

Tribute to Quality Guru - Dr. Joseph M. Juran (1904 – 2008)

By Sunil Thawani

No one in the last hundred years has had more influence on the worldwide practice of quality in business than Dr. Joseph Juran. His work is the foundation for much of the quality movement of the twentieth century – everything from Total Quality Management to Six Sigma. The teachings and writings of Dr. Juran have had profound impact on the products we use every day, and his books like “Quality Control Handbook” are considered fundamental references by quality professionals. So important were his contributions to quality that he is written about in many publications, such as, the Harvard Business Review, Business Week, the Financial Times, and many quality related journals. To quote Peter Drucker “Whatever *advances American manufacturing has made in the last thirty to forty years, we owe it to Joe Juran*”.

Dr. Juran, born in Braila, Romania in 1904 had an impoverished and tragic childhood. Later on he moved to USA and settled in Minneapolis, USA. At Bell System he was assigned to a new department formed to carry out what is known today as statistical quality control. Juran prepared what may have been the first text on statistical quality control—and perhaps the ancestor of today's widely used *Western Electric Statistical Quality Control Handbook*.

Dr. Juran wrote the first standard reference work on quality management, the Quality Control Handbook, first published in 1951 and now moving into its sixth edition. This handbook is the reference for most quality and performance improvement change agents since it provides important how-to information dedicated to improving an organization's performance by improving the quality of its goods and services. The *Handbook* has grown from 15 chapters to 52, paralleling and aiding the growth of the quality field.

In 1937, Dr. Juran created the “Pareto Principle” (commonly referred to as the 80-20 principle), which millions of managers worldwide rely on to help separate the “vital few” from the “useful many” in their activities. Its universal application makes it one of the most useful concepts and tools of modern-day management. This is now referred to as Juran's Pareto Principle.

During the late 1940s, Juran began to develop what may have been the most influential course on the subject of quality since the eight-day seminars conducted during World War II. Juran's "Managing for Quality" has been taught to more than 100,000 people in over 40 countries. For almost 30 years, Juran offered the course through the American Management Association.

Dr. Juran became well known to the world after his first visit to Japan in 1954. Professor Kano of Japan recalls, “He impressed top executives here with his

managerial aspect of quality and contributed to the quality development in Japan by helping to establish the reputation of "made-in-Japan" products."

His classic book, *Managerial Breakthrough*, first published in 1964, was the first book to describe a step-by-step sequence for breakthrough improvement. This process has evolved into Lean and Six Sigma today and is the basis for quality initiatives worldwide.

The Juran Trilogy®, published in 1986, identified and was accepted worldwide as the basis for quality management. After almost 50 years of research, his trilogy defined three management processes required by all organizations to improve. Quality control, quality improvement, and quality planning have become synonymous with Juran.

[Insert Juran Trilogy Diagram – Slide Attached]

In 1979, Dr. Juran founded Juran Institute (www.juran.com), an organization aimed at providing research and pragmatic solutions to enable organizations from any industry to learn the tools and techniques for managing quality.

As a result of the power and clarity of Joseph Juran's thinking and the scope of his influence, business leaders, legions of managers, and his fellow theorists worldwide recognize Dr. Juran as "father" of quality and one of "the vital few" - a seminal figure in the development of management theory.

Dr. Juran devoted almost his entire life to Quality. His books and videos on quality have been read and viewed by millions of people and have been translated into 17 languages. He earned more than 30 awards from organizations around the world, including American Society for Quality's Edwards Medal and Brumbaugh and Grant Awards.

Dr. Juran has contributed more to the field and over a longer period of time than any other person, and yet, felt he had barely scratched the surface of his subject. "My job of contributing to the welfare of my fellow man," wrote Juran "is the great unfinished business."

On 28th Feb 2008, sadly Dr. Juran passed away at the age on 103 years. Millions of business leaders, managers and quality professionals will greatly miss him but we will continue to be inspired and guided by his legacy.

Finally, Two Messages

I close this tribute to great Dr. Juran with a quote taken from his autobiography "Architect of Quality" :

Quote " I close this book with two messages. To those whose careers are in the field of managing for quality :thank your lucky stars. Your field will grow

extensively during your life time, especially in three of our giant industries – health, education and government. There will be exiting oppotrnties for innovation and for service to society.

And to my beloved family : when I am gone, let no one weep for me. I have lived a wonderful life.”

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