertake joint efforts to improve productivity and enhance the quality of working life. Central to the Division's purpose is the conviction that cooperative relations between the parties, particularly those creating new opportunities for worker participation in decision-making, can contribute substantially to the furtherance of their mutual interests.

Although the full scope of this program will develop gradually, initial attention will be directed to meeting already identified needs for technical assistance and information throughout the private sector. A chief aim will be to support and extend existing institutional capabilities by working in close collaboration with trade associations, international unions, area labor-management committees, and national, state and regional productivity/quality of working life centers. In addition, it will regularly compile and disseminate information on current issues and practices through publications, conferences and workshops.

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Center

The Massachusetts Quality of Working Life Center was set up in the fall of 1975 as a nonprofit corporation by a group of people from business, organized labor, State government and universities. Its board of directors was drawn from all four of these groups, with business and labor members in roughly equal balance. For its first two or three years most of its efforts were directed towards conducting conferences and seminars, publishing a monthly newsletter, and in other ways seeking to raise the awareness and interest among Massachusetts managers and union leaders about quality of working life (QWL) programs. In mid-1979 the center changed its name to the Massachusetts Labor-Management Center. In early 1981 the name was changed again to the Northeast Labor-Management Center in response to a wider arena of activities.

The goals of the center have remained relatively unchanged throughout these years and name changes, although its area of activities has broadened outside of Massachusetts. The Center's goals are:

1. To help businesses, State and local governments, and other organizations to increase their effectiveness in providing lower cost and higher quality goods and services;

2. To help increase labor-management cooperation, develop joint problem-solving, and improve the quality of working life;

3. By these means to help existing business to stay, prosper, and expand and new business to be attracted here, leading to more and better jobs, higher incomes, and increases in State revenues.

The center employs a small, full-time, profes-

sional staff which serves as neutral third parties, process consultants, and facilitators to bring together unions and managements in the public and private sectors in labor-management, QWL, and other employee involvement programs.

This Report

This is a report on the experience of our center staff in assisting in the attempted and actual start-ups of a number of quality of work life programs in Massachusetts in 1976 and 1977 and on our experience in the following years in providing ongoing assistance to several programs that did get launched. These efforts were subsidized by a grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. The sites were: The city of Cambridge together with Local 195, Independent Public Employees Association; the town of Arlington together with Local 680, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); and the Gemini Corporation along with Local 226 of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union (ILGWU).

This report is a summary of the lessons learned from these three sites, plus a number of others not involved in the Department of Labor grant work, and from a large number of potential sites where we talked with leaders during the first years of the grant that did not choose for one reason or another to push forward into an actual program.

Acknowledgements

The grant from the U.S. Department of Labor was supported and authorized by Howard Rosen, then Director, Office of Research and Development, Employment and Training Administration (now retired), and by Dr. Robert Foster of that office. Richard Shore, Social Science Advisor in the Office of Policy, Evaluation and Research, was also very helpful in developing internal interest with the Department in this field and our

center. Two other Department of Labor officials on loan for several years to the now dead National Center for Productivity and Quality of Working Life, Edgar Weinberg and William Batt, were instrumental in helping to make joint labor-management cooperation a better understood process, in helping create an awareness of the potential of QWL programs, and in assisting a number of programs and centers, including ours, to get started. To all these organizations and men I would like to express my appreciation and that of our center.

The staff members of our center in addition to the author of this report who provided at one time or other one or another form of consulting or training assistance to the participants in these three sites included: Joe Krzys, Will Phillips, Susannah Nickerson, Bill Duffy, Grant Engle, Gil Dube and Tony Penzone. In addition Lee Ozley, although never a regular member of our staff, served as a contract consultant at the Gemini site starting in January 1979. The author would like to express here his appreciation to all these people for their many contributions to these programs and to our center's growing knowledge about the components and processes of a successful QWL program. The opinions and judgements expressed in this report are, however, solely and fully the responsibility of the author and are not to be attributed to any of these people, nor to the participants from the various program sites or the various U.S. Government officials mentioned above.

Finally, the author would like to express here his deep appreciation and admiration of the many officials, union leaders, and employees in the sites listed above who believed in the QWL process and who struggled to make it work, sometimes successfully and sometimes not.

DEFINITION OF QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL)

When we started working with managers and union leaders to help them understand the new experience with quality of working life programs in other parts of the country, and to decide whether or not they wished to implement their own program, we did not have a very clear definition to offer them of QWL. However, over time we have heard many definitions and read a number of discussions about what it is and is not. The author has over the years come to the conclusion that quality of work life is a combination of three related components, which is one reason why it is so hard to define and so hard to practice successfully.

My definition, then, is as follows: *Quality of working life* is a philosophy of management, a process, and a set of outcomes. It is a *philosophy* of management that accepts the legitimacy of existing unions, that believes cooperative relationships with those unions are worth developing, and believes that every employee has the ability and the right to offer intelligent and useful inputs into decisions at various levels of the organization. QWL is a *process* to involve employees at every level of the organization in decisions about their work and workplaces. QWL also refers to the intended *outcomes* of practicing this philosophy and process, with improvements in working conditions, environment, and practices, and in the general climate or culture of the workplace. This same process also brings organizational benefits of cost reduction and quality improvement and personal development benefits which are also integral parts of the QWL concept, in this author's opinion.

LESSONS AND LEARNINGS

Systems View

An organization to perform work, whether it is an apparel factory or a municipal government or one department such as public works or a city hospital, is a single, complicated social system composed of many subsystems. In these systems, every person and group is interrelated in a variety of ways with every other one. Significant change in any one part or level of the system will have impacts on all other parts and levels and will require changes in each of them. Participants in a change process, and consultants assisting that process, need to be aware of these multiple linkages and impacts and need to plan for them as much as possible rather than be continuously surprised by them. Specifically, introducing more labor-management cooperation into a previously tense and totally adversarial situation will have many repercussions and will require changes in the ways many people and subsystems perceive and relate to each other. And introducing processes for bottom-level employee input into a system which did not previously allow or value this will require prior, parallel, and resulting changes in the attitudes and behaviors of many other parts of the system. Many of the lessons and learnings which follow are in whole or in part elaborations on this one basic systems viewpoint.

Top Manager Committed and Personally Involved

For survival and success of a QWL program, the top manager in the organization or at the particular site of the organization that is launching a QWL program must be committed to the program, including its philosophy, its intended multiple outcomes, and its structure and process requirements. Even more, he or she must be personally involved in the program and in its steering committee. This is the most important single factor in determining success, in our experience. In sites where the top executive has not participated, the program has lagged and eventually folded. In sites where the

executive has initially stayed back and then become involved, the program has initially suffered and then picked up. Personal involvement is not a sufficient condition for program success, but it is a necessary condition. It is vital for several reasons. First, it is a visible, continuing signal to the other managers that the head of the organization supports this program, takes it seriously, and gives it high enough priority to invest personal time in it. Secondly, it is an equally important signal to the top union officials. Our experience is that where the top manager is absent, the top union people may start out participating, but eventually they may tend to drift away as they sense an imbalance in commitment.

Thirdly, the steering committee will be undergoing a long series of learnings about group process, about each others' problems and points of view, about how to communicate with each other, and about the potential in QWL programs. If the top manager is absent from these sessions, subordinates will be undergoing growth that he or she is not experiencing, and before long the manager will become not a leader of the process, but an anchor holding it back.

Top Union Leader Involvement

It is equally important that the top union official(s) be committed and personally involved. The argument is the same as that for the top manager. But in our experience, once the union leadership has committed itself to a QWL program, there has been no problem in having them also personally involved. They don't want to leave this (or anything else of any great importance) to subordinates. So, while the point is important, in practice we have had little experience with programs suffering because of lack of top union leadership involvement.

Management Accepts Legitimacy of the Union and of Union Benefitting

A QWL program cannot work if management does not accept the legitimacy of the union but has instead some hidden agenda or hope of using the program to weaken or destroy the union. If management hopes that after a few years of QWL the union will be weakened, or that employees will be ready to decertify the union, seeing it as no longer needed since their work life is so much improved, then the program will be subtly sabotaged by this attitude all along the line. The converse is in fact required: management must be willing to accept that the program will have positive benefits not only for themselves and for their employees, but also for the union. They should realize and accept that the union will in all probability be held in higher regard by the employees for having helped them to obtain the QWL program.

Joint Ownership Developed Early

It is important that joint ownership of a union-management program be sought and developed as early as possible. Both sides should be involved in discussing and determining the goals and the ground rules for a program. When management unilaterally initiates a program, the longer it waits to involve the union(s) as equal partners, the harder it becomes to develop a truly joint program, and the more likely it is that the union(s) will see it as a management-only tool and will decline to cooperate.

Both Union and Management Committed to Human Goals and Benefits

Management and union leaders should be committed, if the program is to be successful, to utilizing every employee's talents to the fullest extent possible, to making the organization a better place to work for all employees, and to providing opportunities for individual growth and development. When both sides work

successfully towards these objectives, the effectiveness of the organization in reaching its cost, quality, and other goals also increases. If on the other hand only the union is interested in the human outcomes of a QWL program, and management seeks only economic and organizational outcomes, the program is much less likely to be successful.

Both Union and Management Committed to Organizational Effectiveness

A QWL program will be more successful in the long run if it is task oriented as well as people oriented. It should have as part of its overall purpose and expectations the improvement of cost, quality, and other factors of competitive effectiveness. Management must be concerned with these factors or the organization will not survive and thrive. If these objectives are not incorporated openly into the QWL program, QWL will remain something separate and apart from the mainstream of management concerns and activities and will eventually suffer as a result from inadequate commitment and support.

There is no reason for management to deny or hide its necessary concerns with cost, quality, and organizational effectiveness. Denying these objectives will only lead to suspicions among union leaders that managers are either trying to hide the truth or are incompetent. In many cases, but not all, unions and management can also openly add productivity as a part of the overall objectives of a QWL program. We can and should make a distinction between a narrow definition of productivity (more output per man hour, equaling a speedup in many union leaders' and members' eyes) which does not need to be a part of the program, and a broader definition of productivity acceptable to all. This includes reducing a wide variety of costs, such as those due to turnover, absenteeism, accidents, poor quality, scrap, rework, machine down time, grievances, materials waste, etc. And it includes helping the organization become better organized to be responsive

to changing market and environmental conditions and needs. Every union we have worked with, and indeed most that we have talked with, are willing, and in most cases eager, to cooperate in programs to help improve some or most of these factors. The result is a healthier organization that is more likely to survive, and one more capable of providing job security, regular wage increases, and pride for its employees.

Realistic Expectations

It is important that leaders on both sides have positive expectations about what the program should produce. But they must also have realistic expectations about the length of time that is required to launch a QWL program, to develop throughout the organization the necessary skills and attitudes, to accomplish significant organizational changes, and to develop significant outcomes. These programs are a great deal slower to develop, in most cases, than we expected, and much, much slower than the impatient expectations of many of the leaders we worked with. In most cases we have learned to caution people not to expect any significant results in the first year of a program, but that if it moves along well, results should be forthcoming during the second year. This frequently clashes with management impatience and also with the great pressures that some managements are under to save a great deal of money quickly or to rescue a bad situation with some quick cure.

Organizational Diagnosis

In our early QWL programs we did not engage in any focussed effort to diagnose the organizations that we were beginning to work with. Such a diagnosis will turn up information and a variety of perceptions about the mission and purposes of the organization, about how it is structured, what the role definitions (or lack thereof) are, about interpersonal and interdepartmental relationships, and about rewards and leadership and other aspects of what makes it an effective organization,

or not so effective. During the first weeks and months we would of course learn a great deal about the organization and its leaders. But without a formal diagnosis on entry into our early programs, by the time we learned many of these things the opportunity had passed for structuring the QWL program and various training programs and workshops towards assisting in some significant need areas. In most cases an organizational diagnosis early on, using hour long interviews with key managers and union people, would have helped us to avoid some errors and to provide the client organizations with a better planned QWL and training program tailored to fit their needs. We now make this an early stage in most of our new programs.

Strategic Planning

An organizational diagnosis often turns up the interesting fact, among others, that top management has not been keeping adequate track of important changes in the environment which affect or will affect the organization's activities. We also frequently find that the people we interview have widely varying views (if any) on the basic core mission or purposes of the organization. Strategic planning involves a careful scan of the changing environment, developing a new or re-establishing an old core mission, and setting long- and middle-range objectives. We now assist the manage ment in our QWL programs to do some strategic planning if they are not already doing this. The reason is that if the organization is misreading its environment, or has not developed an adequate, up-to-date, clear mission, or has not developed top management consensus around this mission, then a QWL program is not likely to succeed very well, if at all. If it does succeed in some respects, the organization may still perish. We do not wish to help modern day equivalents of buggy whip companies develop ever better labor-management cooperation, more and more worker input, and greater and greater cost effectiveness and quality, only to see them fail because they persisted in producing an outdated product for a dying market. QWL alone will not save such a company;

it takes a combina-tion of good strategic planning plus QWL. We have therefore decided to offer both and not leave the strategic planning, and with it the fate of the QWL program, to chance.

Some Structure Is Needed to Make Participation Work

If a program is to be a joint program between management and one or more unions, then some form of steering committee at the top level should be set up to represent this joint support and to provide overall direction. This steering committee may need to start off with equal or roughly equal numbers from each side to symbolize the balance of support for and ownership of the program. Over time however, and in some cases even at the beginning, the members from one side or the other may significantly outnumber those from the other side. It is important that the top managers and top union leaders be on this committee. It is also important that it hold regular meetings every two to four weeks, perhaps more often in the beginning, and not just when someone wishes to call a meeting. We believe that it is unwise for a steering committee to make decisions by voting; it is much preferable that it operate by some version or other of consensus. It is also important that this be talked about and decided openly by the committee in one of its early meetings, so that there is some degree of consensus around how it will reach decisions.

At the bottom of the organization, if employee participation is to be on a regular basis, it needs to be supported with some appropriate structure such as employee involvement circles or work teams that are formed, trained, led, and supported from above in holding regular weekly or biweekly meetings. If management says it has an employee participation program, but it turns out that employees are only called together when the need arises or to help solve a particular problem, then we question the depth of commitment to QWL. Again, if only selected (or even elected) employee representatives are serving on committees or task forces, the program, although possibly useful in solving

some problems, is falling far short of the potential of a full scale QWL program with direct participation of all interested employees.

Between the top-level steering committee and bottom-level work teams or circles, there may also need to be some committee structure to provide ongoing support and guidance for the work team activity. If the organization is quite small this will most likely not be needed. But if it is large there will need to be divisional or departmental steering committees at these intermediate levels, or perhaps even both.

In all cases it is important that the structure be developed for and tailor made to fit the specific situation and the needs of the individual organization.

Middle Managers Involved, Not Bypassed

In many organizations there are two or three levels of superintendents, general supervisors, general foremen, and other middle managers between the first line foreman or supervisor and the head of the organization. And in some cases top management commits to a QWL program (or to its first cousin, a quality circle program) and then tries to lead downward and start work teams or circles very quickly. This is a serious mistake which is almost certainly going to impede progress at best and to backfire at worst. A QWL program cannot in the long run succeed or survive without the active and growing involvement of all levels of managers and of union personnel.

First-Line Supervisors Involved

What was said above about middle managers applies equally of course to the first-line supervisors and to the union stewards. Their active support and involvement are needed. If they feel that the program is somehow for the benefit of the union worker but not for them, resentment will tend to build. If the program is launched from above and they are told to get involved,

to support it, to start up their own work teams, resentment will build even farther and faster. We now recommend that the first-line supervisors lead the first efforts and probably also the second wave of work teams. After a couple of years and lots of success examples, there will be time for top management to implement a policy that requires all departments and subunits to get involved, including all supervisors. But for those initial rounds it is far better to have the effort led by sincere volunteers. QWL should be for all employees at all levels, including supervisors and middle managers, but this is often forgotten in the rush to involve hourly people.

Formal Training Needed for Participants

In our first QWL programs we offered very little training to the joint committees and worker-supervisor teams, and none at all to managers and union officials separately. We would help the joint steering committee members break the ice, to voice any anger over past behaviors on the other side, and to move beyond that by looking at common goals and objectives for the future. From time to time we would stop steering committee or safety or other meetings when we found people not listening to each other, and we would ask them to notice this and reflect on its meaning for possible success. We also offered participants a problem solving model and occasional exercises in improving their communications skills. But generally we were trying not to impose very much training time up front, preferring to help labor and management to start solving their problems together, knowing they were impatient to get started on this and assuming that it alone would bring the desired changes and outcomes.

Our experience has taught us to modify this. In one program our new consultant, upon entry in early 1979, insisted that, as part of their QWL program, management initiate a series of management development workshops, one for the upper-middle group and a second for first-line supervisors. In another program,

after two years of working with the steering committee and various subcommittees and task forces, we went back to basics and ran a series of workshops for a vertical slice of top, middle, and bottom managers and union people. Now during the initial contacts we begin to talk about the importance of training, and during the entry process we develop a proposal for one or more training programs. We try to require that the steering committee, top management, middle management, and first-line supervisors all participate in some training workshops in how to lead a QWL change process. In our most recent programs we have begun to provide 5 full days of offsite training to a combined vertical core group that includes the steering committee plus 3 or more superintendents or other middle managers, 5 or 6 foremen, and 10 or 12 hourly workers. These training programs emphasize the process of change and the necessity to lead it, communications (especially listening) skills, a problem solving model, how to hold productive meetings, and the roles of internal facilitators. We also train internal people to be facilitators of the ongoing process so that our involvement can decline over time.

Set Up Evaluation Method at Beginning

QWL program supporters, especially among top management, sometimes are overly eager to evaluate every single aspect of a new program, including monitoring exactly every dollar and hour of cost, and trying to measure every dollar of savings. There is an implied and sometimes explicit expectation that the program should have an adequate return on investment within a fixed and probably short time period. Reacting against this, other supporters in management and the union side, and also among third parties, sometimes try to ignore or submerge the whole issue of evaluation, stating that the program should be supported "for its own sake," or for the human values alone, which cannot be measured in dollar terms. This is probably a mistake. A middle course would appear better.

The program should be evaluated, with some records kept on the investment made and on at least the more easily quantifiable dollar savings. Over time the steering committee will need this information to justify to top management the continuation of the program and for its own information about how well the program is working. In the long run the program will not be supported by management if it is not cost effective. To ignore this reality of life in our competitive economy is to engage in wishful thinking. In many of our programs, and in other sites, the decision to evaluate costs and benefits is made only after the program is a year or more old. Then it becomes a question of digging for old statistics, and in the case of attitudes on both sides, asking people to remember how they felt a year or more ago. If changes in attitudes are to be measured, it is far better to measure them before the program begins, or in the very early stages, before they have begun to change very much.

We also see self-evaluation as important for each work team and each level of steering committee. We encourage people to think about what they are trying to accomplish, over what time period, and how they want to evaluate themselves as a part of their learning process. In fact, this is probably the most important single purpose and use of evaluation. It is the one we now stress the most.

Be Prepared for a Union Pullout

From our experience it seems highly likely that, at some point in the first year or two of a QWL program, the union will pull out in protest of some management action. Along the way they may threaten to pull out any number of times. In one site the joint committee agreed to a "heat day" policy which set heat and humidity limits above which outdoor employees would be sent home. But on one occasion a department manager who did not believe in the program or the policy called his employees in on such a heat day, but then kept them sitting in a hot room for several hours rather than

send them home. The union happened to have a regular meeting scheduled the next night, and it was hardly a surprise that the membership voted at that meeting to withdraw from the program. In another site the union president sent us a letter that "terminated" the program on the grounds of lack of progress for his members and poor communications with him. The real reason, unstated, was that some dissatisfied union members had raised at a QWL meeting issues about a failure to get their wages increased adequately during the recent negotiations. Our staff made it clear that QWL could not handle these issues, but it was embarrassing to the union president to have it raised in this forum. In a third, the union withdrew for a five month period to give management time to complete a badly needed reorganization and to "get its house in order" since the current situation was badly hindering the QWL effort. And there have been many other times when unions have threatened to pull out of various programs.

It is important that pressures on union leaders from their membership to pull out be anticipated and that the program take this into account. First, the agreement should call for a cooling off period before any drastic steps are taken if things do go wrong. Second, all participants should be encouraged to think ahead about the nature of the process they are entering and about the likelihood that errors will be made and things not go smoothly, and about the importance of regarding each step as a learning experience from which a better path can be charted and then followed. Mistakes and failures can in this way be built in as a normal part of learning, rather than as a reason to quit. ("Watch the baby learning to walk.") Third, all parties should be urged to make a real commitment to the QWL program and process and to not use it, or the threat of withdrawing from it, as a bargaining chip in the inherited adversarial relationship. Fourthly, when such a crisis does occur, the role of professional neutral third party consultants becomes especially crucial around these issues. First it is one of the functions of the third party to develop a framework and climate so that the above points will be

understood and accepted by all parties. And second, when a walkout does occur, it is the job of the third parties to find out why, to listen carefully and nonjudgementally to both sides, and to find the reasonable path, and any necessary restructuring, for bringing the parties back together. In all three of the above cases our staff continued their behind the scenes work, and in all three the unions returned after two, three and five months respectively.

Third Party Neutral Professional Consultants Needed

It is my opinion that most QWL programs will need expert assistance from neutral professional process consultants for at least the first couple of years. The main functions that they fill are:

1. Bring the parties together for the initial meetings to consider a program.

2. Provide an initial organizational diagnosis and feedback, with recommendations for structuring the program and necessary training flowing from the diagnosis and feedback, shaped jointly by consultants and participants.

3. Assist top management in strategic planning if it is needed.

4. Chair the initial meetings of the steering committee. Where anger is present, as it often is, control the agenda and the setting for the initial meetings and provide the neutral presence which allows anger to be expressed but kept controlled and within acceptable limits.

5. Help both sides initially to construct a common agenda which concentrates on areas they are willing to work together on, while avoiding areas in which disagreement is too great for likely successful cooperation, at least in the beginning.

6. Demonstrate and train by example how to conduct a meeting so that it starts on time, follows a planned agenda, reaches certain agreed upon conclusions, builds in followthrough, and ends on time.

7. Help committee participants identify issues which can best be worked on in smaller groups, task forces, or subcommittees and assist in setting up such groups and in having the parent committee give them clear guidelines and instructions and deadlines.

8. Provide training to committee participants, various levels of management, union stewards, and work team members in such key skills as agenda building, problem analysis/problem solving, communications, active listening, team building, how to handle value differences, and behavior for effective small group functioning.

9. Work with and help to train internal process facilitators to replace gradually the outsiders in performing many of these functions.

10. Provide one-on-one consultation with individual managers and union leaders. QWL calls for great wisdom and patience at times, for skills most managers and union leaders have only parts of, and for changes in attitudes and behaviors that are difficult for human beings to accomplish rapidly. The consultant can help these key people work through these issues, give them new insights and encouragement in how to proceed, and sometimes can provide them with a mirror to see their own behavior better and how it impacts on the organization, on the other side, and on the workers below.

11. Bring in and model for all participants a non-judgemental open minded "fresh-slate" attitude towards all the participants, thereby creating the space and opportunity for people on both sides to break free of past behaviors and stereotypes and to move towards more cooperative, more creative, problem solving approaches.

12. Set the framework to deal with errors and mistakes as learning opportunities rather than reasons to pull out and help to bring the parties back together if in fact one side or the other does pull out.

13. Provide the parties information about prior experience in other programs which might be useful in avoiding pitfalls or achieving rapid progress.

14. Help the participants plan and conduct self-evaluations for their own growth and learning, and to be prepared to justify the continuation of their program to others above them (in management) and below (in the union ranks).

The Inside People Must Own the Program, Not the Outsiders

Important as are the roles of the outside third party consultants, they should avoid coming to think of the program as theirs. It must belong, right from the beginning, and increasingly over time, to the inside participants. Because the outsiders play such important roles, insiders often tend to rely on them too much and to look to them as the designers of the program, as its leaders, as experts on all things related, and as saviors when things go badly. This is unhealthy and should be fought against. Third party staff should be carefully screened and trained to avoid using people with too strong a need for control or credit. Inside people, on the other hand, must be given every encouragement to take charge of their program early on and to use the outsiders only as advisors, as sounding boards, as trainers for specific skills, and as consultants to the inside people who remain in control. There is a very difficult and delicate balance here which needs to be observed, thought about, and discussed since at start-up there is an inevitable dependency on the outsiders which must shift over time towards reduced dependency and toward greater and greater internal autonomy.

Collective Bargaining and QWL are Separate, but Closely Interrelated

To make a joint QWL program successful, it is virtually always essential to agree in advance that issues involved in the collective bargaining contract are not appropriate subjects for discussion at QWL steering committees or work teams. Everyone agrees to this, but the dividing line is sometimes blurry. Wages are clearly outside QWL. But QWL does deal with many aspects of working conditions, by common concern and agreement, even though some few of these issues might someday be addressed through bargaining. And some issues, such as how overtime is allotted, may go either way, being kept out of QWL talks because it is a bargaining issue, or allowed in because both sides want to improve the process and don't want to wait two or three years until the next contract talks. The general rule of thumb is that either side has the right to take an issue out of the QWL arena on the grounds that it is a contract issue.

QWL overlaps with bargaining in another way which we did not anticipate initially. The QWL committee and consultants should have nothing to do with the bargaining when contract renewal time rolls around, and they don't. But the QWL program does have, over time, profound effects on the collective bargaining *climate* and therefore on the *process*. Over and over we have heard managers and union leaders say, during and after completion of bargaining which began 5 or 6 or 12 months after a QWL program had begun, that it was the smoothest, best, easiest, etc., bargaining in which they had ever participated. Leaders on both sides learn through the QWL process how to communicate clearly, they come to respect each other more, some degree of trust is built up, anger is dissipated, and all of this carries over into the bargaining room.

Unique Municipal Problems

Municipal managers are at least as ready for, and interested in, these programs as are private managers. But they do not have the facility of private managers to commit funds to hire consultants or other outside help. One or two or three private managers can usually commit funds from training or other budget items. But public managers usually do not have much freedom of action. Even modest funding for part of the costs of a program must pass the hurdles of a finance committee, city council, perhaps also a town meeting, and maybe more.

In such public and politicized bodies, one or two enemies or skeptics can kill almost any new idea or program. After a year or two of experience, with managers and union leaders ready to explain and argue for support, such public support can be forthcoming. In the absence of such experience, funds to pay initial costs for outside consultants will continue to be very difficult for even the most committed and dedicated top municipal manager to secure. For these reasons, outside funding of at least part of these programs is important for success in municipal government.