

Society of the Anti-Deming

Are you a member of SAD?

by Mike Micklewright



Question: What kind of dishes are made out of lead?

Answer: China

Many of us in U.S. industry have forgotten the principles of our dearly departed quality guru, W. Edwards Deming, since his passing in 1993. Since then our quality levels as a country have grown only slightly. At the Society of Anti-Deming (SAD), we believe that if we practice the opposite of what He preached to us, we might do better. Please evaluate your qualifications to become a member of SAD. You may also send it to your boss, or your boss's boss, if you think either is qualified to be a SAD member.

Click on the "E-mail story" button in the upper right of this page. Type in your boss's e-mail address, and send the story using my name (Mike Micklewright) and e-mail address (mike@mikemick.com) instead of yours.

The recipient will never know it came from you. I'll get the blame, and you can remain humble and undetected, while your target learns our SAD ways.

Here goes.

Please evaluate yourself on each of W. Edwards Deming's 14 points, as follows:

I don't uphold this principle.—One point

I sometimes uphold this principle, depending on the pressure from my company's owners.—Two points

This is great. I love this principle and abide by it all the time.—Three points

Add up your score to determine if you meet the requirements to become a member of SAD. Though it would be a sin to do so, you may wish to read *Out of the Crisis*, the original version of the 14 Points, from the teachings of Dr. W. Edwards Deming.

Point #1. Create inconsistency of purpose toward improvement of product and service.

Ensure that you *look* very competitive in the short-term. Build up huge amounts of inventory and fire all supporting positions such as quality and maintenance. This all looks great on the balance sheet and financial statements produced each quarter. It doesn't matter if you plan on using the inventoried product in the future, because by the time the future rolls around, you'll have gotten the hell out of there, collected a huge bonus, and started with a new company to save their sorry butts, just like you did with this company. Screw the employees! I rule! Score ____

Point #2. Adopt this philosophy.

Take on micromanaging, as you make delayed decisions from the golf course, even though you don't know anything about the business. It's all about control and having your people wait on you. You've earned it. Bilk the company for thousands of dollars. Long live Enron! Score ____

Point #3. Institute 200%–500% more inspection.

You can never inspect enough. If you send a defect to the customer, tell them you'll add an extra inspector. If they're still not sure about your response, tell them you'll add a third inspector. They'll be impressed that you're adding inspectors and are willing to bear such a burden at no cost to them. After the customer has stopped complaining for a few weeks, drop the inspection level to the preproblem level by firing a temporary employee and build profits once again. Score ____

Point #4. Award business based on price alone.

Outsource to China and India. Forget about the total cost of the product. Piece part cost is all that matters. Forget about the defects you have to live with because you have no leverage. Forget about paying for products weeks or months in advance and the abuse the products take in being transported across the world. Forget that you buy through a broker that can buy from any one of hundreds of manufacturers, or barns with dirt floors, and you have no idea where your products come from or what types of controls they have in place, but it's OK, because you buy from China, and that must be good. Forget about

translating your requirements to the Chinese broker and his suppliers. These are commodity items, and we're getting them cheap. Even if they send one right part out of 10, it's still cheaper, because all that matters is piece-per-part cost. And while you're doing this, do lean, too (see next point). Score ____

Point #5. Once in a while, improve the system of production or service.

Do this especially after you've had a crisis resulting from a major customer complaint or product recall. Show the customer that you're committed to change by spending lots of money buying a prepackaged improvement process such as Six Sigma or lean. After all, it worked in the past when you bought quality circles, TQM, benchmarking, quality education system, reengineering, and ISO 9001. Don't bother with developing your practices based on your principles. Hell, don't even bother with developing principles. This is supportive of Point #1. So, buy a program, tell everyone you support it, follow-up a year later, and if things have calmed down with your customers, scrap the initiative, and search for the new China. Score ____

Point #6. Institute trial and error

The greatest waste in America is using the minds of employees. We don't hire thinkers, we hire workers, so let them work. If they don't need to think, don't train them. In fact, the quicker you get them to work (say, within their first 30 minutes on the job), the quicker they'll screw up, the quicker you can make them feel like an idiot, and the quicker they'll learn from their mistakes. It's all about trial and error. That's why it's best to hire as many temps as possible. This way, if they screw up, you can hire another worker within 30 minutes. Workers are commodities, like nuts and bolts. It'd be ridiculous to train nuts and bolts, although we sometimes train nuts. Score ____

Point #7. Adopt and institute micromanaging.

- A) Treat everyone as imbeciles.
- B) Let everyone know how tough your job is, so no one will want it.
- C) Don't participate in any improvements.
- D) Maintain the highest level of dishonesty (e.g., tell them the company's doing well when it's not).
- E) Insist on mediocrity and let your people get away with missing deadlines.
- F) Build competitiveness within the organization.
- G) Show no confidence in your people. Maintain complete control. Micromanage (see #1).
- H) Maintain a strong sense of "taking it easy."
- I) Stay in your office with your door closed.
- J) Stop learning. You know it all by now.

Score ____

Point #8. Drive home fear.

Ensure that all employees know that if they screw up, they can and will be fired. Ensure insecurity. Take advantage of lean. While getting rid of waste, let them all know that they could be the next waste to be thrown out. Take advantage of ISO 9001 registration audits. Let them all know that nonconformities are unacceptable, and if any are found, they will be fired. Encourage everyone to hide nonconformities, or at least lie to the auditor, so that you never lose the ISO 9001 certification. Let everyone know that the root cause of most problems is employee error. Score ____

Point #9. Build and protect your kingdom.

You're the manager of your department. This is your home, and a person's home is his or her kingdom. You have departmental objectives by which you will be evaluated. Other departments have theirs. This is a competition, and you must protect your domain, oftentimes at the expense of the performance of the other departments. Screw them. You need to meet your objectives and achieve the maximum bonus. Anytime one of your subordinates is requested to work on a cross-functional team, this reduces your chances of meeting your goals. Don't let them work in teams outside of your department.

Score ____

Point #10. Promote slogans, exhortations, and targets.

Plaster them all over the walls in the production and office areas. In fact, in the conference rooms, buy the expensive nature and sports photos in the beautiful fake-wood frames, that have nice little thought-provoking phrases with words such as "Persistence," "Teamwork," and "Honesty." Customers and suppliers love these. Elsewhere, ensure that there are slogans about your Six Sigma, lean, and ISO 9001 programs. Ensure that everyone knows that your target is 3.4 defects per million.

Score ____

Point #11a. Institute production quotas.

Ensure that employees all know that the numbers are the key. Slower workers will feel the pressure to keep up, no matter what the cost. They will also see the faster workers standing around doing nothing for the last 30 minutes because they reached their quota (including the defects) early. Standing around will be seen as a reward and will encourage people to work harder.

Point #11b. Institute management by objective.

Set arbitrary improvement percentages for managers, perhaps the same percentages that were set last year, and the years before, as they weren't met. Don't set plans to follow, because there's really no time to plan when we have to "make the numbers" this month. If you do plan, at least keep them vague and in support of Point #5, like, "Save \$400,000 through 5Ss and TPM."

Score (for a and b) ____

Point #12. Develop a culture in which people aren't proud of their work.

Perform an annual rating of performance, or merit rating, for salaried employees. Merit rating rewards people who do well in your system. It's *your* system. You don't want people actually to try to *change* your system. You want them to suck up to you *within* your system.

Don't spend time on developing and communicating acceptable workmanship levels. Let them come to you to make the decision on what to ship and what to scrap. Keep them off balance with your decisions, so that they don't know the deep complexities of your decision-making process. This will keep them in awe of you and ensure even more job security, which you don't really need, because you're working with a headhunter right now, but you never know. Getting rid of quality and maintenance (as described in Point #1) will help promote a lack of pride because they won't be able to make good parts, but will still have to "make the numbers."

Score ____

Point #13. Discourage education and self-improvement for everyone.

We went to school in the past. That's the past, though, and it may have helped get us to where we are right now, but most of that stuff wasn't used anyway. So why waste time and money on it now? Besides, if it doesn't have some kind of certification behind it (e.g., Black Belt, ISO 9001, ASQ, and SME certifications), then it's worthless to get more education, because people can't pad their resumes. Also, can you imagine actually encouraging driving waste out of our personal lives and actually trying to improve who we are, our marriages, or relationships, our health, our society, our government, or our environment? I'd rather watch TV. Score ____

Point #14. Become the hero.

Bear the burden of any transformation of the company on your shoulders and reap the rewards and accolades. If the transformation was unsuccessful, then blame the culture you inherited, resistance, the industry, the owner, or a management coup. By now, your organization understands that the root cause of every organizational failure rests on the shoulders of the employees. If the transformation is successful, you can take full credit for the accomplishment. This is the time to take the next job and move on to reap even greater rewards, because the successful transformation is only short term. The company will soon begin to crumble. This is your most important action. Get out now. Score ____

Add up your score. The maximum number of points is 42 (14 x 3). TOTAL Score ____

If you scored between 32 and 42, you're a member of SAD. Someday we may give you a certificate, which will make all this even more worthwhile.

If you scored between 20 and 31, you need work. Perhaps fire someone and instill some fear in the others by instituting new numerical quotas.

If you scored less than 19, you're a quality freak.

About the author

Mike Micklewright is president of [QualityQuest Inc.](#), a Chicago-based consulting, training and facilitation company specializing in lean, ISO 9001, ISO/TS 16949, Six Sigma, and their integration. Micklewright is an ASQ-certified Six Sigma Black Belt, quality auditor, quality engineer, and quality manager. He holds a degree in general engineering from the University of Illinois and has worked in design, manufacturing, and quality engineering for the Saturn Corp. of General Motors and SeaquistPerfect Dispensing. Micklewright is a sought-after speaker and has had many articles published. He performs stand-up comedy in which he makes fun of the world of continual improvement and has developed, produced, acted in, and sells video training programs. Mike also provides presentations as a Deming evangelist and a Deming impersonator.

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