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## APPENDIX 10: A BRIEF GUIDE TO REVIEW AND AUDIT

“The seeds of every company’s demise are contained in its business plan”

Fred Adler, CEO, Adler & Co. Inc Magazine, February 1987

Once you have established QFD effectively within your organisation, it will efficiently and relentlessly drive the pursuit of the goals that you have set. But while it is doing so, the world moves on and the goal posts shift. And your thinking moves on; you see things differently, and often more clearly.

Your QFD may, in a few short months, represent a future you no longer fully believe in. If you do not remain alert to this possibility, you may find that you have invested a vast amount of effort in a large white elephant (with black spots).

Some people use this reasoning as an excuse to avoid planning in the first place. But people who never engage their brains, are even more ineffective than those who engage their brains to start with and then switch them off. The important thing is to keep thinking all the way through; to establish QFD, and then to periodically review it against your developing understanding, and against your ever changing environment.

In this chapter we will look at two types of review:

- annual review, to provide the opportunity for a total rethink
- spring cleaning, to fix specific issues

### Annual review

The annual review provides an opportunity to review your QFD, and further develop it so that it continues to drive your organisation to its full potential.

- To reassess the logic in your Why-How chart, and to agree new objectives and targets.
- To reconsider the processes of your organisation, and develop a model that provides more insight and leverage.
- To identify new design opportunities within those processes, and to set process objectives that ensure they will be fulfilled.
- To re-harness your organisation to another year of transformational performance.

It is not essential that you totally redevelop your QFD every year, but you should at least face up to the question as to whether it would help your organisation if you did so.

Reconsidering your original Why-How chart, provides the opportunity for you and your team to reflect on how much your situation has changed, and whether you can simply establish new performance targets for the coming year, or whether you would benefit from a total reconsideration of the nature of your role and your objectives.

And by reflecting on your process model, your team can consider how much potential improvement is available by continuing to see the business in this way, or whether changes to the model will provide even more potential for resolving inefficiency and driving up performance.

The result of exploring these issues will help you to determine whether you need to develop a whole new QFD grid, or whether you just need to introduce new ideas and understanding into the old one.

Whatever you decide to do in the top-level QFD, reconsidering the process columns will provide each part of the organisation a chance to think through how radically they wish to redefine their own role.

This annual review cycle provides an opportunity, not only to reset the direction and thrust of the organisation, but also to learn from how well change has been managed.

By preceding the annual review with an audit of how well the implementation of QFD and systematic approaches has taken place, the available lessons can be collated into improvements in management as well as improvements in the organisation; a sort of top-box over the top-box. In this way management can regularly improve not only what they do, but also how they do it.

The audit can be effected by using some of the tools described in Chapter 5.

### Spring cleaning

Subsequent to each reworking of the QFD, your people will gain new understanding of the business as they work to implement its conclusions. Some of these insights will cast doubt on some of the premises contained within the QFD. In most cases this may only be a small proportion of the QFD, but failing to correct the resulting inaccuracy may prove a major hurdle to progress.

On the other hand, constantly altering the QFD every time new insight is gained, can create uncertainty and confusion, and can mean that longer-term improvement projects lose direction and impetus.

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The challenge then is to maintain the QFD with sufficient accuracy such that it remains a valid driver of the business, and yet maintain sufficient stability in its conclusions that teams can practically work on achieving it.

Spring cleaning provides a means to do exactly that. One day, scheduled some three months after the completion of the QFD, in which those parts of the QFD that have been proposed as major barriers to progress are reconsidered and adjusted by the team. In a spring cleaning session, the objective of stability is clearly spelled out, and only individual items of the QFD, proposed in advance and with clearly defined arguments circulated before the meeting, are open to being changed.

In practice this means that only those aspects of the QFD that have to change are changed, and often this is only one or two measures, the odd definition, and about 5% of the cells.

An example of spring cleaning can be found on page 464.