

3-17-1992

## Interview with Yosinori Iizuka

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### NSUWorks Citation

Dr. Joseph M. Juran Collection, "Interview with Yosinori Iizuka" (1992). *'An Immigrant's Gift': Interviews about the Life and Impact of Dr. Joseph M. Juran*. 26.  
<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/juran-transcripts/26>

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# Y oshinori Iizuka

(Interviewed on 17 March 1992, Tokyo, Japan)

## Video Roll # 13

*Q: Please spell, in English, your name.*

IIZUKA: Y-O-S-H-I-N-O-R-I I-I-Z-U-K-A.

*Q: And your correct title?*

IIZUKA: Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo.

*Q: I'd first like to speak about the quality revolution here in Japan. Why have Japan's quality efforts been so very successful?*

IIZUKA: First of all, the Japanese management precisely understood the important of quality control. What I mean by that is that the corporation or organization provides services or products in earned money. To do so, the ... or the product must have excellent quality, which will result in long-term profit.

*Q: What role, what part did Japanese leadership, the senior managers of the companies, play in taking that first step in the quality revolution?*

IIZUKA: Well, other companies may be successful with the quality control, they see it. And to introduce those

success, first of all the organization, which promotes quality control, was founded. And to promote such an institution or organization, they need money. And they were not reluctant to invest on those institutions in the long run.

And they themselves were involved, like president's diagnosis, it's one of the characteristics of Japanese QC. He himself goes to the factory or talks with the designers or the person in terms of the quality control. And then the president understands the direction and the needs.

*Q: Knowing what Japan knows now, after 40 years of experience in quality improvement and TQC, what things might Japan have done differently to make 40 years easier and more productive?*

IIZUKA: It's a very difficult question to answer. As I look back, at the history of Japanese QC, the first success was in the assembly industry. It's interesting that we Japanese learned from the U.S. And then we succeeded in process industry: iron, heavy engineering.

In '60's, in the assembly industry, we became success. All like automobiles, appliances, home electronics. And then we experienced economic war with the U.S.

How can we promote a QC in assembly? That was the main theme in Japan. In '75, later '80's, ... service industries became also the field of QC. But they're not successful very much.

Technically, they are immature yet, or premature. And then how can they introduce TQC? And they regret that they could have done better. In QC, the trouble shooting or the problem study must be done. They understand the source of

the problem and eliminate it. And it helped the promotion of the technology itself.

We recently recognized it in product development. When we do TQC, there are many problems. And once we study deeply those problems, we can accumulate the technology. And we'll know how.

So we could have understood the meaning of TQC in terms of the accumulation of technology. And then we could have applied it to the premature industries.

One more thing is that internationalization is sometimes discussed in Japan. We export products.

After the World War II, the country of Japan was devastated. And we had to live on engineering. Now we have affluent society, and we have economic power. Do we still have to make inexpensive and good quality products? We need some leadership in international society. The sense of value has changed, but we were too late to realize it.

So we have to do something. We're still studying.

*Q: Looking ahead in Japan and the U.S., as more and more companies become involved in TQC, the level of quality will gradually increase. In the next years, what will distinguish, make the difference between the good companies and the companies that are really excellent?*

IIZUKA: Well, good companies, their product -- they share of this information, energy. They improve the quality of those products, and then they can satisfy the customers.

Now, excellent companies, they have ... , or time on hand, or affluence. So not only their own company, they think about the industry or the country of Japan, and have a wide viewpoint, and improve the quality of their own company.

➤. I can give you one example, which is the Fuji Xerox, Fuji Film; and Fuji Company had the joint venture, and they have new work way, which is slightly different from the existent TQC. The employees will think about, give deeper consideration and more relaxed.

So it's not just great efforts and great output, but they have to think about society entirely and they can fulfill their responsibility to the society, not the excellent company.

*Q: Japan has lived a life of TQC for almost 40 years. As you get older, you learn more and more things, with experience. What are the most significant of the things that Japan has learned in the most recent years?*

IIZUKA: One thing: importance of the marketing, I believe. Marketing. The first step to developed new products. In the past, the TQC specialists didn't deeply study the subject. Marketing has its own marketing techniques, and the concept of TQC and the techniques of TQC can be combined.

Quality function deployment is a tool to convert into the new products development. And we're weak confirming the concept itself, and we're still studying it.

One of the characteristics of TQC in Japan is the policy deployment. For certain companies, they have a target and then everybody cooperates and goes for the target. In the pursuit, how do they process, how do they proceed. And that's sort of the guidance.

However, long run, like five years, our strategic business plan. We didn't have good methodology. And just currently we started studies in this field. And, as I mentioned, the technology has been advanced and, in many ways, TQC

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contributed in advancement of the technology. That technology for the product.

Of course, it's not sufficient to develop a product, and TQC can somehow provide or supplement some of the technology which is lacking. And we have the analysis and the methodologies in TQC which can help.

*Q: We have two cultures: Japan and the U.S.A. And these days, we hear much about the differences between Japan and the U.S.A. In quality, what do you observe to be the major differences?*

IIZUKA: I had an experience: two years ago, 1989, August, I went to the U.S. The purpose was ASQC held, or sponsored, quality forum. Organized by David Kerns of Xerox Corporation, Fuji Xerox. And they opened up a forum. And the U.S. business school should start teaching the quality. And that was the theme of the forum.

I was surprised that the U.S. business school didn't have any curriculum of quality control. So they just didn't have the perspective to pay respect to the quality in terms of manufacturing.

In the United States, they learn about financing, like balance sheet, loss and profit. They can read out those data, and have a team sense of marketing. Like three months, six months. They have very short term. If he wants to improve the balance of the company, and then he cuts out something not necessary to that company.

However, in Japan, we look into manufacturing. The top management thinks how he can make good products. So the first thing which comes to his mind is quality. And then he invests, if it's necessary. The resources that he has should be

improved. And then it requires long-term view. That's the difference of the climate among the management.

In the United States, they hold several seminars. The American managers. Japan has two techniques, and the management asks us to introduce the Japanese tools and methodologies, like quality function, deployment, FMEA. Japanese methodologies are variable. I talk about them.

And they have a question: they want an example, a specific example. And I thought about the meaning of these questions. There's a tool, a technique. And then introduce it right away, and won't get the result soon. But it's dangerous.

We have a slight difference. In Japan, we have a tool or a technique. And then we first give consideration to the quintessential of it. To introduce tool, there are some challenges for the people. First of all, it's difficult to stop all the criteria. And it's difficult to understand the relationship among those items which were listed.

And then, if the tool supports it, and then that has to be adopted, and it should be made more suitable to a specific company.

Thirdly, the major difference is that the ratio of top management who believes in quality which brings an ultimate profit is high in Japan.

*Q: Let us now look at another area, let's look at Dr. Juran.*

IIZUKA: All right.

*Q: You're a very young man.*

IIZUKA: Yes.

Q: *You were not involved in those early seminars of the 1950's, when Dr. Juran came here for the first time. So you have a good historical perspective. From the year 1992, looking back, what are the key lessons that Dr. Juran has brought, here in Japan, on the subject of quality?*

IIZUKA: The importance of quality control, or the quality in management, Dr. Juran came to Japan in '54. And we had Dr. Deming prior to that -- '50, '51, '52, for three years. What he told us is that the importance of the statistical approach to quality.

And then, in '54, Dr. Juran came to Japan and he told us the importance of quality in management. And it was quite beneficial for Japan. The top management in Japan understood the needs to improve the situation. So they were ready to listen to the teachings.

One more thing: Dr. Juran has been watching Japan in its effort to promote quality. EOQC, 60 some years. Japan had an activity of QC Circle. And he is the first one who recognized its importance. So Dr. Juran appealed to the world, and especially in the United States, like this is what Japan is doing, and it's good. And it was quite encouraging for Japanese.

So Dr. Juran taught us about the importance of the quality, and he set the fire under the management. And we kept the fire and he kept encouraging us.

Q: *It's one thing to put your ideas in a book or to lecture in seminars. It's something else when those teachings are put to use every day in real companies. Which of Dr. Juran's teachings are being used most frequently by companies every day, here in Japan?*

IIZUKA: I don't know exactly, myself. Well, Japanese companies, they are very good at copying, or mimicking. And also they are quick to learn somebody else's great teaching. For example, like application of the techniques. In a bad expression: they sort of steal those ideas.

So it's not swallowing what Dr. Juran said, but they learn from him and make their own out of his teachings. And the Japanese companies combines all those teachings. So it's difficult to say that this and that is from Dr. Juran; this and that are from ... , or Deming, Professor Ishikawa. We cannot say that. It's a mixture.

*Q: Have you had any personal experience with Dr. Juran?*

IIZUKA: When Dr. Juran came to Japan, I was seven years old. I was born in '47. So I was seven in '54. And he was already over 40, I believe; more than that. He was like somebody up in the clouds.

I heard about Dr. Juran at this university for the first time when I attended Professor Ishikawa's lecture. And Professor Ishikawa talked about Dr. Juran. I heard about him for the first time.

And then Dr. Kano talked to me and said, in the world in the field of QC, who's the number one? Who's number two? Number one, Dr. Juran. Number two, Dr. Ishikawa. That's what Dr. Kano said, and I was very happy because Dr. Ishikawa became the second. And again, I learned that Dr. Juran was such a great person.

Now there's Quality Control Handbook. Whenever I had an occasion, I read it. I learned about the U.S. quality

control, but I found some difference. I thought that Dr. Deming understood the style of Japan. I suspected it from his reading.

In '87, International Quality Conference -- every three years, we take turns, like the U.S., Japan, Europe. I presented a paper, and Dr. Juran was in Tokyo. He didn't come to the meeting, but he read all the proceedings. He was in his room. He evaluated all the papers -- good papers, bad papers. And Dr. Godfrey said that Dr. Juran gave me a good grade. I remember it clearly.

*Q: We are sitting in a university -- this is not a factory. And we're talking about quality. for how long have students of management, or students in Japan, studied, in school, about this subject of quality? And what kind of courses do they take?*

IIZUKA: Myself? Are you talking about myself?

*Q: In the United States, there is probably no school that teaches about quality. People who go to work in companies who practice quality for the first time learn about quality. And yet, here we are in Tokyo University.*

IIZUKA: We have lectures provided at Tokyo University by Dr. Kume, for six months, 90 minutes. And you meet ten to 12 times. It's open at engineering faculty. We have only 40 or 50 students. We have 900 students total at the engineering. So at Japanese universities, students don't really learn about quality. And that's the current situation.

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*Q: In the U.S., we think everyone in Japan knows all about quality. Sony, Honda, Toyota. We buy your products all the time.*

(END OF TAPE NUMBER THIRTEEN)

# Y oshinori Iizuka

(Interviewed on 17 March 1992, Tokyo, Japan)

## Video Roll # 14

*Q: Everything in Japan is of high quality. And now you say maybe not. What is the state of quality, TQC, in Japan now compared to where you would like it to be?*

IIZUKA: About the Japanese products, it's a misunderstanding if you think that all Japanese products are great in quality. The area where we compete in terms of quality and the price is limited.

I don't know exactly, but compared with the U.S. and Japan, I believe that only 20% of the Japanese products have competitiveness. Automobiles, electronics, videos, CD players. Maybe they're the only ones. How about chemical products? We're no way to ... So I'd like you to straighten up your misunderstanding.

We're successful only in a limited area. Do old Japanese companies understand about the quality, TQC? They do TQC? No. Do they understand? To some extent, quality. But do they invest money? No.

After understanding the importance of quality, would they do TQC? Sony doesn't do TQC, but also they're quite successful in terms of quality control.

*Q: What is the relationship between companies that practice TQC methods -- quality, profit. What is the relationship between those two?*

IIZUKA: Of course, the better the quality, more profit. It's not the short term, but a long-term profit that can be obtained. That's what the Japanese top management understands. Of course, not all.

Partially, it's the people who want to sacrifice the quality, but want to make quick money. But most of them believe in the quality and the profit.

*Q: As you read the newspapers now, after Minister Miawawa -- in Japan, they're talking about bad U.S.; in the U.S., they're saying, bad Japan. How are our cultures so different that quality has grown like a flower in Japan and it took such a long time in the United States?*

IIZUKA: As I mentioned, among Japanese companies only limited companies understand and promote QC -- like automobiles, electronics. In that industry, the competition is severe and the customers buy only good products. So severe competition and it's major, but in a free market, they have to hold to the customers and its demand.

They were in that environment at the very beginning. Therefore, they pay respect to quality. Partially, in the United States, it's certain industries -- military party is the major buyer. So as far as they meet the specifications, provided to by the military, they don't have to worry about the competition.

And then there became the Jap.

*Q: In companies in Japan, there is a point at which quality improvement, or quality, is built into the overall business plan.*

IIZUKA: Yeah.

Q: *How is quality integrated into business plans in Japanese companies?*

IIZUKA: In Japanese companies, in their management policy, by all means they talk about quality. For example, to become the world number one in quality and survive through this competition by technology, or provide products which satisfy the customers, contribute to the society, the wellness of the employees.

The major portion is on quality. In a sense, they are not hesitant to invest money. That's one of the integrations. It's not just philosophy, but to fill the goal is corporate wide. They have a system, TQC and policy management.

Except in certain areas, TQC and business and business management over-wraps.

Q: *In the U.S., there is a saying: you must be careful what you measure in a corporation because what you measure, you will get. What do Japanese companies measure with respect to quality?*

IIZUKA: Sales, sales. Not short-term sales but long-term sales. Good quality -- well, the bad quality. The customer determines. If the quality is good, it sells. Not for a few months, but two years, three years. If the product still sells good, then the quality is good.

In a positive side, the management look at sales, especially in a new product, once it's introduced to a market, they're keen of the ups and downs of the sales. Another one is the claims or the complaints from the field. And that's a negative side. Is there any problems. That's the two major measures of the quality.

*Q: We have been told that the reason that Japan first became interested in quality was because Japan, as a country, was in great crisis. Crisis -- quality. Then the United States, crisis, quality. Is it possible in business to have quality without crisis?*

IIZUKA: Impossible. Why? We talk about theories, good things. But all the active days of Japanese corporations are taking place because they're necessary. If the quality is not good, they can't survive. And that's why they pay respect to quality. If the quality is bad, they die.

They had the sense of crisis. So without the sense of crisis, they wouldn't be motivated to improve their company. It's kind of sad for human beings, but there must be some needs otherwise they wouldn't do much.

*Q: We believe that Japan is not so much in crisis right now. What's going to happen to quality?*

IIZUKA: It may have a negative effect. I'm sorry to say this, but I think so. At my age, some of them are involved in management, like Section G for managers. I think it's changing, especially younger generations: they're different.

Suppose there's a problem. In the past, they wanted to take quick action. We have to do something, quick. But now, well, it's not so serious -- tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, will be okay. I think that's a problem. Especially younger generations .. Maybe good, maybe bad, I don't know.

Young people do not forget about family and dedicate themselves to the company. After 5:00 o'clock, that's time for themselves. However, to maintain quality, the great efforts are required. But not just quality, but they want to have a quality of life. They want to have some time on their

own. So unless we face the crisis, not too much efforts may be made to quality in Japan.

*Q: After 40 years of quality and TQC here in Japan, are there still some things that frustrate the leaders of quality here in this country?*

IIZUKA: Yes, there are. We made efforts in quality. We provided cheap and great, good quality products. However, it was not necessarily a good thing, some people started pointing it out.

Like Morita of Sony, in Japanese magazine, he reported: he attended at a European conference and he learned that it was necessarily appreciated to have cheap and high-quality goods, like long working hours, and less sharing of the profit. Under such an environment, like a storm, Japanese supporting goods to the world.

We thought that we are contributing to the world providing the cheap and high-quality products. But it turned out not to be so. So that was a great frustration. It's not goods that only one person needs strong to have a long-term relationship or friendship. We need to have two or three strong people.

Then technology wisdom -- knowledge must be exported. If there is a good methodology, we need to teach other people. And that's the frustration.

*Q: In 1950, Dr. Deming and Dr. Juran were speaking in the United States and publishing their books in the United States. But almost nobody listened, and nobody read. Why were people in Japan more ready to listen and to learn in 1950 than the people in the United States?*

IIZUKA: At that time, the U.S. was already a big country, always number one. They were not hungry. However, we Japanese were hungry. We don't have natural resources. So we had to have engineering, and put a value. Otherwise, we can't survive. Everybody understood that.

I was born after the war. I myself remember how poor we were. When we were small. We thought that I will become an engineer and contribute to the promotion of the engineering in Japan. That's what my parents taught me. I was hungry. That's the difference.

At that time, we were ready for anything. We wanted to learn anything, listen to anything.

*Q: In the United States, when people talk about the quality revolution in Japan, they talk about Dr. Deming and Dr. Juran as though they're almost one person. Can you help us tell the people of the United States who are not engineers, what did Dr. Deming do here in Japan and accomplish? And what did Dr. Juran do and accomplish for the people of Japan?*

IIZUKA: Dr. Deming and Dr. Juran, they didn't give us some dregs of knowledge or experience. They taught us about the importance of quality. It's like a philosophy. Whatever we do, in books or lectures, they give us input that what Japan was doing was right. And that was encouraging.

*Q: We are sort of describing them as **if** they are two halves of the same apple. But they're really two different men: Deming, Juran. How are they different? What did each of them contribute to Japan?*

IIZUKA: As I mentioned, Dr. Deming was more an emphasis on statistics; Dr. Juran, importance of quality controlling management. I myself, personally, don't know Dr. Deming or Dr. Juran.

What I heard from other people is that Dr. Juran was a very serious person. He had various new ideas. Good papers. Enlightening us. Dr. Deming, he drinks, and is frank, friendly.

So about personality, it's not just the knowledge, but the personality attracted us.

*Q: We know there is a Deming Prize. Will there ever be a Juran Prize?*

IIZUKA: I am a member of the Deming Prize Committee. I became the member five years ago or so. We talked about a Juran Prize, actually. In what field should we give Juran Prize? That was the big problem. In my evaluation, I give a higher evaluation to Dr. Juran than Dr. Deming.

And, if it's possible to create something which surpassed the Deming Award or Deming Prize, we could have. But we were not able. We thought about something for service industry, or like Japan QC Medal. Or something equivalent to Japan QC Medal could be a Juran Prize. But it didn't come true.

Dr. Juran was too great. So we couldn't find anything which is suitable to the prize.

*Q: This may not be a question that you want to answer. You just said, for you, Dr. Juran, Dr. Deming. I'm curious to know why you said that?*

IIZUKA: The major point is that the importance of the quality in terms of management was taught by him. Even during the '50's, he had a straight-forward theory. Not Dr. Deming. He's a statistician. And he showed application of statistics to QC, his 14 Points. He generated his own ideas. After seeing ... in Japan.

However, in my personal view, Dr. Juran's work is much more systematic, more comprehensive, and well organized.

*Q: Another question you may not want to answer: when you look back on the extraordinary success of companies in Japan that practice these methods, how much success would you attribute to Dr. Deming? How much success would you attribute to Dr. Juran?*

IIZUKA: Let me give you an example: 14 Points by Deming. How many Japanese companies know about it, do about it? Maybe none. The QC Handbook, by Juran, many people read about it.

They know about Dr. Deming and his name because of the Deming Prize, and it's given to the companies which provide QC in terms of statistical approach. However, the content has changed and now it's given to the TQC.

We learned significantly from Dr. Juran. The companies which challenges to Deming Prize are actually challenging to those teachings of Dr. Juran and Dr. Ishikawa. So they're not necessarily trying to achieve what Dr. Deming was saying. That's my personal view, though.

*Q: In many years, when you and I are 150 years old, Dr. Juran will have great grandchildren who will never have met him or known about Dr. Juran. If you could, when you're*

*150 years old, talk to Dr. Juran's great grandchildren, what would you tell them about their great grandfather, Dr. Juran?*

IIZUKA: During the '50's, and to the '90's -- for 50 years -- in the field of quality the leader and the pioneer of the world, that's what I will teach.

*Q: Could you do this one more time for me, but include Dr. Juran's name.*

IIZUKA: From 1950's to '90's -- for 50 years -- the person who led the field of quality in the world, that is Dr. Joseph Juran. That's what I will communicate to them.

*Q: Thank you.*

IIZUKA: You're welcome.

(END OF TAPE NUMBER FOURTEEN)

