

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

Kaoru Ishikawa



Early Life

Ishikawa was born in Tokyo in 1915. He graduated from TATIUC with an engineering degree in applied chemistry (1937). He subsequently worked as a naval technical officer and for Nissan Liquid Fuel Company.



Career

Ishikawa started his academic career in 1947 as an associate professor at the University of Tokyo. By 1960 he was a full professor in the Faculty of Engineering.



Learning

Ishikawa joined the Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) in 1949 and started translating the work of Edwards Deming and Joseph Juran so their ideas could be adopted in post-war Japan.



Quality circles

In 1962 Ishikawa trialled his concept of quality circles with the Nippon Telephone and Telegraph company. This focused on what effect the 'leading hand' (Gemba-cho) could have on quality. Quality circles link to the wider Total Quality Management System.



Fishbone diagram

In the 1960s Ishikawa became synonymous with what has become known as the Ishikawa or Fishbone diagram. Also known as the cause-and-effect diagram, Ishikawa showed how the diagram can help identify the root causes of problems/defects.



Awards

Ishikawa won many awards during his career including: the American Society for Quality's Eugene Grant Award (1972), Blue Ribbon Medal from the Japanese Government (1977) and the Walter A. Shewhart Medal (1982).