



SUMMER 2019

Grouplink.

Indeed Interactive 2019

by Jacob Ramirez

**Protecting Workers from
heat Stress**

by Paige Hunter

Customer Care and Success

by Tara Burns

Quality Industry Terminology

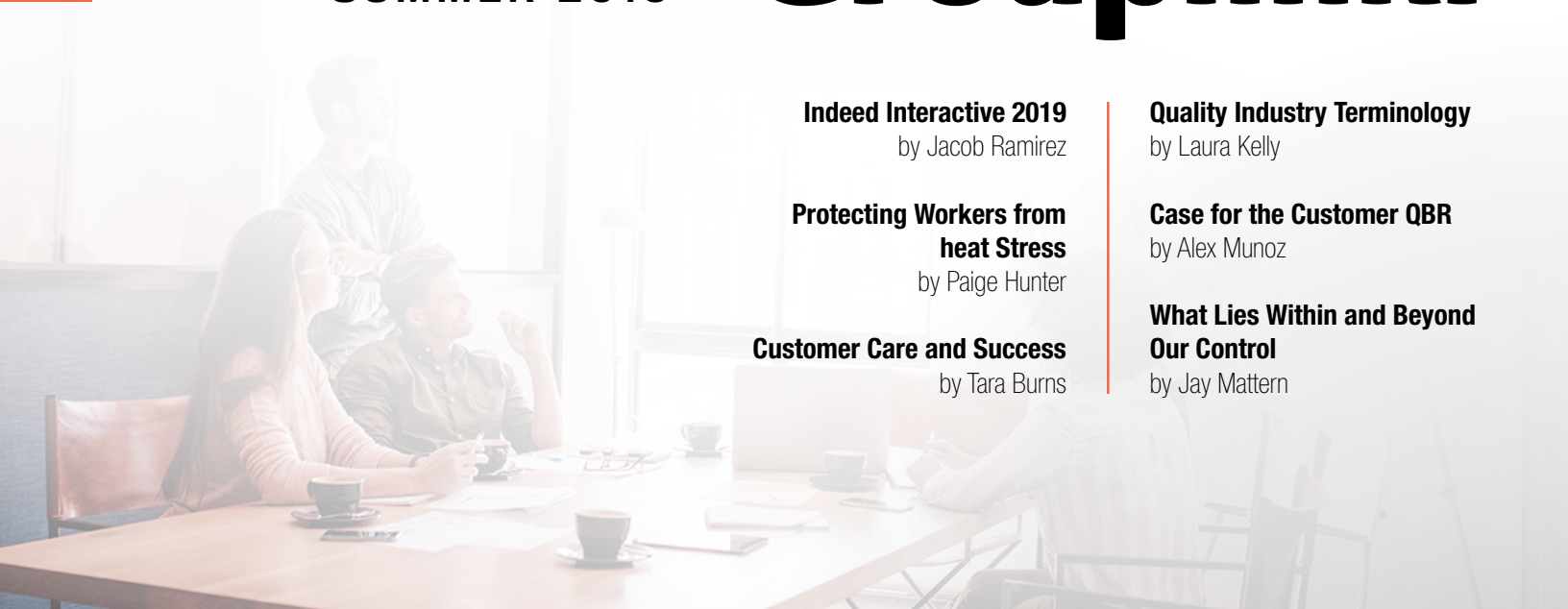
by Laura Kelly

Case for the Customer QBR

by Alex Munoz

**What Lies Within and Beyond
Our Control**

by Jay Mattern



CONTRIBUTORS



LK



JR



TB



ST



PH



AM

LK Laura Kelly, PMP

Laura is project manager for Sustained Quality Group. She recently received her PMP, and plans to secure at least two other post-nominal titles before the end of the year. Laura loves to paint and volunteer in her free time.

JR Jacob Ramirez

Jacob is a recruiter for the Trade Management Carrollton, Fort Worth and Plano offices. He has been working in the staffing industry since 2013 when he joined Trade Management. Jacob enjoys spending his free time with his wife and kids.

TB Tara Burns, CSP

Tara serves as chief operating officer of Peoplelink Group. She has been with the company for over 20 years in various management and executive roles. Tara loves traveling and spending time with her daughter, Hayley.

ST Stephen Tipps

Stephen is operations manager for the Sustained Quality Group Central Tennessee office. He has been with Sustained Quality Group since 2013. Stephen enjoys spending his free time with his family.

PH Paige Hunter

Paige has been in staffing since 2006. She currently serves as safety/compliance coordinator for Peoplelink Group. When she's not at the office, Paige loves cooking and spending time with her 3 year-old Cavalier King Charles Spaniel.

AM Alex Munoz

Alex is branch manager of the Peoplelink Staffing Solutions Greer office. He has been in staffing for 7 years, and has held operations and sales leadership roles for nearly 20 years. In his spare time, Alex enjoys basketball and spending time with his four children.

ART & EDITORIAL



JM



JV

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LETTER FROM THE CEO

Finally, summer is here! We had (another) long and particularly cold winter season. But, we always know that the seasons come and go, though not always as predictable as we would like. Companies, like the weather, also move through “seasons.” They transition from a start-up, or owner/operator model, to an independent operation (the “owner” delegates management responsibility to others), then to organic scale (the business can now replicate itself while remaining profitable), and finally to strategic expansion (pursuing growth through acquisitions and/or additional service offerings). Sometimes, companies wither and die, unable to make it from one phase to the next. In all cases, however, those companies that thrive find themselves successfully transitioning from one “season” to another.

We find ourselves in one of those seasonal transitions here at The Peoplelink Group. For us to be able to move successfully out of organic scale to strategic expansion, we must make sure we have all the right people in the right positions doing the right things. Read that last sentence again. It sounds rather easy, doesn't it? We all know from experience it is not that simple.

In order to get those three things completed, it is necessary to bring in a new CEO. As you all know, Jay Reid will be stepping into that role on Monday, July 15. Jay comes from TrueBlue, a \$2 billion staffing firm with a great reputation and a solid track record of growth. They clearly passed through all four growth levels and are fully executing their business from a strong strategic expansion model. We believe that Jay's skills and experience working with TrueBlue will help us make the transition to the fourth level of growth more quickly and more successfully than if we continue reinventing the wheel on our own.

My role will change as well. I will be here to support Jay and the entire executive team in South Bend, as well as give more time and attention to our strategic initiatives and acquisition opportunities. I can say without hesitation that Jay Reid is the right person to step into the CEO role and believe me, I wouldn't let just anyone take over the reigns at this company!

So, seasons come and go, but with each new season, we find something new and better each time. And, like the seasons, The Peoplelink Group and Peoplelink Nation will continue seeking out the new-and-better in everything they do. From a single crack house in Elkhart, Indiana, to a national presence in the US, Peoplelink lives on and lives strong. I encourage you to enjoy the season we're in, but begin to anticipate the next one coming. It will be new and better. Who wouldn't welcome that?

ABOUT JAY

Jay has led Peoplelink in one role or another since its inception in 1987. He is a native of Indiana with a BS in Business Marketing from Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

Jay W. Mattern, CSP
CEO, Peoplelink Group



Indeed Interactive

BY JACOB RAMIREZ

2019



Indeed's premier client conference featuring insight into the latest trends, as well as inspirational talks and peer networking opportunities, took place at the Austin Convention Center in downtown Austin, Texas, May 13-15. Over 1,800 talent leaders from across the country gathered together to learn how to solve "The Talent Equation." This is a personal journal of my experience at the conference, as well as my takeaways and thoughts from the various presentations.

April 13th. Arrival day was a moderately short day as everyone was getting into town for the event, so I wasted no time getting started with registration. Following registration, they hosted a mixer in the "Indeed Works" room where drinks were provided, and we were able to rub shoulders with the rest of the attendees! The Indeed Works was a location that featured product demos, fun networking activities and a stage that was utilized to offer smaller, more personal seminars and discussions. That night was concluded at an off-location dinner hosted by Indeed's director of national accounts, Shannon McKay.

April 14th. Rise and shine sunshine! Day 2 started with breakfast followed by my favorite speakers of the week. The opening speaker was Indeed's senior vice president of marketing Paul D'Arcy. Paul's focus was on work, identity and brand: does your company's identity give off and stand by the reputation you believe it does? Or does it do the exact opposite? Are your employees proud to say they are a part of your company? Paul also spoke on how employees can be turned off prior to applying because 1. they are not 100% sure what you do or offer, and 2. your brand and company ethics don't correlate with theirs.

Paul was followed by Columbia professor Sheena Iyengar. Sheena spoke on decisions and choices. What I loved about her talk was how she tied her life experiences into her presentation. I was one to believe that more job choices meant that I could offer more jobs to one employee and make them happier by providing options; although that can be true at times, it can also turn making an easy decision into a hard one, and taking more time to do so. **The takeaway:** interview until I am able to help the candidate arrive at their best choice as opposed to offering a plethora of options that don't fit their work needs.

The closer for the day was New York Times bestselling author Kevin Kwan, author of *Crazy Rich Asians*. He brought a great energy into the room. Although he didn't speak so much on how to find the proper candidates, he offered his life story and the choices he made that got him where is today as well as how to balance financial success and personal fulfillment. Very enlightening.



LEFT
Kevin Kwan,
author of
*Crazy Rich
Asians*



ABOVE
Welcome to Indeed Interactive; Indeed Works mixer

April 15th. I skipped breakfast on the final day of the event so that I could make sure I had a great seat for the opener. It turns out I was one among many with the same idea. Opening for the day was Indeed's marketing director Carmen Bryant.

Carmen spoke with a passion that was hard not to feel. I think this was the part of the week that was most pertinent to us! Carmen talked about how everything a business does comes with a promise – whether it's spoken or unspoken – and once you break a promise it can be hard to gain that trust

back. A broken promise can come in many forms, but the biggest way to break a promise is by broken communication, not calling your customer or employee back, and not giving an update regardless of the situation.

She also touched on company pages: a great company page can compela an applicant to apply to 3-5 more jobs with your company versus them passing you up. It was also noted that a truly great company page rating is 3.9 and higher! My goal for the upcoming week is to make sure our company page is up to date complete and polished.

Following the opener, I finally found and met Libby Pflaumer, Peoplelink Group's Corporate Recruiter. We chatted and sat through a couple discussions, one being the new Indeed Hire recruiting service. Indeed Hire is a hiring service they offer that narrows down candidates by actual skill and weeds out the applicants that lack the applicable skills. Although not an everyday tool, it sounds like it could be used for direct hires, temp-to-perm jobs and foreman and superintendent positions.



A B O V E

Indeed marketing director Carmen Bryant

Actor and author Amy Poehler and Indeed president Chris Hyams delivered a closing dialogue on how learning and mastering the art of authenticity can change a person or a company and even the world for the better!

In closing: The event and week were full of incredible and enlightening information. I am still surprised they managed to pack it all into three days! It wasn't all "recruit, recruit, recruit," either; there were life lessons learned, engaging conversations and an overall great experience had. I'm grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of it. **JR**

ENJOYING

Grouplink? >

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Grouplink.

US Worker Confidence Index Hits Record High

STAFFING INDUSTRY ANALYSTS

Workers' confidence in the US reached its highest level in four years in the first quarter. Following a slight dip at the end of 2018, HRO Today magazine reported their quarterly Worker Confidence index rose to 110.7 the first quarter — up 3.6 points from a reading of 107.1 in both the fourth quarter and the first quarter of 2018 to reach its highest level since the study's inception.

The index measures workers' perceptions of four drivers of worker confidence: the perceived likelihood of job loss, the perceived likelihood of a promotion, the perceived likelihood of a raise, and the perceived overall trust in company leadership. On a year-over-year basis, all four indices increased for only the third time in the study's history; the job security index was the only index to report a quarterly decrease.

Perceived likelihood of a promotion saw the biggest jump to start the year, rising to 121.2 from 112.7 in the fourth quarter. Perceived likelihood of a raise saw the second-largest, increasing to 113.3 the first quarter from 107.2 in the last quarter of 2018. Perceived job security and trust in company leadership saw minor falls and rises, respectively.

The survey series includes approximately 1,000 online interviews conducted monthly among those aged 18-plus working full-time in the US. Quarterly reports are issued based on 3,000 responses per quarter.

Lack of Skills a Top Obstacle to Getting Hired


AMERICAN STAFFING ASSOCIATION

More than 82% of employers report they are actively hiring for open jobs, according to a survey of 150 human resource professionals by Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc. However, 80% of those employers are having trouble finding candidates, with 70% reporting a skills shortage.

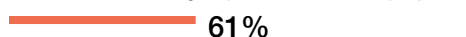
"The tight labor market typically means workers have their pick of jobs. This survey suggests that while opportunities abound, employers are looking for select skill sets and having trouble finding qualified talent," says Andrew Challenger, vice president of Challenger, Gray & Christmas.

Of those surveyed, 43% stated that while they have plenty of applicants, those who apply do not have the requisite skills.

Nearly six out of 10 Americans cite employer shortcomings as responsible for skills gap.

Failing to provide training
 69%

Not offering apprenticeship programs
 63%

Not communicating expectations to employees
 61%


Unrealistic expectations of job candidates' skills
 58%



Nine in ten say employers should do more to train their workers.

Americans realize that individuals are also accountable for the skills gap.

92% believe employees should continually update their skills
 92%

72% say students' failure to study in-demand fields (e.g., STEM) is a factor
 72%

Americans believe schools must better prepare youth for the world of work.

93% say schools need to do more to develop employable graduates
 93%

75% say inadequate education is a top factor responsible for the skills gap
 75%

SOURCE

American Staffing Association Workforce Monitor, an online survey conducted among 2,023 U.S. adults age 18 and older by Harris Poll.

US independent workforce to rise nearly 3% by 2024

STAFFING INDUSTRY ANALYSTS

The US independent workforce – which includes consultants, freelancers, contractors, temporary and on-call workers – will rise to 47.2 million over the next five years, representing a 2.8% annual growth rate, according to the 2019 State of Independence in America report. All independent worker segments are forecast to increase in number, with “occasional independents” expected to grow the fastest.

Independent workers generated \$1.28 trillion of revenue for the US economy last year, according to the report. About 20% of full-time independents are “high-earning independents” who make more than \$100,000. The number of high-earning full-time independents edged down in 2019 to 3.14 million from 3.3 million in 2018. The figure remains up sharply, however, from 1.95 million in 2011.

The report states the likely explanation for the small decline is that, at the margins, independents with high incomes, who are likely those with skills in high demand, are being offered attractive opportunities for traditional jobs as the labor market tightens.

Five key trends from this year's study:

- **A record-high feel more financially secure than in traditional jobs.** Seven in 10 full-time independents say they plan to continue their current path.
- **Millennials are displacing baby boomers in the independent workforce.** Boomers, many of whom are aging out of the workforce, fell from 35% to 33%.
- **Independents pump the economy.** Independent workers contributed \$1.3 trillion to the U.S. economy this year – close to the total GDP of Spain.
- **Social media and online talent marketplaces are among primary ways to find work.** Word of mouth remains the top way.
- **More Americans are taking up a side hustle to supplement their income.** In 2019, occasional independents – like Uber drivers – rose 6.3% to 15 million.

This survey had responses from 3,985 US residents aged 21 and older, including 1,046 independent workers.

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Staffing brand recognition among temps good; workers able to ID firms

STAFFING INDUSTRY ANALYSTS

How well do temporary workers know staffing firms' brands? A report by Staffing Industry Analysts asked temporary workers to identify companies from a list of real and fake firms; it found a majority of the time, temporary workers were able to identify staffing firms, but some brands were much more recognized than others.

“Brand recognition clearly benefited from size and age of firm, but that didn't entirely explain the ranked order,” said Jon Osborne, VP Strategic Research, and the author of the report. “It's clear that some staffing firms have simply earned greater brand awareness, likely as a result of intelligent marketing and operational excellence.” (Continued next page)

IT staffing firm brands were correctly recognized a median 66% of the time; healthcare staffing firm brands were correctly identified a median 76% of the time; and office/clerical brands were correctly identified a median 66% of the time.

Among the most-recognized brands:

- Among IT workers, the most recognized brands included Kforce, Robert Half International, Insight Global, TEKsystems and Randstad Technologies.
- Among healthcare workers, the most recognized brands included Flexcare Medical Staffing, Truststaff, Aureus Medical Group, Cross Country Healthcare and Maxim Healthcare Services.
- Among office/clerical workers, the most recognized brands included Kelly Services, Office Team, Adecco, Manpower and Randstad.

The report is based on a survey of 5,777 North American temporary workers from 45 staffing firms.

Celebrate Your Nation



ESSENTIAL PIECE AWARD
APRIL, 2019

A B O V E

Dawn Ransbottom, Administrative Assistant
Zing Recruiting Warsaw



SQ BEST CATCH AWARD
MAY, 2019

A B O V E

John McBee, SQ Supervisor (LEFT); John Gerdam, SQ
Inspector (RIGHT); submitted by Stephen Tippy

John Gerdam was nominated & awarded this certificate of recognition along with a \$25 dollar gift card by Nissan for his Best Catch. While performing an inspection for the presence of a Piston C-Clip, John noticed that the C-Clip was present but not fully seated which was not part of his inspection process. He then initiated a Help Call and through a group discussion Nissan stated this condition could have led to catastrophic engine failure had John not detected this condition.

Note: Sustained Quality is the first Vendor that Nissan has allowed to participate in this program.



GREAT RECRUITER CERT
JUNE, 2019

A B O V E

Natasha Miranda, Recruiter
Peoplelink Staffing Solutions Augusta

Congratulations to all of our talented and dedicated staff members! Email your staff recognitions to marketing@peoplelinkgroup.com and we'll feature them!

SPRING 2019 PROMOTIONS

- Jill Becker** to Area Sales Manager, Fort Wayne
- Mary Bennewise** to Sr. Recruiter, Birmingham
- Kevlynn Bradley** to Onsite MBUSI, Alabama Auto
- Kayleigh Brown** to HR Generalist, Corporate
- Ella Callahan** to Recruiter, Midlothian
- Meghan Collins** to Recruiting Manager, IT Division
- Darren Dannenburg** to Branch Manager, Longview
- Karin Detras Cardenas** to Recruiter, Allentown
- Louie Ellis** to Account Executive, TeamSoft Madison
- Frances Guzman** to Branch Manager, Fort Wayne
- Sarah Halford** to Recruiter, Knoxville
- Stephanie Hernandez** to Sr. Recruiter, Alma
- Melissa Hull** to Onsite Manager, Greer
- Kristin Janus** to Sr. Recruiter, Zing Pompton Plains
- Rebecca Markin** to Selling Branch Manager, South Bend
- Allysa Marquez** to Benefits Coordinator, Corporate
- Courtney Morgan** to Branch Manager, Rockford
- Eneida Morris** to Workers Comp Dept Supervisor, Corporate
- Cortnie Perkins** to Branch Manager, Trade Management Austin
- Brooke Powell** to Recruiter, Rockford
- Crycelda Rosales** to Recruiter, South Bend
- Kalie Thomas** to Sr. Recruiter, Beloit
- Jarvis Updite** to Selling Branch Manager, Tuscaloosa/AL Auto
- David Valdez** to Sr. Recruiter, Kansas City
- Beth Vawter** to Area Manager, Gastonia/Greer/Summerville
- Tracy Waters** to Recruiter, Gastonia
- Jeanine Wieczork** to Sr. Recruiter, Plymouth



Rockford & Greenville teams participating in the Lakeview parade.



2019 Rochelle Chamber Play Day, Davis region.

JULY 2019 QBR SCHEDULE

TUESDAY, JULY 23

- 8:30a – 9:15a | **Opening & State of the Company**
- 9:15a – 10:30a | **Operational Updates**
- 10:30a – 11:15a | **Zing Professional Recruiting**
- 11:15a – 12p | **Teamsoft IT**
- 12p – 1p | **Lunch**
- 1p – 3p | **Corporate Departments**
- 3p – 3:45p | **SQ Group/Quality**
- 3:45p – 4:30p | **VP Sales**
- 4:30p – 5:15p | **Trade Management**

WEDNESDAY, JULY 24

- 8:15a – 9a | **Commercial, Proctor & Riley**
- 9a – 9:30a | **SQ – PPL Partnership, Jones**
- 9:30a – 10:15a | **Midsouth & Plains, Adcock**
- 10:15a – 11a | **NW IN/Illinois, Wood**
- 11a – 11:30a | **Michigan/N IN, Legacy Proctor**
- 11:30a – 12p | **E Southeast, Legacy Riley**
- 12p – 12:45p | **Lunch**
- 12:45p – 1:45p | **Bullhorn**
- 1:45p – 2:30p | **IL/WI, Davis**
- 2:30p – 5p | **Leadership Council Meeting**



Protecting Workers from Heat Stress

BY PAIGE HUNTER



Exposure to heat can cause illness and death. The most serious heat illness is heat stroke. Other heat illnesses, such as heat exhaustion, heat cramps and heat rash, should also be avoided. There are precautions that can be taken any time temperatures are high and the job involves physical work.

Risk Factors for Heat Illness

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Heavy physical labor
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces
- Low liquid intake
- Waterproof clothing

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion

- Headache, dizziness, or fainting
- Weakness and wet skin
- Irritability or confusion
- Thirst, nausea, or vomiting

Symptoms of Heat Stroke

- May be confused, unable to think clearly, pass out, collapse, or have seizures (fits)
- May stop sweating

To Prevent Heat Illness:

- Establish a complete heat illness prevention program.
- Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them.
- Provide a lot of cool water to workers close to the work area. At least one pint of water per hour is needed.

HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION



Establish a complete heat illness prevention program. Provide training about the hazards leading to heat stress and how to prevent them.



Drink at least one pint of water per hour.

The Message: What Lies Within and Beyond Our Control

BY JAY MATTERN

“The chief task in life is simply this: to identify and separate matters so that I can say clearly to myself which are externals not under my control, and which have to do with the choices I actually control. Where then do I look for good and evil? Not to uncontrollable externals, but within myself to the choices that are my own . . .”

—Epictetus, Discourses, 2.5.4–5

The single most important practice we can consider is differentiating between what we can change and what we can't. What we have influence over and what we do not. A flight is delayed because of weather – no amount of yelling at an airline representative will end a storm. No amount of wishing will make you taller or shorter or born

in a different country. No matter how hard you try, you can't make someone like you. And on top of that, time spent hurling yourself at these immovable objects is time not spent on the things we can change.

The recovery community practices something called the Serenity Prayer:

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.” Addicts cannot change the abuse suffered in childhood. They cannot undo the choices they have made or the hurt they have caused. But they can change the future—through the power they have in the present moment. As Epictetus said in the opening quote, they can control the choices they make right now.

The same is true for us today. If we can focus on making clear what parts of our day are within our control and what parts are not, we will not only be happier, we will have a distinct advantage over other people who fail to realize they are fighting an unwinnable battle. **JM**



Epictetus was a Greek Stoic philosopher. His teachings were written down and published by his pupil Arrian in his *Discourses and Enchiridion*.



TB

Customer Care and Success

BY TARA BURNS

Do customers give us opportunity or do we earn it? The answer is both: initial engagement with a prospect that turns into a customer is a “given opportunity,” traditionally as a result of either an immediate urgent need they are struggling with, or because, during the sales process, they identified a valuable solution that helps improve their results, solves a problem and proves that we listened and delivered what they needed. Yes, we’ve been “given an opportunity” to solidify a new customer, but don’t celebrate just yet – this is only the first step in creating a customer partnership that adds value to your business and yields strong return.

Year after year, we do a great job of securing a new customer only to see it fizzle out quickly after a handful of placements at best, when we know the opportunity is much greater. So why then do we secure new customers and grow so few of them to partnerships? Essentially, it’s because we’ve not actually earned the opportunity; we likely failed to execute on the promises of the solution (the proposal) or failed to differentiate and add value to help make their business better.

We talk a lot during the sales process about “value business reasons” and “compelling reasons from the customer’s eyes” to spend time and invest with a Peoplelink Group company, but how many times after we finally get a “W” in the column do we change our mindset to our needs and wants vs. those of the customer? My guess is we can all identify and personally name a couple of situations that may come to mind – myself included. We work for our customers, we are all here because of and for them; they have a plethora of “vendors” to choose from in the marketplace. When you become a “partner,” that’s when you *earn* continued business – you deliver day in and day out and earn the trust and confidence and truly *make their business better*.

Here are a few tips on how we can enhance and continually drive a strong customer experience to help elevate our customers to partners:

- Involve the service/delivery team early in the sales cycle; get them introduced to the prospect so that they begin to understand their business and staffing needs, and how to best service and deliver.
- Engage with multiple buying influences on the customer/prospect side. We are at risk if we are reliant on one primary point of contact. In the staffing business, relationships are king (and queen).
- Ask lots of questions, and then *listen* to learn and understand. Don’t rush right in to what Peoplelink can do for them; instead, truly listen to what the customer needs and then devise a solution that delivers their desired results.
- Communicate frequently once we’ve been “given opportunity;” provide continual progress reports, and communicate them via phone and in-person meetings. Remember, you’re still building the relationship, and you’re not going to build a solid relationship via email...you’ll just be a vendor!

Lastly, make QBRs a priority in your relationship with the customer. Frequently reviewing KPIs with the customer will help maintain transparency, and nurture the trusting relationship you’ve already worked to build. **TB**



LK

BY LAURA KELLY

Quality Industry Terminology



Business acumen is understanding how your company makes money and then making good decisions to improve the money-making process. The first step in this process is understanding basic industry terms.

Below is a short list of terms. In this issue, we will review A through G. There are not enough pages in this newsletter to cover all terms. For a more extensive list, visit asq.org/quality-resources/quality-glossary. LK

A

Acceptance number

The maximum number of defects or defectives allowable in a sampling lot for the lot to be acceptable.

AS9100

An international quality management standard for the aerospace industry published by the Society of Automotive Engineers and other organizations worldwide. It is known as EN9100 in Europe and JIS Q 9100 in Japan. The standard is controlled by the International Aerospace Quality Group (see listing).

B

Batch and queue

Producing more than one piece and then moving the pieces to the next operation before they are needed.

Benefit-cost analysis

An examination of the relationship between the monetary cost of implementing an improvement and the monetary value of the benefits achieved by the improvement, both within the same time period.

C

Calibration

The comparison of a measurement instrument or system of unverified accuracy to a measurement instrument or system of known accuracy to detect any variation from the required performance specification.

Cycle

A sequence of operations repeated regularly.

D

Deming cycle

Another term for the plan-do-study-act cycle. Walter Shewhart created it (calling it the plan-do-check-act cycle), but W. Edwards Deming popularized it, calling it plan-do-study-act.

Deviation

In numerical data sets, the difference or distance of an individual observation or data value from the center point (often the mean) of the set distribution.

E

Eighty-twenty (80-20)

A term referring to the Pareto principle, which was first defined by Joseph M. Juran in 1950. The principle suggests most effects come from relatively few causes; that is, 80% of the effects come from 20% of the possible causes. Also see "Pareto chart."

External failure

A nonconformance identified by a source outside of the producing organization. Discovered after a product or service has been passed downstream, for example, to users or customers.

F

Failure

The inability of an item, product or service to perform required functions on demand due to one or more defects.

Flowchart

A graphical representation of the steps in a process. Flowcharts are drawn to better understand processes. One of the "seven tools of quality" (see listing).

G

Gantt chart

A matrix-type horizontal bar chart used in process/project planning and control to display planned and finished work in relation to time. It is called a milestone chart when interim checkpoints are added.

Gatekeeper

A timekeeper; in team meetings, a designated individual who helps monitor the team's use of allocated time.



Case for the Customer QBR



BY ALEX MUNOZ

We were not doing the best job communicating with our client. We dropped the ball a few times, did not respond timely enough to emails, and we had had a very high rate of no-shows for orientation in the few weeks prior. I was not feeling very well walking into this QBR, with my boss, Beth Vawter, and my boss' boss, Kelly Riley, with me. I was prepared to take it on the chin here.

At first, the tension was a bit high, as we discussed a few areas of opportunity. But, as we continued the conversation, we agreed on addressing some immediate concerns and making changes! First and immediately, we agreed we would have a bigger presence onsite. We would start by coming in and sitting with the customer's safety team the following Monday during orientation, and at the completion of orientation, we would get to know some of the line/shift supervisors on the floor. One of the biggest takeaways for me was account potential for increased business – to the point of adding a full-time, onsite presence. I definitely made this a 2019 Greer office goal when I walked out of there!

I arrived the following Monday, as discussed in the QBR, and spent some time on the floor. I met with Tory, Julia, and Jaime (all shift supervisors) and they were all very excited to meet us. Susan, the safety manager, was very pleased with me introducing our staff to her promptly at 7:30 am. Additionally, we had a 70% show-up rate – much higher than the previous weeks, when we were just sending folks directly to the site. Telling someone that a person from our office will be meeting them onsite makes a big difference! Susan was excited to see such a high show-up percentage as well, and best of all, she made sure to let us know!

I was back out at the customer again for the second orientation, and brought Crystal Norwood, our recruiter, with me. We both went through their entire safety orientation, and were nearly ready to implement the second part of what was agreed upon during the initial QBR – being tours of the facility by all of our potential placements prior to placing.

To recap, the Monday following the customer QBR, we had 7 out of 10 of our associates show up. Wednesday, we had 10 out of 12 show for orientation. These are huge improvements over our performance just a couple of weeks ago! Most importantly: we had 5 people end/turnover this week, which means we have had a +12 impact on this client – just one week after a QBR! What an impactful tool! This tool led to conversations we would have probably never had, or even thought to make time for. In short, if your office is not yet holding QBRs, I'd encourage you to start. It works! **AM**

What is Industry 4.0?

BY BERNARD MARR FOR FORBES

We are in the midst of a significant transformation regarding the way we produce products thanks to the digitization of manufacturing. This transition is so compelling that it is being called Industry 4.0 to represent the fourth revolution that has occurred in manufacturing. From the first industrial revolution (mechanization through water and steam power) to the mass production and assembly lines using electricity in the second, the fourth industrial revolution will take what was started in the third with the adoption of computers and automation and enhance it with smart

and autonomous systems fueled by data and machine learning.

Even though some dismiss Industry 4.0 as merely a marketing buzzword, shifts are happening in manufacturing that deserves our attention.

Industry 4.0 Optimizes the Computerization of Industry 3.0

When computers were introduced in Industry 3.0, it was disruptive thanks to the addition of an entirely new technology. Now, and into the future as Industry 4.0 unfolds, computers

are connected and communicate with one another to ultimately make decisions without human involvement. A combination of cyber-physical systems, the Internet of Things and the Internet of Systems make Industry 4.0 possible and the smart factory a reality. As a result of the support of smart machines that keep getting smarter as they get access to more data, our factories will become more efficient and productive and less wasteful. Ultimately, it is the network of these digitally connected machines and the data they create and share that results in the true power of Industry 4.0.

Industry 4.0 Applications Today

While many organizations might still be in denial about how Industry 4.0 could impact their business or struggling to find the talent or knowledge to know how to best adopt it for their unique use cases, several others are implementing changes today and preparing for a future where smart machines improve their business. Following are just a few of the possible applications.

Identify opportunities. Since connected machines collect a tremendous volume of data that can inform maintenance, performance and other issues, as well as analyze that data to identify patterns and insights that would be impossible for a human to do in a reasonable timeframe, Industry 4.0 offers the opportunity for manufacturers to optimize their operations quickly and efficiently by knowing what needs attention. By using the data from sensors in its equipment, an African gold mine identified a problem with the oxygen levels during leaching. Once fixed, they were able to increase their yield by 3.7%, which saved them \$20 million annually.

Optimize logistics and supply chains. A connected supply chain can adjust and accommodate when new information is presented. If a weather delay ties up a shipment, a connected system can proactively adjust to that reality and modify manufacturing priorities.

Autonomous equipment and vehicles. There are shipping yards that are leveraging autonomous cranes and trucks to streamline operations as they accept shipping containers from the ships.

Robots. Once only possible for large enterprises with equally large budgets, robotics are now more affordable and available to organizations of every size. From picking products at a warehouse to getting them ready to ship, autonomous robots can quickly and safely support manufacturers. Robots move goods around warehouses and also reduce costs and allow better use of floor space.

Additive manufacturing (3D printing). This technology has improved tremendously in the last decade and has progressed from primarily being used for prototyping to actual production. Advances in the use of metal additive manufacturing have opened up a lot of possibilities for production.

Internet of Things and the cloud. A key component of Industry 4.0 is the Internet of Things that is characterized by connected devices. Not only does this help internal operations, but through the use of the cloud environment where data is stored, equipment and operations can be optimized by leveraging the insights of others using the same equipment or to allow smaller enterprises access to technology they would not be able to on their own.

While Industry 4.0 is still evolving, and we might not have the complete picture until we look back 30 years from now, companies who are adopting the technologies realize Industry 4.0's potential. These same companies are also grappling with how to upskill their current workforce to take on new work responsibilities made possible by Internet 4.0 and to recruit new employees with the right skills.



Industry 4.0 is a name given to the idea of smart factories where machines are augmented with web connectivity and connected to a system that can visualize the entire production chain and make decisions on its own.



The Sandvik Coromant advanced Industry 4.0 production unit in Gimo, Sweden. The plant has been selected as a "lighthouse" site, namely one that comprehensively deploys a wide range of Industry 4.0 technologies and use cases at scale, while keeping humans and sustainability at the heart of innovation.

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