
Minnesota Council for Quality Stakeholder Update
April 2005

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1. A Message from the President: The Science of Listening to Customers

Customers' satisfaction is declining. According to the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI), the national barometer on what customers are thinking, aggregate US customer satisfaction has decreased for four straight quarters -- from its 9-year peak of 74.4% the first quarter of 2004 to 73.6% in the fourth quarter of 2004. Although the trend may not appear meaningful, consider that the 10-year index has ranged from 70.7% to 74.8% (see http://www.theacsi.org/national_scores.htm); indeed, a near-1% drop in satisfaction is significant.

I have a theory about why this might be happening: organizations are becoming complacent. If you look at the trend, customer satisfaction generally increased from the third quarter of 2001 to the first quarter of 2004 before its recent slide. I submit that this increase was not coincidental with the market cycle: companies were struggling during our recession and therefore were focusing on more of the basics to satisfy customers (I also think that the "weaker" companies may have gone out of business because of the recession, which by default may have increased satisfaction with companies that survived). But times have been good the last couple of years: companies are growing again, corporate profitability is rising, stock prices are up. Quite simply: the need to

systematically deliver against customer requirements isn't as strong as it was a few years ago.

It's sad, really. Because, as we all know, markets are cyclical. And another downturn looms somewhere on the horizon. Companies that become "fat and happy" will again find themselves scrambling to cut inefficient waste, increase productivity, maximize use of resources, and satisfy customer needs better than their competition. But companies that never stopped doing so will be way ahead.

So how does an organization identify customer (or stakeholder) requirements and expectations (including product and service features) and their relative importance to customers' purchasing decisions? Here are some ideas:

1) Use surveys (judiciously). Used by many (if not most) organizations, customer surveys are a wonderful tool for capturing (or validating) customer needs, identifying product/service features, and/or measuring customer satisfaction. Surveys can be delivered via paper, electronic medium (email or web), or by phone; they can be delivered by an independent third party or directly by the organization. Surveys can be administered to a sample of your customers or to 100% of the population, as the situation dictates. My only word of caution: try not to over-survey your customers! (The Council's method of surveying our own customers is to survey roughly 1/12 of our customer base every month, so that each individual customer only gets asked once a year, but we have more timely data every month.)

2) Use focus groups. Focus groups are relatively informal -- but structured -- discussion sessions with a group of current (and/or former and/or prospective) customers. They are usually moderated by a professional (though can be conducted by employees of the organization itself), and they are very effective at identifying (or validating) emerging needs. Typically, focus groups can be used in the product/service concept stage, when not much is known about customer preferences (and can be followed up with subsequent surveying, pilot testing, and so forth). Focus groups provide for good interaction with a small number of customers; as such, they afford an opportunity to go into depth with a sample of an organization's customer base. Usually, you will need to use tools such as Kano, Conjoint Analysis, and Quality Function Deployment to analyze the results of a focus group (for more information on the first two tools, see last month's Performance Improvement Network slides delivered by Satisfaction Management Systems: http://www.councilforquality.org/performance_archive.cfm).

3) Observe customer buying behavior. You can gain a lot by "watching" how and what your customers buy. In a retail setting, this can be as simple as seeing if the blue hammers sell more or less than the black ones, and then adjusting design and/or inventories appropriately. But regardless of industry, buying behavior can help organizations determine customer preferences, and robust mechanisms for observing changes in customer buying behaviors can inexpensively help organizations proactively adjust to shifting marketplace needs.

4) Use “mystery shoppers.” Mystery shopping has exploded in popularity with organizations -- particularly in the retail and entertainment industries. Mystery shopping is a process by which your organization hires an independent contractor who is paid to evaluate your products/services while pretending to be a regular shopper. Mystery shopping can give an organization insight into current service levels, but it can also test conformance to already-known customer requirements (such as customer wait times, staff competencies, store layout, etc.).

5) Use test markets and/or simulations. Sometimes it makes sense to build a product (or service) prototype to what you believe to be customer requirements, and then test those assumptions on a limited scale. Using test markets and/or simulations (which replicate as close as possible a buying situation) is a particularly helpful method when there is a high investment in a product/service launch.

6) Gather customer feedback on specific transactions. Different than requirements determination methods (which are usually up-front, before a product/service is designed and delivered) or customer satisfaction determination methods (which are usually a snapshot of perceptions well after product/service delivery), organizations should have systematic methods for following up with customers on products, services, and/or transaction quality to receive prompt, actionable feedback. We all have received those 2-minute phone calls from our utility companies asking if the service we received met our expectations...or the 3-question customer comment card that is given to us in a restaurant when the server presents the bill...or the 1-page survey that your car dealer sends about a week or two after you have your car serviced. Rather than waiting a year to gauge customer satisfaction, these processes provide timely information on whether you met customer expectations.

7) Leverage your complaint data. Many organizations have a complaint management process, but few truly leverage the power of aggregated complaint data. Companies should systematically collect, aggregate, and analyze root causes of complaints (using a simple tool like Pareto Analysis will help identify the biggest sources of customer frustrations) -- and then use these insights to improve product/service performance. It is not enough to simply react by solving a specific customer’s problem (though that is important!), but also use aggregate complaint information to solve systemic issues within your organization...after all, customers are giving you a gift by telling you what upsets them!

8) Use the customer data you already have. Most organizations have (or should have) a wealth of information on their customers – buying histories, complaints, customer win/loss analysis, transaction completion rates, customer loyalty and retention data, referral (or intent-to-refer) rates, and so forth. Use this information to identify current or emerging customer needs, buying behaviors, and satisfaction rates.

Customer satisfaction is paramount to any organization’s ultimate success. Satisfied customers will buy more of your products and services, will remain loyal to your organization, and may refer other business to your organization. Organizations that take

the time to systematically understand customer needs will eventually see increases in revenue, market share, and, presumably, profitability. (By the way, the same applies to not-for-profits, which will see increases in funds and their “bottom-line,” as well as departments which need to understand internal customer needs in order to satisfy external customer needs).

If you are with an organization that systematically identifies customer and market needs, good for you. If you are not, now is the time to do so before the next market downturn makes you wish you had.

Yours in Improvement,

Brian S. Lassiter
President, Minnesota Council for Quality
www.councilforquality.org

2. 2004 Minnesota Quality Award Event May 24; Register Today!

The Minnesota Council for Quality will present the 2004 Minnesota Quality Award to eight organizations in a celebration event on Tuesday, May 24. The eight organizations are (actual Award levels will be announced soon):

- * Allina Hospitals & Clinics (Minneapolis)
- * Bethel Lutheran Church Administration Department (Rochester)
- * Dover-Eyota Schools (Eyota)
- * Hayfield Schools (Hayfield)
- * Kingsland Schools (Spring Valley)
- * Mayo Clinic Radiology Department (Rochester)
- * StoraEnso (Duluth)
- * Winona Health (Winona).

The two-hour event (which includes heavy hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar) is intended to recognize these organizations' accomplishments, to thank the Minnesota Quality Award Board of Evaluators and other key Council volunteers, and to promote networking within a growing community of organizations and professionals interested in organizational excellence. The event is open to the public and is made possible by the generous contributions of our sponsors: Xcel Energy, Micro-Tech Hearing Instruments, and Benedictine Health System.

Date: Tuesday, May 24, 2005

Time: 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM

Location: Embassy Suites Minneapolis Airport, 7909 34th Avenue South, Bloomington, 55425 (just south of 494 and airport; just northeast of the Mall of America)

Save the date and spread the word within your organization!

For more information on the event or the Minnesota Quality Award, visit our website at www.councilforquality.org or call the Council at 612-462-3577. To register, please email brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org.

3. Disney's "Keys to Excellence" -- Disney Institute Visits Minnesota 6/16

The Minnesota Council for Quality, in partnership with the Rochester Area Quality Council, is please to host an extraordinary event this June 16: "The Disney Keys to Excellence." This full-day event will focus on best practices and philosophies from the world-renowned Walt Disney World Resorts. The program will showcase four areas:

* Leadership - Disney Style. Discover how effective leadership has been the catalyst at Disney to drive employee and customer satisfaction and bottom-line results, from the company's inception to today. Disney will share best practices in communication, building involvement and ownership, organizing (work structure), and capitalizing on change.

* Management - Disney Style. Understand the importance of integrating your corporate culture into selection, training, and employee care. Disney will share best practices in organizational/employee learning methods, hiring and employee selection processes, employee training and motivation, and creating a supporting environment by rewarding employees.

* Service - Disney Style. Explore world-renowned Disney principles for service excellence. Disney will share best practices in developing a service philosophy, knowing and understanding customer needs, defining service standards, developing a service theme, and delivering on that service theme.

* Loyalty - Disney Style. Learn key practices and principles in building and sustaining loyalty that have made Disney a trusted and revered brand around the world for more than 75 years. Disney will share the business case for loyalty (the link between loyalty and financial results). And Disney will share best practices in strategies for creating loyalty (for identifying your brand promise and your core components) and for creating emotional connections with employees and customers.

The program is ideal for leaders and professions in any sized organization in any sector or industry. So if you are interested in learning about how a role model organization like Disney achieves such world class results from its processes in leadership, management, service, and loyalty, don't miss this one-time event.

"The Disney Keys to Excellence" will be held at the Earle Brown Center in Brooklyn Center. Cost is \$369 for the full day (\$299 for Council or RAQC members, if registered

before May 27), which includes lunch and refreshments. A half-day session is available (either for the morning, which focuses on leadership and management or for the afternoon, which focuses on service and loyalty). Cost for a half day is \$208 (\$199 for Council/RAQC members before May 27), which includes refreshments.

For more information, visit our website at www.councilforquality.org. To register, email kathryn.mackin@councilforquality.org and indicate attendees' contact information (name, affiliation, title, address, phone, and email), full day or half-day session (and which half-day), and preferred payment method (MasterCard, Visa, or invoice).

4. Recognizing First Quarter Council Members

The Council would like to recognize 50 organizations and individuals who joined or renewed their membership in the third quarter. These individuals and organizations became members last quarter (asterisks indicate renewal members):

AgStar Financial Services, Rochester, MN*
Business Architecture, Inc., Stillwater, MN*
Capitol View Consulting, St. Paul, MN*
Capture Marketing Group Inc., Chanhassen, MN
Career Momentum, Inc., Madison, WI
Carryer, Carol, Rochester, MN*
Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS), Monticello, MN*
Competitive Edge, San Clemente, CA
Construction Partnership, Don DeKeyrel, Rochester, MN*
cPMT, Rochester, MN*
Department of Public Safety, St. Paul, MN*
Finn, Michael, Burnsville, MN
Gantz-Wiley Research, Minneapolis, MN*
GrayHall LLP, St. Paul, MN
Hampton Inn Rochester, Rochester, MN*
Hearth and Home Technologies, Inc., Lakeville, MN*
Hennepin County Change Agents, Minneapolis, MN*
Hoisington, Steve, Greenfield, WI
HR Outsourcing Solutions, Minneapolis, MN
Human Strategies LLC, Albuquerque, NM*
Idea Girls, Minneapolis, MN*
Imation, Oakdale, MN
Institute for Clinical Systems Improvement (ICSI), Bloomington, MN
Inver Hills Community College Customized Training, Inver Grove Heights, MN*
Lambert, Cindy - Advancing Visions, Plymouth, MN*
Light, Merilee, Minneapolis, MN
LynTek Engineering, Andover, MN*
Makela Performance Inc., Bloomington, MN
Malt-O-Meal, Northfield, MN*

Mate Precision Tooling, Anoka, MN
McNeilus Steel, Dodge Center, MN*
Medica, Minnetonka, MN
Multek Flexible Circuits (formerly Sheldahl), Managers & Quality Department,
Northfield, MN*
Murphy Warehouse Co., Minneapolis, MN
Olmsted County Medical Center, Rochester, MN*
Peters, Paul, Big Lake, MN*
Poindexter, Katherine, Minneapolis, MN
Remmele Engineering, New Brighton, MN*
Rochester Community and Technical College, Rochester, MN*
Rockwood Capital Management, Minneapolis, MN*
Sathe & Associates Executive Search, St. Louis Park, MN*
Satisfaction Management Systems, Inc., Minnetonka, MN*
Solutia Consulting, Stillwater, MN
Strategy Management, Edina, MN
Stratis Health, Bloomington, MN
Tappe Construction Co., Eagan, MN*
TASC Management Consulting, Fridley, MN
The Dahlen Group, Verona, WI
TKDA, Engineers-Architects-Planners, Minneapolis, MN
University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, WI*

We thank all members for their support. As of March 31, the Council represents a growing community of over 220 members representing over 150,000 employees. A complete list of members is available at <http://www.councilforquality.org/member.cfm>.

Why should you or your organization consider membership? There are many reasons. Your or your organization receives: recognition (in this newsletter, in press releases, on the website, and with a certificate/letter); discounts to Council services (Evaluator training, organization assessments); access to Council services (Clearinghouse, Consultant Referral Network, and free admission to Performance Improvement Network discussions); and discounts to our partners' services (other improvement-related non-profits, universities/colleges, and professional/trade associations).

Individual memberships are \$100 and organization memberships begin at \$250. For more information on the benefits of becoming a member, please visit www.councilforquality.org/member.cfm or email the Council at info@councilforquality.org.

5. Minnesota Council for Quality Launches Consultant Referral Network

The Minnesota Council for Quality -- in cooperation with the Michigan Quality Council, the Ohio Partnership for Excellence, and the Wisconsin Forward Award -- is pleased to announce the launch of the Consultant Referral Network(c).

Located at www.consultantreferralnetwork.org, the Consultant Referral Network is a dynamic, web-enabled search tool that connects organizational improvement experts to client organizations seeking them. This service allows clients to outline their needs in terms of subject matter expertise sought, type of assistance desired (consulting, training, coaching, speaking, or facilitating), sector/industry expertise required, size of consulting firm desired, desired location of consulting firm, and years of experience preferred. The client can also weight the relative importance of each variable. The tool will then identify up to five consultants or firms that best match the client's needs.

"This service is extremely unique," says Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality. "A few consultant directories exist, but this is the only tool to my knowledge that allows a client organization to search for consultants based on their specific needs. In this way, the Consultant Referral Network can much more effectively connect experts with organizations in need of assistance, where the two parties likely would not have otherwise found each other."

Liz Menzer, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Forward Award adds: "It is oftentimes difficult for clients to locate organizational improvement experts. Unless a client already knows of a specific consultant – or they get lucky through word of mouth – it is oftentimes challenging for organizations in our state to find help. Since there is no 'yellow pages' for improvement consultants, this service helps us bring resources to those organizations in a cost-effective, efficient manner."

The benefits to organizations are numerous. First, the tool can accelerate an organization's search for improvement resources because it is quicker and more efficient than "word of mouth" and traditional searches. Second, it is neutral, independent, and unbiased. "Because the tool is managed and maintained by independent third parties, no consultant receives preferential treatment in the search formula," says Lassiter. "This makes the tool credible and more useful for clients."

Third, there is no charge for organizations to use this tool to search for consultants. "We hope to create awareness and encourage organizations to use this tool, because the more clients that find value in the service, the more valuable it becomes for consultants to list in it. And the more consultants who register, the more valuable the tool is for clients, because searches are from a broader base of expertise and capabilities."

Casey Mackert, Executive Director for the Ohio Partnership for Excellence, states: "I frequently get calls from organizations in our state looking for help in a variety of subject matters like Six Sigma, leadership development, balanced scorecard, strategic planning, and other areas. Right now, I sift through my business cards and offer them a couple of names. But this tool will make the search process far more systematic and more useful for clients. I know that organizations in our state will benefit from this service."

"Consultants, too, will benefit from the service," adds Geri Markley, Executive Director for the Michigan Quality Council. "The service offers a potential channel of leads and a

legitimate mechanism to create market awareness for the consultant's services and capabilities. It is independent and unbiased – which makes it credible and fair. And it is reasonably priced for consultants to get listed.”

Consultants pay a small fee for this service, and the pricing is flexible so the consultant can choose what best matches their needs – a higher up-front listing fee with lower subsequent referral fees for projects secured through the service, or a lower up-front listing fee with higher referral fees.

The process itself is simple. Improvement consultants first enter information about their firm/practice. This information includes contact information, information on their expertise and capabilities, and billing information. Consultants are also asked to agree to a Statement of Ethics as a prerequisite for being listed, which attempts to ensure a basic level of integrity with the firms that are listed. Once they complete the form and pay their listing fee, consultants await inquiries from organizational clients.

Organizations access this service throughout the year, seeking various subject matter experts that fit their requirements. Those consulting firms that best match the organization's requirements are reported to the organization for each search. The organization can then interview, research, negotiate, and select the consultant that best meets their specific needs before finalizing the scope, solution(s), and terms of an engagement.

“This service provides a win-win-win,” says Lassiter. “The organizations win because they can more efficiently locate organizational improvement resources to help them advance improvement efforts in their operations. The consultants win because they may now get connected with organizations interested in their services. And the state quality programs win because we are offering a valuable service to stakeholders in our states.”

6. Looking for Experts to Join the 2005 Board of Evaluators

Are you interested in learning more about what makes organizations successful? Are you interested in helping other organizations -- such as schools, hospitals, non-profits, and businesses -- around the state improve their performance? Would you be interested in networking, learning, and sharing with others who feel the same way?

The Minnesota Council for Quality is seeking candidates for the 2005 Minnesota Quality Award Board of Evaluators. There are many benefits to becoming an Evaluator, such as:

- * strengthening your ability to understand what factors drive organizational results,
- * networking with peers across the state,
- * forming deep relationships with professionals and leaders interested in organizational improvement,

* reviewing performance of organizations throughout the state (and possibly identifying best practices for your organization), and

* developing other professional skills such as analysis, consensus- and team-building, interpersonal, written communication, interviewing, and systems thinking.

Many Evaluators consider the experience to be among the most valuable of their careers. Furthermore, Evaluators can now earn post-graduate credit for participating in training. For interested Evaluators, the University of Wisconsin-Stout will offer three (3) hours of credit in partnership with the Minnesota Council for Quality.

If you are interested in joining the 2005 Board of Evaluators, the summer training session will be June 28-30 (in Rochester) and the fall session will be September 20-22 (in the Metro). You may select the session that best meets your needs. In addition to the full three-day training session, new Evaluators are also required to attend a one-day orientation (dates will be set soon).

We hope that you would consider (re)joining the Board of Evaluators and/or encourage others to do so. For more information or for an application, please visit www.councilforquality.org/assess.cfm, email us at kathryn.mackin@councilforquality.org, or call 612-462-3577.

7. Coaching: A Way to Improve as a Manager and Leader -- PIN Discussion 5/5

Are you responsible for attaining results through other people? If so (and more importantly), are you good at it? What sustains excellent performance? Would you like to expand your capacity for learning, innovation, and flexibility with change? If you'd like to learn the difference between managing and leading, then our next PIN discussion is for you.

The Minnesota Council for Quality is pleased to welcome Ms. Sue Lindgren, President of YESS! – Your Extraordinary Success Strategies, to the May 5 Performance Improvement Network (PIN) discussion. Sue will share the distinctions and explain how coaching is integral to excellence at both. Through interactive discussion and exercises, we will explore how coaching is the catalyst for sustainability and excellence.

Anyone who has accomplished anything extraordinary has had a coach. You simply can't see where you're blind. Learn from the coach's coach how to go beyond the trend and sustain excellence for yourself and others. We'll utilize the Worldview model from ideal Coaching's Ontological coaching framework. We'll discover the keys to becoming a world class leader, manager, and coach. We'll touch on learning to learn and the value of being a beginner. And we'll talk about what coaching is and isn't.

The discussion is from 8:00-9:00 a.m. on May 5 (networking and continental breakfast begin at 7:30 a.m.) at the University of St. Thomas in downtown Minneapolis, Opus Hall Room 201. Admission is FREE for Council members; \$10 for partner organizations; \$20 for the public. For more information or to register, visit www.councilforquality.org/perform or email brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org. Space is limited so register today.

In addition, Sue Lindgren is conducting an informational session on coaching Tuesday, April 19 from 7-9pm at the Ideal Coaching Conference Center (1660 South Hwy 100, St. Louis Park). For more information or to register, please call 952-746-3190.

8. Invest in the Best: How to Find Well-Managed Companies -- MSLF 4/26 Discussion

The Minnesota Strategic Leadership Forum (MSLF), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce their April 26 discussion “Invest in the Best: How to Find Well-Managed Companies.” The discussion will be facilitated by Steve George, an independent writer and consultant.

Based on his book, Steve George will discuss the connection between superior management and superior financial and stock performance. Learn about the key qualities of a well-managed company, how to spot them, and how to use what you learn to improve your investment strategy. Building on the innovative Quality Index developed by Robinson Capital Management (the first index to screen companies by the quality of their management), Steve will guide you through an interactive exercise to identify public sources of information about management quality. He will provide an analytical framework you can use to evaluate a potential investment’s managerial competence, which will support more informed investment decisions.

Steve will provide fresh insights into assessing the quality of a company’s management using tools and information available to all, but used by few. You will learn: what a well-managed company looks like, how to locate reliable and timely data that illuminate the quality of a company’s management system, how to understand the Quality Index and what it means to investors, and how to apply your knowledge to improve your investment strategies and decisions.

Steve George is an independent writer and consultant with more than 25 years of experience in helping organizations improve performance. He is a recognized expert on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award and on integrating the Baldrige model into the management system of any organization; he has helped more than 25 organizations perform assessments using the Baldrige criteria – 14 applied for quality awards and received site visits and 8 won awards. Steve has been a Baldrige Examiner, has trained extensively on the Baldrige framework, and has written four management books, including “Invest in the Best: How to Profit from Well-Managed Companies (2000).”

The discussion will be held Tuesday, April 26. Registration, networking, and breakfast is at 7:00 AM; the program is from 7:45-9:00 AM. The meeting will be held at the University of St. Thomas, 1000 LaSalle Ave in Minneapolis, Opus Hall 201. Cost is \$35 to the public or \$25 for members of Council (free for MSLF Premium members). For more information or to register, visit <http://www.slf-minnesota.org/calendar.htm>.

9. The Influential Leader: Unlocking the Power of People -- RAQC Session 4/29

The Rochester Area Quality Council (RAQC), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is hosting a special live global leadership event on April 29: "The Influential Leader: Unlocking the Power of People." The full-day event is a live broadcast from the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

Join over 70,000 business professionals around the country for an unforgettable day of leadership development training. Renowned coaches, authors, and leadership experts such as: John Maxwell, Marcus Buckingham, Patrick Lencioni, Jackie Freiberg, Coach Bobby Bowen and Coach Mike Kryzewski, will motivate you through compelling leadership concepts and personal leadership techniques. Your team will learn how to ignite team synergy, build a positive corporate culture through a shared leadership experience, and improve relationships among peers and customers. You won't want to miss this event!

This event, scheduled from 7:30-4:00, will be at Rochester Community and Technical College, Heintz Center Room HB 117. After April 1, the cost is \$140 for members or \$175 for non-members. Cost includes breakfast, a lunch buffet, and a glossy program workbook.

For more information or to register, contact the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce (RACC) at 507-288-1122 or email chamber@rochestermnchamber.com.

RAQC's regular breakfast is Tuesday, May 3rd. Mr. Bill Harreld from Quality Culture Institute will present "Project Management 101." Come and learn from "an old pro" how to get the project done right and on schedule. To register, visit RAQC's website, www.raqc.com and click on Program.

10. Adaptive Consulting: the Emerging Technologies Model -- MNODN Meeting 5/3

In today's organizations, the diversity of challenges is greater than ever before. Each organization has its own unique landscape, and the similarities among the various landscapes are fewer and fewer. In the past, a consultant's "tool box" could consist of a number of technologies that were applied in the various organizations, sometimes with slight adjustments for particular needs of the individual clients. Today that "tool box" has to be stretched, compressed, and bent out of shape to meet the widely diverse needs in organizations. So how can one consultant keep up with the rate of change?

The Minnesota OD Network (MNODN), an alliance partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce its May meeting, "Adaptive Consulting: the Emerging Technologies Model." In this session, Kim Burnes, Director of Services with the Human Systems Dynamics Institute Twin Cities Federal Coop Credit Union, will introduce the "Emergent Technologies Model." Based on the emerging field of human systems dynamics, this model shows consultants how they can use a sound theoretical base to adapt what they know and meet the clients where they are. Through interaction with a real-life case study, this presentation will use the "Emergent Technologies Model" to describe what emerged to meet one client's needs. During this session, participants will explore this powerful model, participate in a case study in which the model was applied, and apply it to their own challenging questions.

Kim Burnes has 20 years experience in critical management areas such as strategy execution, organization development, change management, and team and individual human system effectiveness. Kim has worked across numerous industries and organizational types including corporate, non-profit, and public sector entities. Kim received a Bachelor of Individualized Studies from the University of Minnesota and her MBA from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. She is a Certified Co-Active Professional Coach (CCPC) through the Coaches Training Institute (CTI). Kim is also certified through the Human Systems Dynamics Institute as a Human Systems Dynamics Professional (HSDP).

The discussion will be held May 3 from 3:30-5:30 (networking at 3:00) at the University of St. Thomas Minneapolis Campus, Murphy Hall Room 242. Cost is \$10 for members of MNODN or the Council and \$20 for non-members. For more information, visit <http://www.mnodn.org> or contact Charlie Bisanz at 612-344-1789 or cfbisanz@visi.com.

11. Century College Announces Spring Courses; Council Members Receive \$50 Discount

Century College, White Bear Lake, is pleased to announce their spring quality curriculum. Council members are entitled to a \$50 discount for the following courses:

* Certified Quality Improvement Associate (CQIA); 5/3 through 5/24; \$525 Council members, \$575 non-members

You can also find more information on the Council's Clearinghouse at http://www.councilforquality.org/improve_events.cfm.

Century College offers a comprehensive program of Quality training, certificate and certification courses to meet the needs of business and industry. Courses may be customized and delivered to your organization's work site. For more information on the above courses or any of Century's offerings, please contact Nancy Hoglund, CQM at 651-747-4048 or n.hoglund@century.edu.

12. South Central Technical College Announces Spring Courses; Council Members Get 10% Discount

South Central Technical College, Faribault and Mankato campuses, is pleased to announce their spring quality and performance improvement curriculum. Council members are entitled to a 10% discount for the following courses at the Faribault campus (prices before member discount):

Introduction to Quality; 4/19-4/20; \$370
Supplier Quality Management & Improvement; 5/5; \$235
Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) Review; 5/5-6/2; \$250

Council members are entitled to a 10% discount for the following courses at the Mankato campus (prices before member discount):

Corrective & Preventive Action Systems; 5/3; \$235
Introduction to Six Sigma; 5/5-5/6; \$390
Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) Review; 5/5-6/2; \$250

For more information, please contact Laura Hardy at 507-332-5802 or at laura.hardy@southcentral.edu. You can also find more information on the Council's Clearinghouse at www.councilforquality.org/improve_events.cfm.

13. Feedback on This Newsletter

We have been told that -- while the content of this newsletter is good -- the format and functionality could use a little work. And we listened. So we will be making big changes to this newsletter in the next 60 days. With the support of Cargill, we are designing an HTML-formatted email that will improve the look, feel, and usability of this publication. If you have thoughts as to how we might improve this newsletter -- content, format, or functionality -- please send them to info@councilforquality.org. We appreciate any ideas you share.

This newsletter is provided as a benefit to Council members, friends, and stakeholders. Feel free to forward it to your colleagues. If you wish to be removed from the distribution, please email us at info@councilforquality.org.