

A WORD FROM THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Prof. Eng. Constantin OPREAN, SC.D

The Europe 2020 Strategy has set the goal of developing three main areas:

- Smart growth in view of promoting knowledge, innovation, as well as developing education and digital society
- Sustainable growth in view of attaining an effective production correlated with the available resources and increased competitiveness
- Inclusive growth in view of creating more job opening and increasing employability, training new aptitudes, abilities and competences, as well as fighting poverty

In this respect, the aforementioned Strategy is focused on eco-industries with related technologies for manufacturing environmental-protection products and increasing performance without additional resource consumption. This objective requires the collective effort of all decision factors in the eco-system – producers, partners and clients – with the beneficial result and gain – regarding wellness and health - for all actors involved, in view of assuring sustainability. Considering this context, organizations should be able to produce in order to ensure and support economic growth, whereas sustainability should be integrated in business management in view of enabling the sustainable development of the entire society. Economic research and practice have shown that sustainability and total quality management rely on preventive and proactive approaches with the aim of long-term accomplishment of set objectives and maintaining high performance. At an operational level, both philosophies have developed organizational and technical instruments - to endorse process management – such as: continuous improvement; ‘zero defect’ concept; life-cycle assessment; loss reduction and employee commitment.

Based on the above considerations, organizational and society sustainability rely, to a great extent, on how critical success factors of total quality management will be taken into account and supported. The critical success factors are:

- The commitment of top management and leadership in the identification of objectives and strategies regarding the assignment of necessary resources for quality improvement
- Management of processes aimed at a process-based approach instead of a results-based focus
- Focusing on meeting customer requirements
- Win-win partnership with suppliers
- Human resource management in view of increasing performance and employability
- Information, analyses and data necessary for the quality assessment of the product by means of measurement means and methods, before and after improvement
- Culture and communication involving all partners
- Planning quality strategy in such a way that quality should be integrated in the organizational strategy in view of disseminating the philosophy of quality throughout the organization
- ‘Just-in-time’ to alleviate all sources of loss in the manufacturing process in view of manufacturing the right product, at the right place and time
- The role of quality department regarding quality assurance and continuous improvement of quality and quality system
- Benchmarking for leadership in the field
- Continuous improvement regarding the level of quality and cost reduction
- Complex concepts and meeting by customer expectations
- Social and environmental responsibility
- QFD (Quality Function Deployment) – quality instrument changing customer needs into technical characteristics
- Education, training and Learning

It is only such a systemic approach that integrated management systems enable us to achieve what we all aim at – sustainability in all fields of activity as well as micro- and macro-economic structures.