

## Guidelines for a Strong Quality Improvement Program in the Warehouse

The goal of every warehouse and distribution center (and indeed every company) is to provide great customer service while minimizing the cost of doing business. To achieve this goal, it is essential to have a strong quality improvement program. This means maintaining consistency throughout the operation.

According to Jerry List, Vice President of QC Software (<http://www.qcsoftware.com>), a leading provider of warehouse control software, "Quality improvement is key to operating a lean business. When continuous improvement is an integral part of the company culture, businesses are customer focused and better prepared to manage market fluctuations."

### Guidelines for Implementing an Effective Quality Improvement Program:

**Know your operation.** Find out how well your facility is currently performing. Assess the physical layout, processes and technology. Implement key changes that improve productivity and minimize errors. Continue to monitor your processes and focus on increasing the velocity.

**Implement standards for all departments and employees.** All employees should understand standard operating procedures for their departments and job functions. These procedures should be reviewed periodically and revised as needed.

**Understand the customer's needs.** Make sure you understand how, when and where the customer uses your product and how much is needed. You can then manage production and distribution accordingly.

**Create a collaborative environment.** It is senior management's responsibility to foster a positive work environment where people can learn from each other and work together to solve problems. Departments should be able to freely communicate with each other as well as with suppliers and customers. Improving the flow of information will minimize misunderstandings.

**Focus on the total cost.** Look at the entire supply chain - purchasing, receiving, storage, fulfillment and shipping - to get a picture of all costs. For example, the amount of inventory purchased should depend on storage space and consumer consumption. Purchasing an insufficient amount of inventory increases back

orders, while purchasing too much results in more returns. Either way, there are additional costs in the long run.

QC Software (<http://www.qcsoftware.com>) is recognized as an industry leader in providing innovative software solutions for order fulfillment and distribution centers. These solutions enable customers to streamline their warehouse operations with the lowest total cost of ownership in the industry. By using cutting-edge technology, their warehouse control system (WCS), the QC Enterprise, provides greater visibility and control throughout the supply chain. And, as the customer's business grows and evolves, QC Software's agile WCS easily adapts to their changing business needs.

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