



The Ice Cream Maker: An Inspiring Tale About Making Quality The Key Ingredient in Everything You Do

By Subir Chowdhury

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Innovation, claims quality consultant Subir Chowdhury, is part of America's DNA. No other country in the world matches America's creative drive and its ability to turn innovative ideas into revolutionary products—from antilock brakes and steel-belted radial tires to sophisticated software and microprocessors. But as fast as we introduce new products, we lose the markets we establish to countries that know how to manufacture higher quality versions for less money. As Japanese and European firms win market share by concentrating on *quality*, America is continually forced to rely on innovation to stay ahead.

In *The Ice Cream Maker*, Chowdhury uses a simple story to illustrate how businesses can instill quality into our culture and into every product we design, build, and market. The protagonist of the story is Peter Delvecchio, the manager of a regional ice cream company, who is determined to sell its ice cream to a flourishing national grocery chain, Natural Foods. In conversations with the Natural Foods manager, Peter learns how the extraordinarily successful retailer achieves its renowned high standard of excellence, both in the services it provides its customers and in the foods it manufactures and sells. Quality, he discovers, must be the mission of every employee; by learning to *listen*, *enrich*, and *optimize*, he can encourage and sustain the highest levels of quality in everything the company does.

Like *Fish!* and *Who Moved My Cheese?* *The Ice Cream Maker* offers an essential and universal lesson about one of industry's foremost challenges in a thoroughly engaging style. For managers and executives, small business owners and entrepreneurs, *The Ice Cream Maker* is a compelling, eye-opening guide to the most effective ways to achieve excellence and become industry leaders on the global stage.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Pete, hero of this rapturous business novella, manages an ice cream factory where "the low hum of mediocrity filled the air...like an offensive odor." Desperate to boost margins, Pete makes a sales call to the local Natural Foods grocery store, where he is amazed by "how clean and fresh, warm and welcoming the store was," by the cheerfulness of the employees, and by charismatic store manager Mike, who expounds legendary Natural Foods founder Glen Goodwill's philosophy of putting quality before profit. "Mike...I need help," Pete sobs, in the throes of a conversion experience, "tell me what I can do to make quality a part of our culture." He learns to empower his workers, listen to customers and obsessively measure every detail of production processes with an eye to continuous improvement. Soon lumpy texture and leaky cartons are a thing of the past, profits soar, Pete is promoted to company president and he even applies Mike's teachings to enhance the quality of his marriage and parenting. Chowdhury, author of *The Power of Six Sigma*, extends Total Quality Management from a managerial program into a journey toward spiritual redemption. He conveys its principles through a smattering of process-engineering argot ("we reduced tolerance of variables on our mix-ins to .1 grams and the depth of each tub to two millimeters"), golf and football parables, and cultic incantations like "you have tilled the soil, to prepare it for the seed of quality." Although less than convincing as a motivational tract, this book provides a readable, if sketchy, introduction to TQM precepts. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Review

TAKING QUALITY TO THE NEXT LEVEL

"Great book! *The Ice Cream Maker* should be mandatory reading for anyone entering the workforce."

—Steve Walukas, Vice President, Corporate Quality, DaimlerChrysler Corporation

"This business gem is short in length, but boundless in the depth of its insight and wisdom. If there is only one book and one author I could recommend in the world of quality, it would be *The Ice Cream Maker* and Subir Chowdhury."

—Marshall Goldsmith, founding partner of Marshall Goldsmith Partners, and author of *The Leader of the Future*

"Fabulous! *The Ice Cream Maker* offers a great illustration of the amazing results that can be achieved by engaging your entire workforce in the efforts to improve quality."

— Lee A. Mundy, Executive Director, Strategic Quality Initiative, General Motors Corporation

"In 115 jargon-free pages, [Chowdhury] boils down most of the wisdom of modern management theory and practice that is equally relevant to chief executive and front-line clerk."

---- THE WASHINGTON POST (10-9-2005)

"The Ice Cream Maker becoming a kind of Detroit Bible, at once raising our expectations and our self-confidence. That's bold self-promotion -- chutzpah -- a quality that our battered region could use right now."

---THE DETROIT NEWS (11/13/2005)

"Subir Chowdhury's mission is to make quality part of America's corporate DNA. The Ice Cream Maker is a great step on the path to this end."

--- KEN BLANCHARD, coauthor of The One Minute Manager

From the Inside Flap

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In THE ICE CREAM MAKER, Chowdhury uses a simple story to illustrate how businesses can instill quality into our culture and into every product we design, build, and market. The protagonist of the story is Steve Combs, the manager of a regional ice cream company, who is determined to sell its ice cream to a flourishing national grocery chain, Natural Foods. In conversations with the Natural Foods manager, Steve learns how the extraordinarily successful retailer achieves its renowned high standard of excellence, both in the services it provides its customers and in the foods it manufactures and sells. Quality, he discovers, must be the mission of every employee; by learning to "listen, "enhance, and "optimize, he can encourage and sustain the highest levels of quality in everything the company does.

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From reader reviews:

Richard Redd:

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Marilyn Urquhart:

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