

## WEDNESDAY interview

Dr. MADHAV MEHRA

(Management guru)

**'Quality' has been the mantra for the past three decades for Dr. Mehra who is the founder member of Quality Management International, set up in 1974 to promote quality management.**

**A Ph.D in Management by Objectives, London, he is the most sought after international trainer of Quality Management. As the chairman of the World Quality Council, which is the apex body on all quality issues, he is intensely involved with India for the implementation and regulation of the ISO 9000 certification.**

**Dr. Mehra, who was in the city last week to chalk out plans for the ninth World Congress on Total Quality to be held in January next year in Mumbai and to address the Association of Small Scale Industries, stated that the need of the hour is to prepare the Small Scale Industries (SSI) for the ISO-9000 certificate which will give a thrust to our exports. Dr. Mehra spoke of the importance of quality management and other related issues.**

■ How are your techniques of quality management different from your contemporaries?

□ Quality management is primarily focused on technology and tools. We have reached the limits of technology including software. However, we have not yet tapped the innovative power of humans. Quality is how you can exploit this power for development. People are not performing to their capabilities. They have not been empowered. Sadly, the attitude to train and empower people is lacking in the country. Workers at the lowest rungs should be involved in corporate planning and vision. If you want to get the best out of them they have to know how they

are going to benefit. Companies based on total quality management must share with the workers their aspirations.

■ India has been active on its quality management with the advent of liberalisation and globalisation but the concept of total quality management is still lacking. Comment?

□ India is way behind in quality management. It is unfortunately lower down on the list of priorities of corporations and the government. This has affected our exports in a big way. The government has no proper policy framework for quality management, and though they have launched

incentive schemes for companies preparing for ISO-9000 very few are taking advantage. It is important to get the concept of quality management accepted at the grass root level. The current research indicates that the fastest growth is registered by micro companies with just 20-30 workers. In this context quality management has to be developed in a big way as they are going to be the major players of the future.

■ What are the plans to help SSIs get the ISO-9000 certificate?

□ About 4,000 companies have been certified to the ISO-9000 in India but the percentage of SSI units are negligible. If exports have to improve we have to prepare the SSIs to meet the standards. For this we have launched a drive and our target is getting 1,000 SSI units certified in the next year. In partnership with consultants we have devised a fast track scheme for SSI. The European Commission is waiting



# 'The customer has become high quality conscious'

to send a team for the purpose but is waiting for the government to get its act together. We have to develop our own accreditation board in India. EEC has sanctioned a fund for India for an accreditation course.

■ What are the areas that Indian corporates should focus on in terms of good quality manage-

ment? What is your prescription in general for Indian entities?

□ There is a tremendous upsurge in the software market but it still requires quality management. Pharmaceuticals is yet another area which is important where we have an advantage in conventional and non-conventional drugs which has to be exploited. Textiles is yet another industry where companies have done well but

they have not been able to have their own labels. Emphasis on quality management in textile and garments will make them export winners. This also holds true for the jewellery business. The company which can change their perception according to the customer perception is going to emerge a winner. The customer is become highly quality conscious. ■

— ACHAL DHURVA