

Hesam AREF KASHFI  
74, Armaghan St. Valiasr Ave.  
19678, Tehran, Iran

6<sup>th</sup> March 2008

### **In Tribute to Dr. Joseph M. Juran**

The first time I was impressed by Dr. Juran goes back to 1994 and his article published at *Quality Progress*, August Issue, based on the presentation he had on May 24, 1994 at ASQC Annual Quality Congress. The last sentences were very important to me as the final message of the speech of a true quality leader with almost 80 years of hard work in this field. It reads: "All of you attending this congress have an interest in the subject of managing for quality. Some of you are fully immersed in it. I believe I can safely promise you that it will continue to grow during your lifetime and will offer exciting challenges as well as drudgery. I hope that during your own journey, you, too, will avail yourself of the opportunities provided by ASQC and other professional societies to gain from sharing experiences with others in the field. And I hope that, you, too, will come to relish the exhilaration of contributing to the common good."

I found that quality aims at the "**common good**" and mostly satisfies those who live for more than their own benefits. Also, through his historical review, I realized that quality profession is a hard and difficult job because it deals with change which requires challenging people, with high vision in mind and deep passion in heart. These are the first lessons I learned from Dr. Juran.

Since 1994, I have been following his works, lectures and articles and especially, for fundamentals of quality and quality management his treasure "**Juran's Quality Handbook**", is always providing me with reliable answers and clues, like a bible.

I hadn't the lucky opportunity to meet him in person, but I believe he was so great that could even influence people from far and the following specific case is just an examples:

It was around 8 o'clock in the morning 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2004, when I started my work by checking the received e-mails for the large quality conference we had on 6<sup>th</sup> July. Among the received e-mails there was one sent by Laura A. Sutherland, Dr. Juran's Executive Assistant, with an attachment: Dr. Juran's supporting message, against my request and invitation, to our 5<sup>th</sup> Conference of Quality Managers. I got extremely excited and very delighted for having such an important message in hand. I don't know how those days of impatience passed to reach the opening of the Conference. I was to deliver the opening address and I had prepared it on Dr. Juran's centenary, reviewing his unique life and career. On the conference day, near the end of the speech, after a short silence, I continued, "Today is a very important day for all of us. We are honored with the supporting message received from Dr. Juran, Father of Quality Management, to quality movement in Iran." And, I conveyed the message and asked all attendees, few thousands, to acknowledge. The audience gave him a long standing, about a minute, ovation. We hadn't had such a warm and deep hearty appreciation in similar situations yet. After the applause I continued, "It is our responsibility to show that we deserved such an honor and we should commit ourselves to continue the quality journey with passion and hard work," and I gave my vote of thanks and ended the address.

In the break time, one of the top executives came to me and said, "You are a powerful man!" I asked, "Why?" He explained, "Because you made such a large audience with so many top executives from

government to stand up and express such a warm and long appreciation.” I replied, “I did nothing other than reading the message. This is the influence of Dr. Juran’s personality which motivated all to express their heart-felt feeling. This is his profound belief in quality which excited the whole audience.”

That day, always remembered, is known as a turning point in the history of quality movement in Iran, a movement going on with the same pace and energy since then. I strongly believe behind our quality movement it’s Dr. Juran’s spirit and he has given us an impetus for all future. We feel ourselves in debt to Dr. Juran for inspiring us with his deep guidance through his supporting message. His leadership in world quality community was indisputable. Our case is a small but concrete example among many.

The message itself was very concise and short recalling Japan’s history with regard to quality in 20<sup>th</sup> century, explaining “...that historic event has demonstrated that it is entirely feasible to bring a nation to a state of world leadership in quality. It also has demonstrated that leadership in quality can lead to stunning results in the national economy.” Japan’s case was not exceptional and can happen everywhere provided that similar initiatives followed by hard work are taken.

Three years later, I have been invited for a quality convention to Nepal in August 2007 in which Professor Kano had a keynote address. During the panel discussion a question came asking if Nepal can change and improve through quality. I explained Dr. Juran’s directive in our case and the audience found it quite convincing and naturally challenging as well.

Dr. Juran not only helped Japan change in a revolutionary or, as it is usually called, miraculous way towards welfare and prosperity, he also contributed to the improvement of quality of life in many other countries. In general terms, he made the world change. It is worth noting to remind Peter Drucker’s sentence at the top of cover page of his book “Architect of Quality”. He had great influence almost everywhere and on everyone having either direct or indirect contact with him or his works. Only great individuals with integrity in character, honesty in personality and conviction to their own believes can have such an impact on the environment. Serving society and the human community had a very high position in his thoughts. He has always been emphasizing and inviting others to contribute to “**Pero Bono Publico**”. In spite of having tireless endeavors throughout his long life, he believed “**My job of contributing to the welfare of my fellow man is the great unfinished business.**”

Dr. Juran was my great role model as for many others. I feel, although he is unfortunately not among us any more but, he will always be remembered by all those being influenced during his life and even by coming generations through the fundamentals he developed for “Managing for Quality” as a new science.

Sincerely,



Hesam AREF KASHFI  
President, Iranian Society of Quality Managers,  
Vice President for External Affairs, Asia Pacific Quality Organization