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BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF TOTAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IN LEBANESE SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation is crippled by various barriers. Studies have shown that poor knowledge, lack of relevant tools, funding and feasible leadership commitment to poor data plus deployment plans to inflexible piecemeal implementation to unrealistic expectations, and insufficient managerial skills contribute to unsuccessful TQM implementation.

Managers face different TQM implementation obstacles and barriers which include insufficient human resources development as well as management; lack of quality planning; lack of leadership that promote quality; inadequate resources for TQM implementation; and absence of customer focus,

There is also lack of awareness about culture change and the best approach to cultural transformation, it being the most essential ingredient for successful TQM implementation. Other commonly cited barriers are lack of involvement by all members, lack of goals and insufficient knowledge to poor planning, absence of management commitment, inappropriate training, use of wrong framework, absence of resources and effective management, and incompatibility of attitudes between top management and the subordinate. Some companies implement TQM when already incapacitated.

Another factor that been suggested to contribute towards many TQM programs failure is lack of commitment by the chief executive to actively support, participate and provide leadership to the continuous improvement process and the culture change associated with it to achieve successful implementation. Notably, staff attitude may be a significant barrier to implementation process given that they are central to improvement process. Apart from cooperation and teamwork, there is need for high-level trust and confidence between superiors and subordinates at all levels. Trust in the management as a result of past behavior is an important factor for persuading employees to adopt the new. Effective strategy implementation is more than likely to be achieved with commitment to organizational vision by the staff. Apparently, employee development is a major need to a quality-focused organization since the staff requires appropriate training and positive attitudes about their work in order to deliver quality services. In general, all employees need relevant knowledge and skills to facilitate them to make their contribution towards quality implementation policy.