
Minnesota Council for Quality Stakeholder Update
August 2006

In This Issue:

=====

1. A Message from the President: Identifying What Is Important: Making Strategic Plans Strategic

Council News & Events

2. Join the 2006 Board of Evaluators; Fall Training Dates Set
3. Seven Tips for Shaping a Great Career -- PIN Discussion 9/7
4. Improving Business & Healthcare Using Six Sigma, Lean, Baldrige, and Balanced Scorecard -- 11/2 Save the Date!

Partner News & Events

5. Baldrige Recipient Jenks Public Schools Visits Minnesota -- RAQC 8/25
6. Aligning Human Resources with Strategy -- Winona SHRM 9/12
7. Trend Countertrend -- MNODN 9/5
8. Annual Minnesota Section ASQ Conference -- Save the Date 10/9-10/10
9. University of Minnesota College of Continuing Education Summer Courses Announced
10. Getting Management Support for Improvements -- Manufacturers' Alliance 9/14
11. A Struggling Professional Association -- MN Facilitators Network 8/17
12. ASTD Regional Conference -- Save the Date 11/16
13. University of St. Thomas Announces Fall Courses
14. South Central College Announces Fall Courses; Council Members Get 10% Discount
15. Credits and Funding for Your Performance Improvement Initiatives -- MNISPI 9/19

-
1. A Message from the President: Identifying What Is Important: Making Strategic Plans Strategic

It must be that time of year again. The summer's heat is (finally) subsiding, kids are beginning to head to college, football camps at all levels are kicking off, people are scrambling to get their last summer vacation in before the leaves change, and many organizations (at least the proactive ones) begin to crank up their annual planning process.

It amazes me how many organizations do NOT have a systematic strategic planning process. In fact, I recently heard that only 20-25% of organizations have a planning process that focuses on strategic issues (and not just budget). But planning is tremendously important: it helps leaders focus on strategic issues; it aligns resources,

activities, and staff on key priorities; it forces a dialogue about what's important to the organization's sustainable success; and it provides a roadmap for navigating the future.

A couple of years ago in this column (see June 2004 in http://www.councilforquality.org/about_newsletter.cfm), I outlined a simple seven-step planning process that could be customized and used by any type of organization, regardless of size, sector, and purpose. After all, planning processes usually have a set of universal steps -- only the mechanisms, tools, and approaches under each step will (appropriately) vary by organization (some organizations use scenario planning, some use Appreciate Inquiry, some use SWOT, some use Large Scale Change, and so forth). So I thought, given the time of year, I'd focus again on the topic -- this time focusing only on the front half of the process...on the steps that help organization's identify what's important for success.

In most planning processes, the first step is to understand your organization's environment, both internal and external. The external factors facing your organization include customer (and/or stakeholder) and market needs, your competitive environment, and external risks (regulatory, societal, and economic) facing your business. Internal factors to consider include organizational strengths and weakness (in terms of staff, operations, technology, equipment, and facilities); internal risks (such as budgetary and ethical); and factors unique to your organization (such as supply chain issues or research and development).

Organizations should build mechanisms to gather data on the environmental factors facing them, and then sort through that data to identify the key challenges facing their business. Here are some ideas on mechanisms to do so:

- To collect customer and market data, use: customer satisfaction/loyalty surveys, focus groups, market research (on things such as market needs, customer requirements, competitor offerings, and so forth), win/loss analysis, complaints, information from your suppliers, and information from your sales force.
- To collect data on your internal strengths and weaknesses, use: employee satisfaction/engagement surveys, employee suggestion systems, measures on past performance (perhaps a balanced scorecard), a third-party assessment of strengths/improvement opportunities (such as a Baldrige assessment against a set of best practices), customer data (see above), and competitive or benchmark data to identify gaps in your performance versus external reference points.
- To collect data on your external risks, use: regulatory research (to identify emerging legislation, changes in taxes, and so forth), analysts' reports (on competitors and the industry), mystery shoppers, benchmarking databases and consortia (to learn more about competition and industry leaders), and business library research.

Environmental scans should produce a tremendous amount of data, so be prepared to have an approach for analyzing and synthesizing it into meaningful information. There are sophisticated tools for doing so (regression and correlation analysis) or fairly simple

techniques (like sorting issues into common themes using an “affinity diagram” approach or using any number of common SWOT analysis techniques).

Once the environmental scan is complete, organizations typically then determine their strategic challenges -- those three to five pressures that exert a decisive influence on an organization’s likelihood of future success. They are usually externally-driven, but sometimes can be internal (such as an aging workforce or specific skill gaps). This is where the distillation of your environmental scan becomes critical: the goal here is to identify the absolute key issues facing your organization.

Think about some of the well-known issues today that may represent strategic challenges for certain organizations:

- Increasing gas prices certainly impact transportation companies such as airlines, trucking, and cab companies. But they also are impacting delivery companies (couriers, pizza delivery, postal service); construction companies (the cost of petroleum-based products, such as stucco, roofing, etc. are rising); resort owners and travel companies (people are vacationing less or at least closer to home); boat manufacturers and all their suppliers (the cost of actual boating has increased, as well transporting the boats); and many, many other industries.
- The aging population of America is beginning to greatly impact the availability of skilled staff for many types of organizations. Particularly hit hard are manufacturers, health care, utilities, and public sector. Not only does this challenge require organizations to figure out how to replace these retiring workers (or redesign processes that leverage automation to increase productivity and reduce the need for certain types of workers), but perhaps the more challenging issue is in transferring the wealth of knowledge from the most seasoned, experienced part of an organization’s workforce to the newer/younger staff. Without addressing this challenge, organizations will find themselves brain-drained and understaffed.
- I recently contracted my third (yes, third) bout of Strep Throat, thanks to two day care-aged kids. This last time was while I was out of town, so I visited the new clinic in Walgreen’s called Take Care. I was diagnosed and treated in 25 minutes, grabbed my medication, and paid my \$59 (which is less than half of a typical clinic cost for this ailment). The company Minute Clinic, founded a few years ago in Minneapolis (and recently acquired by CVS), has revolutionized how less-complex health care is delivered to patients. The unique delivery channel makes tremendous sense because it crisply identifies a particular market segment (patients with relatively simple ailments like sore throats, bladder infections, and sprained fingers), efficiently and inexpensively delivers care (using RNs rather than MDs), and physically compresses the delivery channel (putting the clinic within feet of the pharmacy in a retail setting). The patients love it for the convenience and speed; the third party insurers must love it, as the cost is roughly half of traditional providers. But did traditional providers see this market threat emerging a few years ago? I’m not sure they did or this business model probably would not have emerged to address this real market need.

- Interest rates have slowly, but steadily, increased the last 18-24 months. Certainly the increase in rates has impacted obvious industries like banking, credit card, and mortgage lending (have you noticed that you receive mail from mortgage companies nearly daily now, as they are forced to compete for a shrinking market for refinancing and home equity lines?). But interest rates are impacting most other industries in more subtle ways: construction companies will experience a decrease in demand for new housing starts and renovations, companies that manufacturer large equipment will feel pressures as other companies begin to reduce or delay their capital investments (as the cost of money is more expensive), and retail companies may feel pressure as consumers begin to reduce spending due to higher credit card and mortgage payments.

As you can see from the simple examples above, there usually is a “trickle down” effect from environmental factors. So the advice here (and I hate the phrase): think out of the box. From all the data in your environmental scan, try to identify the issues, opportunities, and threats facing your organization. How will increasing gas prices, a looming tax change, an aging workforce, the prospect of bird flu (or another disaster like 9/11 or Hurricane Katrina), or a new competitor or business model in your industry (like Minute Clinic) impact your ability to succeed? And what action should you take today to proactively address these environmental factors?

Finally, once an organization identifies its key challenges, leadership should then identify strategic objectives -- those three to eight (or so) articulated goals that are intended to address a major change, improvement, competitive issue, and/or business advantage. Typically, strategic objectives respond to your key strategic challenges; they are usually externally focused (but could address internal issues); and they set an organization’s longer-term direction and guide resource allocations and distributions.

Strategic objectives should be consistent with your purpose, mission, and vision. They should reflect issues/opportunities facing your organization, and they should absolutely crystallize your future direction. As such, they not only will help leaders focus energy and resources in the short- and longer-term, but -- if well-communicated and linked to your performance management (reward/recognition/compensation) system -- they will also help guide employees on what to focus.

Strategic planning is not (or should not be) about a two-day retreat at the lake. And strategic planning should not be synonymous with budgeting (though budgeting is a step in planning after challenges are identified and objectives are set). Rather, strategic planning is about systematically understanding your organization’s environment and translating strategic challenges and issues into strategic objectives (and eventually action plans and budgets) that will move your organization toward its vision and goals.

Yours in Improvement,

Brian S. Lassiter
President, Minnesota Council for Quality

www.councilforquality.org

2. Join the 2006 Board of Evaluators; Fall Training Dates Set

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 2006 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 earn post-graduate credit for participating in training. For interested Evaluators, the University of Wisconsin-Stout will offer three (3) hours of (post-grad and undergrad) credit in partnership with the Minnesota Council for Quality.

If you are interested in joining the 2006 Board of Evaluators, the fall training session will be October 3-5 (in Roseville). In addition to the full three-day training session, new Evaluators are also required to attend a one-day orientation (either September 7, 12, or 13).

Applications for new Evaluators are due 9/1. Applications for returning Evaluators (which only require updates from your most recent application) are due 9/22.

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.

3. Seven Tips for Shaping a Great Career -- PIN Discussion 9/7

The Performance Improvement Network usually focuses on techniques for improving organizational performance. But on occasion, we will feature a topic and speaker that focuses on individual improvement; September's meeting does just that.

Many of us focus our workday around managing our workload and employees for optimum performance. But we seldom devote time or thought to planning and managing our careers. As a result, we often let our careers happen to us and become frustrated and angry when things don't go as we had hoped.

The Minnesota Council for Quality is pleased to welcome Ms. Linda Hoeschler, a veteran executive, to our September 7 PIN meeting. Linda will offer some tips on career management, based on her years of experience as VP of Dayton Hudson (now Target) Corporation, Group VP of National Computer Systems, and Executive Director of the American Composers Forum. In her motivational talk she shares some points critical to career optimization that she learned during her impressive and fulfilling years in the work force...points, she says, she wished she had known starting out.

The discussion is from 8:00-9:00 a.m. on September 7 (networking and continental breakfast begin at 7:30 a.m.) at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC), 1501 Hennepin (15th and Hennepin), downtown Minneapolis, Room L3000 (Wheelock-Whitney Library). Parking is available at their ramp across Hennepin (for \$5). Admission to PIN is FREE for Council members; \$10 for partner organizations; \$20 for the public.

Space is limited so register today by emailing brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org.

4. Improving Business & Healthcare Using Six Sigma, Lean, Baldrige, and Balanced Scorecard -- 11/2 Save the Date!

The Minnesota Council for Quality, in cooperation with the Minnesota Healthcare Quality Professionals (MHQP), is planning a full-day educational workshop this fall. Scheduled for Thursday, November 2 at the Holiday Inn Bloomington, the workshop is titled "Improving Business & Healthcare: How Six Sigma, Lean, Baldrige, and Balanced Scorecard Can Advance Excellence in Your Organization." Save the date!

As a result of the workshop, participants will be able to:

- Compare and contrast the strengths and limitations of Six Sigma, Lean, Baldrige, and Balanced Scorecard
- Describe the challenges and success factors organizations have encountered implementing the various improvement frameworks
- Learn how multiple improvement frameworks can be successfully integrated
- Identify tips, tricks, and techniques for implementing quality in your organization
- Describe the impact validated/reliable measurement has on process improvement

- Identify contacts and network with other business and health care leaders interested in organizational improvement

We expect professionals from both business and health care to attend; attendees will represent all organizational levels (senior leaders/administrators, mid-level managers, quality professionals, practitioners). Some will have experience with contemporary improvement frameworks, but many will not.

The workshop will feature a morning keynote address, which will outline the four improvement frameworks (Six Sigma, Lean, Baldrige, and Balanced Scorecard); this talk will set the context for the day. We will then hear six organizational case studies -- three health care and three businesses -- that have implemented one, two, three, or all four frameworks. The organizations will highlight what worked for them, what challenges they endured, and what results they have seen thus far. We will also showcase a plenary speaker who will focus on the human side of measurement/data -- a factor important to all four frameworks.

Save the date!

5. Baldrige Recipient Jenks Public Schools Visits Minnesota -- RAQC 8/25

The Rochester Area Quality Council (RAQC), in cooperation with the Rochester Area Math and Science Partnership (RAMSP) and the MN Council for Quality, are pleased to host Jenks Public School (JPS) District, a 2005 Baldrige National Quality Award recipient in education, on Friday, August 25 from 7:15 AM to 11:00AM. The session will be at the Rochester Public Schools' Education Service Center (ESC), 334 16th Street SE, Rochester.

In an interactive session, Diane Bosworth, Ed. D. Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and School Improvement, and Shan Glandon, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, will share some of their best practices for achieving extraordinary levels of student achievement, as well as some of their strategies for improving financial/budgetary performance, operational performance, and faculty/staff-related performance. More information on Jenks can be found at http://www.nist.gov/public_affairs/baldrige_2005/jenks.htm.

This session will have a focus on achieving excellence in K-12 education, but the best practices translate to other sectors and industries.

Cost is \$10 for the first hour overview or \$49 for the entire morning; breakfast is included. For more information, visit www.raqc.com. To register, contact Kay Wiegert at kay.wiegert@roch.edu or 507.285.7560 (include name, organization, email, billing address, whether you are attending the first hour only or the entire morning).

6. Aligning Human Resources with Strategy -- Winona SHRM 9/12

The Minnesota Council for Quality is pleased to announce an alliance with the Winona Chapter of the Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM). The agreement brings programs and services to each others' members at a discounted rate.

“This alliance is consistent with the Council’s mission of building networks that bring organizational improvement resources to our members,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Council. “The Winona Chapter of SHRM provides excellent programming for human resource and other professionals, and the Council has a growing membership base in Winona and Southeast Minnesota. We are excited to offer their programs to our members, and we hope that our services can be of value to their members.”

The Winona SHRM is also pleased to announce its September 12 meeting: “Aligning Human Resources with Strategy,” presented by Brian Lassiter, president of the Council. The meeting is scheduled for 12:00-1:00 PM at a location to be determined in Winona.

In today’s business world, there are many HR challenges facing organizations such as: finding and recruiting capable and competent staff; organizing staff into logical and effective structures; developing staff to reach their potential; managing key staff’s career paths; managing the organization’s succession plans; communicating key messages to staff; rewarding and recognizing staff accomplishments; creating a work environment that is safe, healthy, and ergonomically sound; providing services and benefits to staff that satisfy their needs and motivate them on and off the job; and measuring staff satisfaction and well-being.

But how does an HR professional (or business leader) reconcile oftentimes competing HR priorities? And how do business leaders align its human resources with its organizational goals?

In the September 12 discussion, Mr. Lassiter will outline how leading organizations are aligning their employee processes to strategic objectives using frameworks such as the Balanced Scorecard, the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, and other methods. This interactive dialogue will provide HR professionals and managers with ideas and tools that can be brought back to your organization and immediately used to optimize resources and better align priorities.

For more information on the discussion, visit <http://winona.shrm.org/>.

7. Trend Countertrend -- MNODN 9/5

The Minnesota OD Network (MNODN), an alliance partner of the Council, is pleased to kick off its 2006-07 program year with a great speaker, a later start time to better accommodate members’ work schedules, and appetizers to better accommodate members’ stomachs at this later hour!

Robyn Waters will kick off MNODN's 2006-2007 program year on September 5. Robyn will provide a look at the opposites inherent in trends and how to make sense of them as OD professionals. Trend used to be so simple. Once upon a time a trend was a trend specifically BECAUSE everyone wanted the same thing. Today, the 'next big thing' is in reality many different things...and it's not unusual for complete opposites to be deemed trendy at the same time. "Trend Countertrend" explores the polarity of macro trends influencing the marketplace today, such as:

- Can you do good AND make money in today's business environment?
- How do you customize your product for the masses?
- Is there such a thing as 'healthy indulgence?' How can you make something old 'brand' new?
- Can a commodity be a luxury?
- And what is extreme relaxation all about anyway?

F. Scott Fitzgerald once said that the test of a first-class mind was the ability to hold two opposing ideas in the head at the same time and still be able to function. This presentation will help you embrace that concept in a practical manner that makes sense for business today. The following World Café discussion will help you tease out its implications for the work we do every day.

The discussion will be held September 5 from 4:30-6:30 (networking at 4:00) at the University of St. Thomas Minneapolis Campus, Opus Hall Room 201. Cost is \$20 for members of MNODN or the Council and \$25 for non-members. For more information, visit <http://www.mnodn.org> or contact Anne Sturdivant at annesturdivant@aol.com.

8. Annual Minnesota Section ASQ Conference -- Save the Date 10/9-10/10

The Minnesota Section of the American Society for Quality (ASQ), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce their 53rd annual Minnesota Quality Conference on October 9-10 at the Minneapolis Airport Marriott.

The keynote presentation, "The Top 10 Quality Mistakes," will be led by Craig Cochran, author of "The Continual Improvement Process: From Strategy to the Bottom Line." The easiest way to improve is to learn from the mistakes of other people. Craig Cochran has spent the last 20 years analyzing, investigating, and helping to fix quality mistakes in a wide range of organizations. Please join us for an entertaining and engaging discussion of the most common quality mistakes and what can be done about them.

In addition to Craig, Monday highlights include concurrent sessions and an exposition. Topics are Six Sigma, quality tools, supplier quality, Voice of the Customer, and leadership. Tuesday's highlights include full-day workshops for more advanced and hands-on learning.

Cost for one day (ASQ or MCQ member) is \$300 or for non-members is \$350. Cost for both days is \$500 (member) or \$600 (non-member).

For more information or to register, visit
<http://www.mnasq.org/MNQualityConference.htm>.

9. University of Minnesota College of Continuing Education Announces Summer Courses

The College of Continuing Education (CCE) at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, is pleased to announce their summer improvement and business courses. Council members receive a 10% discount on all CCE courses.

8/16 Succession Planning; \$395
8/17 Principles of Employee Compensation; \$395
8/22 Recruiting Strategies; \$395

For more information on any of these courses or to register, visit the University of Minnesota's College of Continuing Education's website at
<http://www.cce.umn.edu/professionaleducation/> or call 612-624-4000.

10. Getting Management Support for Improvements -- Manufacturers' Alliance 9/14

Any successful improvement effort requires management support. But how do you get them involved in setting the strategy and planning; committing the financial support; and aligning the organization structure? Ultimately, will they model the expected behavior and/or get directly involved?

The Manufacturers' Alliance, an alliance partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce their Monthly Educational Program on September 14, from 7:30 - 9:30 AM at Normandale College in Bloomington. Presenters are Beckman Coulter Inc., Lexington Manufacturing, UMC Inc. The discussion is moderated by Patrick Hager, director of Manufacturing Engineering and Lean Enterprise at Tennant.

Cost is \$30 for non-members of Manufacturers Alliance. Council members (from manufacturing companies) are entitled to one free pass per monthly educational program; visit www.mfrall.com/free_pass.htm to print a free pass. For more information or to register, visit www.mfrall.com.

11. A Struggling Professional Association -- MN Facilitators Network 8/17

The Minnesota Facilitators Network (MFN), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce their August 17 session. This month's meeting will

feature a case study of a struggling professional association. How can facilitation be used to address this case? They will use MFN as the basis for the case.

Join others at MFN on August 17 as Sue Laxdal will facilitate the process of identifying the key shifts and strategies that will grow MFN and attract a larger and broader membership. Together we will discover what it takes to get people to show up, be involved and stay involved. We will identify 6 or 7 key strategies that MFN can implement -- strategies that range from advertising and communications to ideas for programming topics. Here's your chance to contribute.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

- You will be able to experience first hand how you could facilitate a group through a process that concludes with specific and meaningful decisions and action items.
- You will see how facilitation can turn diverse opinion and competing ideas toward positive and lasting results.
- You will help strengthen MFN to attract a larger and broader membership so that it can better serve as the preferred resource for facilitators in the Twin Cities.
- You will have the opportunity to learn something about facilitation you can apply.

Sue Laxdal has been a professional facilitator for 35 years and is the owner of Laxdal Consulting, her facilitation business. She has a Master of Science degree in Organization Development from Pepperdine University in California. Her master's thesis topic was on strategic planning and government. She is also a fellow of the Bush Foundation Leadership Development Program.

The session will be August 17 from 5:30-8:30 PM (program from 6-8PM). A light dinner will be served. The location is Salem Lutheran Church: 610 W 28th Street (corner of 28th and Lyndale Ave S. in Minneapolis). Cost is \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members.

For more information or to register, visit <http://www.mnfacilitators.org/> or contact kimgregleigh@earthlink.net.

12. ASTD Regional Conference -- Save the Date 11/16

ASTD-Twin Cities Chapter, a partner of the Council, is proud to announce its Regional Conference: "Designing the Future: Business Savvy, Influence and Skills for the Learning & Performance Professional." The conference will be held Thursday, November 16, 2006 (pre-conference November 15), at the RiverCentre in St. Paul, Minnesota. The conference and expo will be marketed to over 700 ASTD-TCC members, as well as more than 1500 members of other ASTD chapters in the region and local professional organizations for the learning and performance industry.

ASTD-TCC is pleased to announce Kevin Oakes, Board Chair of ASTD's National Chapter, as the opening keynote speaker for the conference. Oakes is President of

SumTotal Systems, the largest provider of learning and business performance technologies and services. Kevin has served as chief executive officer, President and a Board member of technology-based training companies since 1997. Kevin's keynote presentation, "*What will the future look like for learning and performance professionals?*", will examine traditional trainers to strategic partners in developing, designing and accomplishing strategic business goals. To learn more, go to www.sumtotalsystems.com.

John G. Miller, author of "*QBQ! Question Behind the Question* and *Flipping the Switch*," will be the closing speaker for the conference. He is the founder of QBQ, Inc., an organizational development firm based in Denver, Colorado, dedicated to helping organizations make personal accountability a core value. He has been actively involved in the organizational development industry since 1986. John's concluding remarks will challenge us to take the next steps to design the future and use QBQ to apply our newfound skills and knowledge for professional and personal growth. To learn more, go to www.qbq.com.

In addition to the keynotes, the conference will feature 15 breakout sessions and a wine and cheese expo for networking.

The American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) represents approximately 70,000 training and development professionals in more than 100 countries. Of ASTD's more than 150 local chapters worldwide, ASTD-Twin Cities Chapter (ASTD-TCC) is one of the top ten with more than 700 members. Members specialize in areas including instructional design, group facilitation, training delivery, organizational development, performance improvement, career development, sales and marketing, computer-based training and total quality management.

Cost is \$145 (ASTD member) or \$195 (non-member) for the 11/16 conference only. Cost for the 11/15 pre-conference only is \$85 (member) or \$125 (non-member). For both days, the cost is \$195 (member) or \$255 (non-member).

To learn more about the ASTD-TCC Regional Conference, please visit www.astd-tcc.org.

13. University of St. Thomas Announces Fall Courses

The Center for Business Excellence at the University of St. Thomas Minneapolis Campus, an alliance partner of the Council, is pleased to announce their fall improvement curriculum. Council members are entitled to a 15% discount for the following courses:

- 9/6 Human Resource Functions; \$345
- 9/6 Mini MBA Program; \$1895
- 9/7 Human Resources Management in Projects; \$395
- 9/7 Interpersonal Communication; \$695

9/7 Mini Master of Information Technology; \$1395
9/7 Mini Master of Human Capital Management; \$1695
9/11 Mini Master of Marketing Management; \$1795
9/11 Mini Master of the Lean Enterprise; \$1695
9/11 Six Sigma Black Belt Certificate; \$10,495
9/12 Financial Management for Nonprofit Organizations; \$350
9/12 Mini MBA for Nonprofit Organizations; \$600
9/13 Project Initiation; \$395
9/13 Supply Chain Quality Management Certificate Series; \$1595
9/13 Life Leadership Circles for Women Managers; \$1195
9/18 Mini Master of Project Management; \$1795
9/20 Mini Master of Financial Management; \$1795
9/21 Mini Master of Business Communication; \$1795
9/21 Team Dynamics; \$695
9/26 Project Negotiation Management; \$395
9/27 Human Resource Basics of Compensation; \$345
9/27 Board Development Recruitment and Orientation; \$25
9/28 Design, Development, and Evaluation of Training; \$995
10/4 Handling Difficult People; \$395
10/4 Managing Diversity and Global Human Resources; \$395
10/4 Nonprofit Board Chair Overview; \$90
10/5 Project Planning; \$725
10/5 Critical Reasoning and Systems Thinking; \$695
10/6 Becoming an Influential Leader; \$2995

For more information on any of these courses or to register, visit the Center for Business Excellence's website at www.stthomas.edu/cbe or call 651-962-4600.

14. South Central College Announces Fall Courses; Council Members Get 10% Discount

South Central College, Faribault and Mankato campuses, in cooperation with Ridgewater College-Hutchinson, is pleased to announce their fall quality and performance improvement curriculum. Council members are entitled to a 10% discount.

The following courses will be held at the Faribault campus (prices before member discount):

9/11-10/16 Certified Quality Technician (CQT) Review; \$300
9/11-10/9 Certified Mechanical Inspector (CMI) Review; \$250
9/19-10/17 Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence Review; \$450
9/25 Applying SPC & Statistical Tools; \$235
9/26 Technical Writing for the Quality Professional; \$125
10/11 Project Management; \$235
10/12 Microsoft Project 2003; \$235
10/16 Electrostatic Discharge Basics; \$235

10/24 Supplier Quality Management & Improvement; \$235
10/30-11/27 Certified Quality Improvement Associate (CQIA) Review; \$250
11/1-11/29 Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) Review; \$250
11/8 Understanding & Implementing ISO 9001:2000; \$235
11/9 Internal Auditor Skills; \$235
11/14 Food Safety Management Systems ISO22000; \$235
11/15 Planning & Conducting Food Safety Audits; \$235
11/30 Problem Solving Tools & Methods; \$235
12/12 AIAG FMEA & Control Plans; \$235

The following courses will be held at the Mankato campus (prices before member discount):

10/10 Problem Solving Tools & Methods; \$235
10/17 AIAG FMEA & Control Plans; \$235
12/5 Project Management; \$235
12/6 Microsoft Project 2003; \$235
12/19 Supplier Quality Management & Improvement; \$235

The following courses will be held at the Hutchinson campus of Ridgewater College (prices before member discount):

9/27 Understanding & Implementing ISO 9001:2000; \$235
9/28 Internal Auditor Skills; \$235
10/17 Calibration Processes; \$125
10/17 Calibration of Dimensional Gages; \$125
10/18 Gage Repair; \$235
11/13 Electrostatic Discharge Basics \$235

For more information, please contact Laura Hardy at 507-332-5802 or at laura.hardy@southcentral.edu or contact Brian Knutson at 507-332-5874 (brian.knutson@southcentral.edu). You can also find more information on the Council's Clearinghouse at www.councilforquality.org/improve_events.cfm.

15. Credits and Funding for Your Performance Improvement Initiatives -- MNISPI 9/19

The Minnesota Chapter of the International Society of Performance Improvement (MNISPI), an alliance partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce its next meeting on Tuesday, September 19. The topic, Credits and Funding for Your Performance Improvement Initiatives, is really two topics. First, Nick Maras, Vice-President Century College Foundation, talks about how to add college credit and CEUs to your training programs. Second, Joe Mulford, Dean of Customized Training, Hennepin Technical College, talks about how to fund development initiatives through Minnesota Job Skill grants. These are two value-added strategies.

The session is September 19 from 6-8PM at TIES, 1667 Snelling Avenue North, St. Paul. Council members are entitled to half-price admission.

For more information, visit <http://www.mnispi.org/> or email contact@mnispi.org.

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.