

THE LONG TERM BENEFITS OF THE INNER QUALITY MANAGEMENT[®] PROGRAMME

Thank You

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Oil Company Logistics Division — Case Study 12 by Alan Watkins, M.D. and Chris Sawicki of Hunter Kane Resource Management

Managing Transformation

Most world-class companies are in the grip of continuous change and transformation, and it seems that the pace of change is increasing. Some divisions are in a perpetual re-organisation cycle, some are facing problems of globalisation, while others are constantly trying to “catch-up” with a rapidly changing marketplace as well as keeping pace with the competition. This Oil Company’s Logistics Division has been a prime example of this rapid change undergoing a very significant transformation over the last twelve months.

A decision was made by the management team to take a positive, proactive approach to the transformation process and run the Inner Quality Management[®] (IQM) programme to help deal with the turmoil, stress and conflict that inevitably arises at a time of significant change. The view was taken that a failure to deal with the turbulence would significantly reduce the chances of coming out the other side in any sort of healthy state.

The view that unless the division was equipped for change, their ability to provide high-quality service and be the dynamic, flexible, innovative group that would flourish in difficult economic circumstances would be lost. In short, the division would become a poor performer.

Scientific Background

There has been a substantial amount of scientific and organisational research demonstrating that the turbulence of change and transformation, the feelings of being overburdened, under-resourced, time-pressured or “stressed” prevent individuals and teams from performing well and prevents them from making a success of the transformation process.

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Scientific Background (continued)

Thus if the goal is to achieve peak performance, then it is vital to create the right amount of pressure in the system. A lack of pressure in the system would fail to generate a challenging and stimulating environment, but too much pressure in the system would simply inhibit performance (Figure 1).

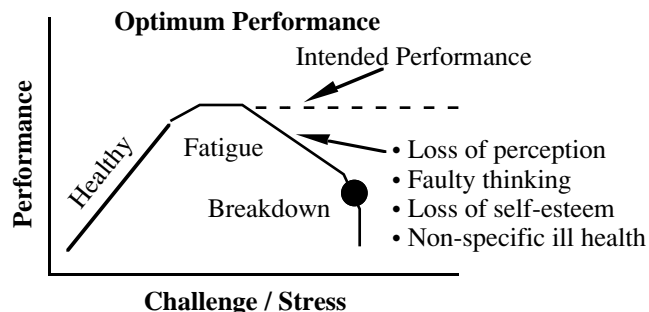


Figure 1. The Relationship Between Stress and Performance

The danger of transformation is that too much pressure is created and this often goes unnoticed by management and workers alike until performance levels have dropped substantially. It is very easy to misjudge the amount of pressure in a system because the very process of change puts individuals under pressure. And this pressure causes very real physiological changes that inhibit performance, reduce mental clarity, impair creativity and productivity and have a detrimental effect on health

If such changes go unchecked, individuals may move inexorably further down the “downslope.” Ultimately excessive pressure, work or self-inflicted, can result in a system breakdown. This could mean a physical breakdown such as a heart attack in a middle-aged individual, a psychological breakdown or the individual simply quits. Life on the downslope can be pretty unrewarding, performance is low, motivation is low and goal clarity is low. Individual and team performance is poor and this percolates through to poor organizational performance.

Study Design

Because of compelling scientific evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of the Personal Effectiveness Programme, the Logistics division ran a series on one-day workshops in October 1997 involving 45 people. In these workshops attendees were taught and practised four scientifically validated self-management techniques. The IQM programme is based on leading edge research by cardiologists and neuroscientists demonstrating that there is a profound link between productivity, brain function, cardiovascular health and stress. By the end of one day’s training, the vast majority of attendees master these techniques and can start to apply them immediately at work and at home.

Psychometric Results

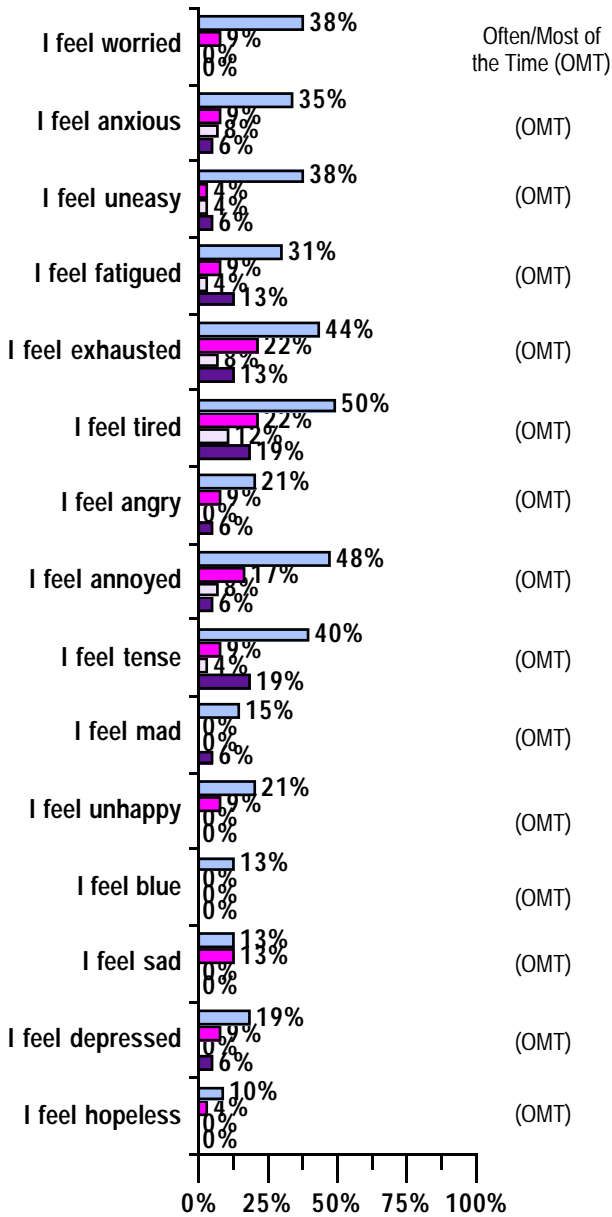
Prior to attending the course, all 45 participants completed an extensive psychometric questionnaire, the Personal and Organisational Quality Assessment (POQA). The POQA addresses individual and business performance issues. It has 58 items scaled to represent 12 constructs. There are five potential responses to each question, ranging from almost never, rarely, occasionally, often or most of the time; or alternatively from strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree or strongly agree.

The POQA was repeated after six weeks and again after six and twelve months to determine the impact of the IQM programme. The main findings of the POQA are presented on the following pages. Scores shown are for responses of Often/Most of the Time (OMT) or Agree/Strongly Agree (ASA).

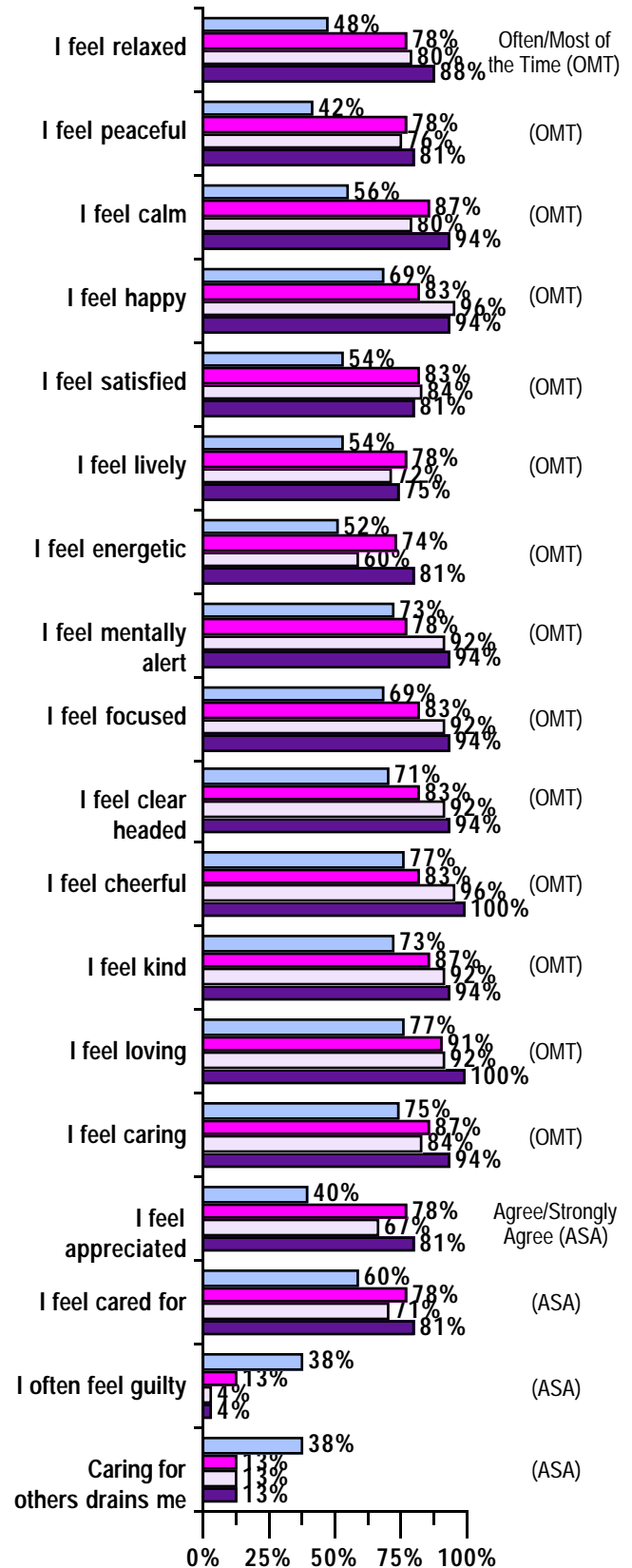
1. Personal Data

Sample size = 45

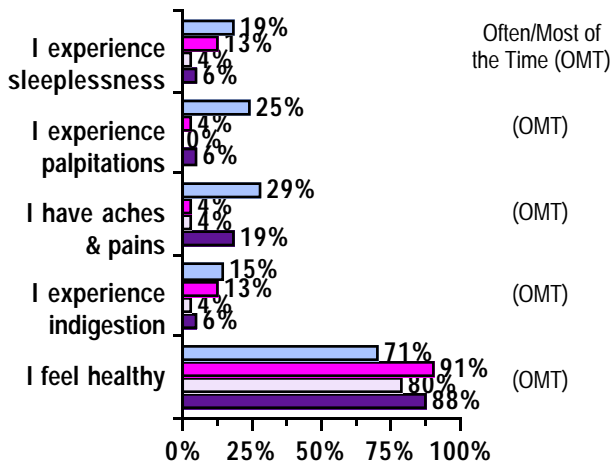
Code: Pre-IQM (light blue), 6 weeks (magenta), 6 months (light purple), 12 months (dark purple)



3. Positive Effects

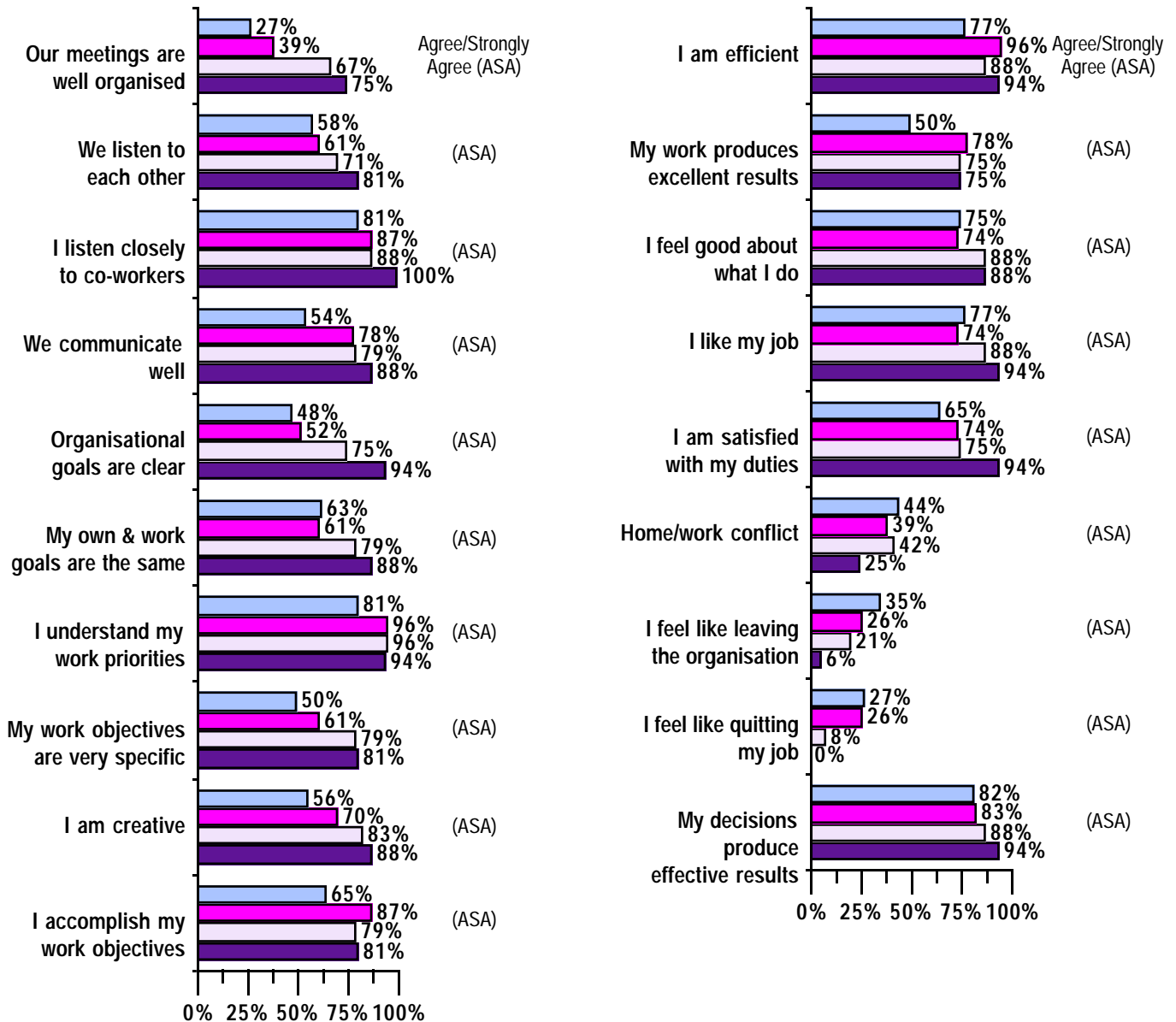


2. Stress Symptoms



4. Business Data

Sample size = 45



The Benefits of Inner Quality Management

The benefits of the IQM program seen at 6 weeks and 6 months were entirely in keeping with larger organisational case studies involving over 400 attendees (see case study 9), and 120 attendees respectively (see case study 11). In addition, the data clearly demonstrated that the benefits of the IQM programme were sustained at 12 months. The management team reported that this programme played a significant part in helping the division through the transformation successfully.

The manager of the Logistics business said, “I have noticed a real reduction in individual stress levels of those working within the department. This of course can only help in achieving the higher levels of performance required in our newly structured organisation.”