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FOM Assignment # 04
4C

Question # 01:

As the Operations Manager of a fast-growing tech startup, applying the controlling process is crucial to resolve the current challenges of missed production targets and declining customer satisfaction. The controlling process helps track performance, identify gaps, and take corrective actions to align operations with company goals.

Steps to Apply the Controlling Process:

1. Set Clear Performance Standards

- Define **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** such as:
 - Production output per day/week
 - On-time delivery rates
 - Customer satisfaction score (CSAT/NPS)
 - Error/defect rate in product delivery
- Align KPIs with **organizational goals** like fast delivery, quality service, and customer satisfaction.

2. Measure Actual Performance

- Collect real-time data through:
 - **Production tracking systems**
 - **CRM systems** for customer complaints and feedback
 - **Project management tools** like Asana or Trello
 - Employee performance dashboards
- Use **weekly and monthly reports** to review metrics.

3. Compare Performance with Standards

- Identify **deviations** by comparing actual results with benchmarks.
 - Example: If the goal is 95% on-time delivery and the actual is 78%, the gap needs to be addressed.
- Analyze whether the issues are related to manpower, tools, supply chain, or planning errors.

4. Analyze Deviations

- Use tools like:
 - **Root Cause Analysis (RCA)**
 - **Fishbone Diagram (Ishikawa)**
 - **Pareto Analysis** (80/20 rule)
- Involving team leads to understand the **why** behind underperformance.

5. Take Corrective Actions

- Examples of corrective steps:
 - Hire or reassign staff to balance workload
 - Automate repetitive processes using software
 - Optimize scheduling and inventory management
 - Improve team coordination with daily stand-up meetings
- Launch quick training sessions to bridge skill gaps

6. Monitor Progress Continuously

- Set up **weekly performance reviews**
- Track changes after implementation using real-time dashboards
- Adjust strategies if results are not improving

7. Provide Feedback and Documentation

- Share insights with teams through reports and meetings
- Use **feedback loops** to keep employees involved in the improvement process
- Document processes for future reference and continuous improvement

Tools and Technologies to Use:

- **ERP Systems** (e.g., Odoo, SAP Business One)
- **Customer Feedback Tools** (e.g., SurveyMonkey, Zendesk)
- **Data Dashboards** (e.g., Power BI, Google Data Studio)
- **Time & Task Management Tools** (e.g., Trello, Notion)
- **Communication Tools** (e.g., Slack, MS Teams)

Ensuring Alignment with Company Objectives:

- **Involve leadership** in defining measurable targets.

- Align department goals with **strategic business objectives**.
- Ensure transparency and **communicate expectations clearly** to all employees.
- **Review progress regularly** and adjust actions to stay aligned with customer needs and company vision.

Question # 02:

Benchmarking is a vital part of **Total Quality Management (TQM)** because it allows companies to **measure their performance against industry best practices** and **identify areas for improvement**. It helps organizations understand where they stand in terms of quality, efficiency, customer satisfaction, and innovation by comparing with top competitors or leaders in the market.

Why Benchmarking is Important in TQM:

1. **Promotes Continuous Improvement:**
 - Helps companies identify performance gaps and set realistic goals for quality improvement.
2. **Drives Innovation and Best Practices:**
 - Encourages learning from other successful companies and adapting their strategies to improve processes and products.
3. **Improves Customer Satisfaction:**
 - By comparing customer service and product quality with competitors, companies can better meet customer expectations.
4. **Enhances Competitive Advantage:**
 - Knowing what the best in the industry are doing helps a company stay competitive and relevant.
5. **Objective Evaluation:**
 - Benchmarking provides data-driven insights, making the TQM program more focused and measurable.

Can a TQM Program Succeed Without Benchmarking?

While it's **possible** to implement a TQM program without formal benchmarking, it would be **less effective**. Without comparing performance to others:

- The company might operate in a bubble.
- It becomes hard to identify what “world-class quality” looks like.
- Improvement efforts may be misdirected or limited in scope.

So, **benchmarking strengthens the TQM approach** by providing a **real-world standard** to aim for and ensuring **continuous, competitive improvement**.