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"Navigating Global Quality in a New Era"



**June 21, 2011 (Tuesday) 55<sup>th</sup> EOQ Congress**

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**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**  
**KEMPINSKI HOTEL CORVINUS**

**Tuesday 13:30 – 17:30**  
**Erzsébet tér 7-8, Budapest V.**

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**REGINA BALLROOM III.**

**Tuesday 15:30 – 17:30**

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## **12.2. MANAGEMENT OF QUALITY OR QUALITY OF MANAGEMENT II.**

**Session Chair:** *Asbjørn Aune, Norwegian University for Science and Technology, Norway*

### **15.30 Cross Functional Support Process Management**

*Lars Sörqvist, Sandholm Associates and Royal Institute of Technology, Sweden*

**Sörqvist, Lars** (Sweden), Member of the International Academy for Quality (IAQ)

Dr Lars Sorqvist is president and partner of Sandholm Associates. Sandholm Associates was founded in 1971 by Dr. Lennart Sandholm in close cooperation with Dr. Joseph Juran and is the leading Scandinavian consulting and training organization in Quality Management. The company also has a local office in Beijing in China. Sorqvist has also been since 1995 head of the subject area of Quality Management at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. He has a doctorate in Quality Management since 1998 and is Associate Professor at the Royal Institute of Technology. Sorqvist has published seven books in Swedish and Mandarin (Chinese) and many articles. He is member of the International Academy for Quality (IAQ) and chairman of the nomination committee of the Swedish Institute for Quality (SIQ).

# Cross Functional Support Process Management

*Dr Lars Sörqvist*

*President of Sandholm Associates,  
Associate Professor at Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm and  
Member of International Academy for Quality (IAQ)*

Today most companies and other organizations are focusing on their processes and how to develop and improve those. A process focus is a vital part of most quality and improvement models like TQM, ISO 9000, Six Sigma and Lean. The processes of the core business in an organization are usually well defined and mapped in a cross functional way. The work is led by process owners and goals and control systems are implemented. The process orientation in the main or core processes have today more or less reached a rather mature level.

Then studying administration and internal support activities in the same organizations the situation is in most cases very different. The level of process orientation is much lower. Sometimes processes are even not defined and mapped at all. If they are mapped the cross functional approach is mostly very weak. The role of process owners, implementation of goals and measures are in most cases indistinct and immature.

This paper will present a new cross functional way of looking at and handling support activities. By analyzing the activities and the work performed in the typical support functions/departments like human resources, finance, quality management, information technology, environmental management, information etc of companies many similarities have been found. The level of cooperation and cross functional understanding is anyhow very low. If, for instance, comparing the work carried out at a quality department with the work carried out at an IT-department or environmental department a strong focus on continuous improvements, control and competence development are found. Those similar needs of methodology can then be used as a ground for develop a new kind of common cross functional support processes. This will create new possibilities for cooperation, understanding and effectiveness. Examples of such process are business controlling, continuous improvement and competence development.

A methodology for identifying, defining, mapping and managing this kind of cross functional support processes will be presented in the paper. An interesting aspect of cross functional support process management is that it gives a new opportunity to manage a company. Some companies have chosen to give power to a cross functional management. Instead of manage the support work of the company by traditional managers as financial manager, HR-manager, quality manager etc this working activities could be manage by a global business controller, a business develop manager, a competence development manager etc. The advantages with such a cross functional management are considerable as it creates a strong platform for cooperation, prevents sub-optimisation and align many different support activities. Another effect is that this also makes it easier to focus on the real need of support in the core business and give support work a stronger internal customer focus.

The paper will be based on research at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm and many years of experiences from working with process management in hundreds of different organizations. A recent study of process management in Swedish companies carried out by the author is also part of the background to the paper. Examples will be given from several companies that have reached a higher level of cross functional support process management.