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People's Corner

Quality Interview with Pamela Litka & Rand Croxall

Introduction

Quality and Customer Peace of Mind.

Recently, our Executive Vice President at Baker Hughes Digital Solutions President & CEO [Rami Qasem](#) wrote an article on [LinkedIn](#) expressing the importance of Quality to our brand.

"Quality is always a priority for industrial companies like ours; however, too often it can become an abstraction. That's why we are quite proud of [a video that Digital Solutions developed early this year](#). It puts in clear, simple language what quality means for us: peace of mind for our customers that their equipment and processes will work when and where required. What is not as simple is the extensive work that goes into giving our customers this peace of mind – particularly in the new world shaped by COVID-19."

Today, I introduce you to the Bently team and what Quality means to the Bently Nevada family.

Interview Q & A

Pamela:

Rand, please tell me about yourself.

Rand:

I grew up in Southeast Idaho in an area and climate not too different from Minden, other than not having the beautiful Sierra Nevada mountains and Lake Tahoe we have to enjoy in this area. I graduated from Brigham Young University with a degree in Computer Science and started with [Bently Nevada](#) shortly after graduation. My beautiful wife and I have 4 boys, ranging in age from 14 to 25. I love spending time with my family. We love to hike, camp, and visit theme parks when they are open.

Pamela:

What is your career history with Bently Nevada?

Rand:

I started my career with Bently Nevada just over 25 years ago working on [ADRE](#) for Windows as a software engineer on the sustaining team. I then transitioned to product development on Data Manager 2000, after which I had the opportunity to work on version 1.0 of [System 1](#) Configuration. At the time of the initial release System 1, I took the role as the System 1 Introduction Team Leader where I spent many years managing the engineers on the team and working directly with customers, service engineers, and technical support engineers to solve problems and address customer problems. In 2007, I took the role as the Software Sustaining Manager, managing the team for all software sustaining. In 2010, I took a role as operations manager for software, learning much more about business planning cycles, budgets, and forecasts. It was in this role that I focused more on software development and sustaining processes and procedures and took audit responsibilities both inside and outside the software organization. Exposure to these areas led to my current role in quality.

Pamela:

Please share with us your evolving role with BN Quality and how it differs from your previous role(s)?

Rand:

Coming from a software background, my transition into a full-time quality role opened up many more opportunities to interact with and spend time on the manufacturing floor, while also expanding my opportunities to work cross-functionally with commercial, sales, service, and other groups within technology much more closely than I had in prior roles. In my current role, I am able to lead quality initiatives, drive continuous improvement, and support the broader team as we all work to maintain site [ISO 9001](#) certification with focus on the [Quality Management System](#) vitality and effectiveness.

Pamela:

What are the take-aways from your previous role that you have brought into your role?

Rand:

Working on the sustaining team for several years provided me with many opportunities to work directly with customers, helping to resolve their issues. The experience also highlighted for me the challenges we present to our customers when what we deliver as a business does not work as expected or does not meet customer expectations. This can be very painful for our customers and costly to the business. While developing and sustaining, I spent a lot of time problem solving. What we do in quality also involves a lot of problem solving, facilitation, and working with all functions to ensure we have a robust quality management system throughout the organization.

Pamela:

Who does your team comprise of?

Rand:

We have been fortunate this year to now be a Quality team of 4 - dedicated to the Minden facility. We have Ryan Roberts, who was recently promoted to Lead Process Improvement Specialist, focused on supporting the manufacturing team; Damien Gombert – Product Quality Engineer, working with both manufacturing and engineering to drive quality initiatives and support both teams as they design and manufacture products, and the most recent addition to the team LeQuan Anderson, who joins after most recently working as a technician in manufacturing, focused on driving our Quality Management System (QMS) metrics, leading the Material Review Board and composing formal reports for customer returns, among a number of other responsibilities.

We also have tremendous support from others not directly part of the quality team when it comes to resolving customer issues, driving continuous improvement and providing high quality products and services. Thanks goes out to all our employees supporting and driving quality outcomes.

Pamela:

Please share with us the direction and future of the BN Quality organization through the lens of a Quality leader?

Rand:

Going forward, it is critical for the BN quality organization to maintain rigor and focus around the basics that provide for a robust Quality Management System. We will continue to work with the cross-functional teams to keep cost of quality low, continuing to drive continuous improvements through robust internal audits and formal causal analysis, and manage the on-going transition when it comes to tools and processes due to recent business restructuring and change. In addition, we would like to be able to help the business where we can, to support the overall business strategic initiatives.

With recent changes in the business structure, we look forward to having [John Monson](#) join us as the Bently Nevada Global Quality Leader. John will be leading the overall quality organization, partnering globally with all functions to help the business achieve our strategic objectives and leading the business transformation to the Digital Solutions Operating System.

Pamela:

During Covid 2020, how has the quality team pivoted to support our customers? How will they continue to support through the pandemic into 2021?

Rand:

These are interesting times we now live in. As far as the quality team, we have tried to do our part in minimizing the number of employees at the facility while still maintaining a physical presence in the building to support the manufacturing team. We have been able to successfully adjust schedules to make sure we have someone in the building every day. For those working remote, video conferences and calls have worked very well to keep the team connected while we continue to address issues both inside and outside the facility to support our customers. We are setup to support this model as long as needed going into 2021.

We also worked closely with our ISO Auditor for our periodic site audits with screening requirements, masks and social distancing for in-person audits. Both audits were very successful, allowing us to maintain our ISO 9001:2015 certification. Other audits managed by Tonya Woods and the Technical Regulations and Standards team have been remote audits, all of which have also gone very well.

Pamela:

What kind of feedback is the quality team receiving from the BN employees and the customers during the 2020 year that we can grow from and continue to support them with, with the lack of interaction while previously being face to face?

Rand:

The feedback we are receiving has generally been very positive. We have seen an increase in overall Net Promoter Scores from our customers over the course of the year, currently up 17% for transactional surveys despite [COVID-19 challenges](#). When it comes to feedback through relationship surveys, we are up slightly with continued opportunities for improvement. We must make sure we are responsive to the needs of our customers, that they know who and how to contact Bently Nevada when needed, and that we all pay attention to the details when performing our work, all in an effort to make our customers happy, while at the same time, being able to go home each day feeling good about the work we do.

Pamela:

What does Quality mean to you? To our employees? To our customers? Why is it so important?

Rand:

Quality, in addition to Safety, Integrity, and Compliance, is critical to the success of the business for us and our customers. It must be at the forefront of what we do, whether designing, manufacturing, or providing service to our customers. Our goal has been and will continue to be delivering the highest quality products and services to our customers. It is important for all of us to remember that we are all critical to quality and we should all do our part to make sure that within our realm of responsibility we are responsible for the quality outputs, whether product or service. We must all do our part to delight our customers and build quality into our products and services, from design to delivery and beyond.

Pamela:

Is there anything else you'd like to highlight that we haven't discussed?

Rand:

I would just like to thank everyone for their continued support and dedication to quality. It is everyone's responsibility. We saw several great examples of stopping the line this year when something did not look right, or trends were going in the wrong direction. We all need to remember that we are entitled and expected to raise concerns, the earlier the better. Doing so helps to ensure we identify issues early, mitigate risks to our customers and the business, and continue to delight our customers with the highest quality of products and service.



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