

## Chapter Fourteen

# INVOLVE EVERYONE IN THE TRANSFORMATION

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*"Put everybody in the company to work to accomplish the transformation. The transformation is everybody's job."*

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To accomplish the transformation, Dr. Deming says that management must organize as a team. Every employee must then acquire a precise, very specific idea of how to improve quality, starting with the management team or council. But how to begin? Start with the Shewhart Cycle, also known as the Deming Wheel—the wheel of continuous improvement. In America, it is often referred to as the PDCA cycle, for Plan, Do, Check, and Act. Starting in 1950, Dr. Deming used this model as the central theme for his twice-a-year conferences that he gave to engineers and managers.

The PDCA cycle is an action-oriented approach designed to involve everyone in the transformation. It is intended to be coupled with a never-ending focus on customer satisfaction—both internal and external. One of the things that I will always remember about Dr. Deming is his uncanny ability to be at the forefront of voicing new theories, as shown by his early use of the term *internal customer*. As early as 1975, he taught that each of us has customers, even if we do not interact with the external (or ultimate) customer. While this may not seem like such a big deal today, in 1975 it was

positively revolutionary thinking. Along the same lines, he was an early advocate of the concept of *internal suppliers*.

Often management will require guidance from an experienced consultant, as in our private lives we may turn to our priest, minister, rabbi, or other earthly intermediary. Dr. Deming stressed that the ultimate responsibility for promoting quality improvement on a continuous basis cannot be delegated. He taught that the consultant cannot become a substitute for senior management in carrying out the Fourteen Points and eliminating the Seven Deadly Diseases. "No substitutes," Dr. Deming would say. Instead, management must adopt an evangelical zeal for studying and implementing the new philosophy, which in his mind was like the "new religion." To him, quality was like religion—not something you do once in a while and then go about your business the rest of the week. It was a way of life, a permanent and unending change of heart, a religious conversion.

If you have ever visited an award-winning quality company that practices excellence, you will know what I mean. The people you meet, from top management to the people in the mailroom, all have this evangelical look about them. They exude quality in their walk and in their talk. When you visit Milliken, IBM Rochester, Zytec, AT&T, and all the others, you come away shaking your head and marveling at their zeal and enthusiasm. They all seem to speak the same language; in other words, they are all involved in the transformation. Dr. Deming would often say, "This whole movement may be instituted and carried out by middle management, speaking with one voice." Why is middle management the point of focus? They are the hardest to motivate and often have the most to lose. They must become like the church choir, singing the songs of change. They must become disciples if the organization is to change, much less transform. They must be converted if the people are to believe.

Finally, Dr. Deming saw the organization as a team, where everyone has the opportunity to take part. He said that the aim of the team is to improve the input and the output of any stage. In *Out of the Crisis* (p. 90), he put it this way:

A team may well be composed of people from different staff areas. A team has a customer. Everyone on a team has a chance to contribute ideas, plans, and figures; but anyone may expect to find some of his best ideas submerged by consensus of the team.

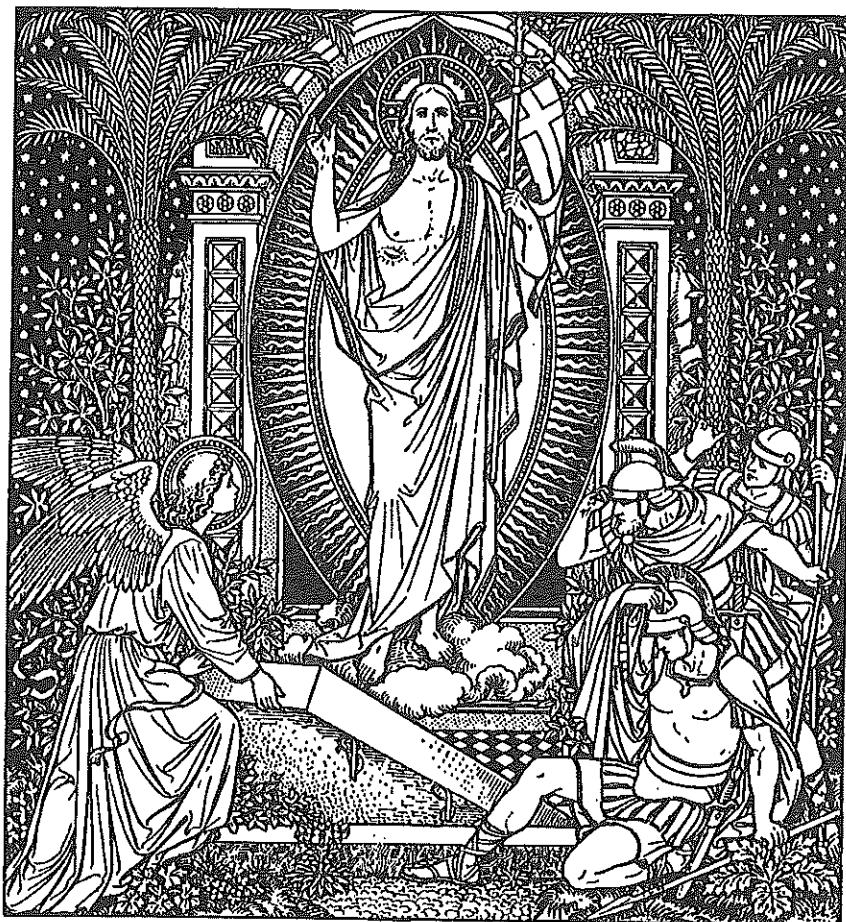
He may have a chance on the later time around the cycle [for] a good team has a social memory. At successive sessions, people may later tear up what they did in the previous session and make a fresh start with clearer ideas. This is a sign of advancement.

In Dr. Deming's world, his church was a very important part of the team he was on. His religion was a very strong part of the fabric of his life. He composed hymns, sang in the choir, said his prayers, and followed the Golden Rule as best a man could. He believed in the universal brotherhood of mankind and treated each person he met with respect. He also believed in the universal fallibility of systems, but he balanced it all with a love for the people who created them. Even when the situation called for harsh measures, he always tried to act with a higher purpose in mind. He was a heavyweight among his peers, but heavyweights die as well. Although he has gone to his greater reward, the reward is also ours for having known him and been touched by him, if only for a moment in time.

*A Requiem Offered for the Repose of the Soul of*

**William Edwards Deming**

*(14 October 1900–20 December 1993)*



*Christus resurgens ex mortuis, tam non moritur:  
mors illi ultra non dominabitur. [Romans 6.9]*

Wednesday, 29 December 1993

Saint Paul's Parish  
Washington, D.C.

## Requiem for a Heavyweight: Homily Delivered at the Requiem for W. Edwards Deming

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*by the Reverend Father August W. Peters, Jr.*

On behalf of Father Martin, Saint Paul's Parish, and the family of Dr. Deming, I welcome you to his beloved church today and to this special service for him. I thank all of you for coming and for braving the elements to do so. It is a particular honor for us, and it is extremely gratifying, to have here today numerous dignitaries and official representatives of governments and corporations and so many friends and associates of Dr. Deming, not only from this city, but from across the nation and from other parts of the world. It is a fitting tribute to him. And so, again, we are grateful that you came, and we hope that you were not terribly inconvenienced by the bad weather or our space limitations, two things over which we had very little control at this time.

We are all the poorer for having lost a giant of a man, Dr. W. Edwards Deming. We are at the same time all the richer for having known him and having benefited from his knowledge, his sound teaching, his wise counsel, his kindness and generosity, and what I am bound to call the "quality life" which he led.

I cannot tell you how honored and humbled I was to be asked by Dr. Deming's family to be the preacher at his requiem. I feel privileged to do this for I have great admiration and affection for the man.

My mind ran immediately to a passage from the forty-fourth chapter of the book of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus, which is appointed to be read at the Eucharist on All Saints' Day. As I read to you now verses one to eight of that lesson, I think you will see why I at once thought of it in connection with Dr. Deming:

*Let us now praise famous men, and our fathers in their generations.  
The Lord apportioned to them great glory, his majesty from the  
beginning.*

*There were those who ruled in their kingdoms,  
 and were men renowned for their power,  
 giving counsel by their understanding, and proclaiming  
 prophecies;  
 leaders of the people in their deliberations  
 and in understanding of learning for the people, wise in their  
 words of instruction;  
 those who composed musical tunes, and set forth verses in writing;  
 rich men furnished with resources, living peaceably in their  
 habitations—  
 all these were honored in their generations, and were the glory of  
 their times.  
 There are some of them who have left a name, so that men declare  
 their praise.*

Edwards Deming is a *famous man*—without doubt one of the most eminent figures, nationally and internationally, in the latter part of this century, and he is surely the most illustrious member of Saint Paul's Parish. Dr. Deming has been to many, first, a *father*—to his own daughters, to whom he was devoted, and to the multitudes of students who have sat at his feet and absorbed his doctrine. He has even been called "the father of the third wave of the Industrial Revolution." He has *given counsel by (his) understanding*, which was immense, and has been regarded by many as a *prophet* who was *wise in the words of instruction*. (I have recently been reading his books and can testify that this is true.) And so Dr. Deming is rightly regarded as a *leader of the people*. At the same time he was a man who *composed musical tunes*—we are singing some of them today for his service!—and one who *set forth verses in writing*.

Dr. Deming, as we all know, was eminently successful in his professional career as a scholar, educator, lecturer, author, and consultant. And he did it all with conviction, purpose, zeal, and moral authority. The London *Daily Telegraph* of December 24 in its article on Dr. Deming referred to "the fruits of Deming's **evangelism**" (which are found in the efficient organization of Japanese factories around the world). It also spoke of Dr. Deming pursuing "a relentless **mission to convert** ailing [American] industries to his way of thinking." It was, as he himself said, a matter of "trying to keep America from committing suicide"—certainly a worthwhile mission!

Now I know practically nothing of economics and the science of statistics, and even less of the principles of business management—fields in which he was an acknowledged expert. But I do grasp the significance of Dr. Deming's commitment to "total quality" at every level. God bless him for that important principle which he never ceased to hammer home and apply. His famous seminars obviously have made great sense to a great many people and have led to positive changes in industry—which is a thing that is good for everyone. Quite rightly, he has been *honored in his generation* and could be considered among those who are called in Sirach *the glory of their times*. Edwards Deming is a person who *has left a name, so that men declare his praise*. How proud we are of him today and how thankful for his time among us and for his enormous contribution to the betterment of our lives.

Having said all that, I must point out that my purpose here today is not to deliver a eulogy to Dr. Deming, recounting all the significant events and achievements of his long and distinguished life and career and extolling his many virtues. First of all, there wouldn't be time! (Some of you have planes to catch.) Secondly, it would be presumptuous of me, one of his pastors but not one of his peers, to attempt so formidable a task. How could I begin to detail with accuracy, insight, and perspective such a life and to "sum it all up" for you, so to speak? And thirdly, Dr. Deming's family specifically directed me not to do it. I am being an obedient servant of God's people. So I now must practice some restraint.

The reason why we gathered here at Saint Paul's, in the snow and ice, is because this is Dr. Deming's own parish church and this is a religious service—specifically a requiem mass, which is the service we have for every member of our Church at the time of their departure out of this world. It is offered to the glory of God, in thanksgiving for the life of the deceased Christian and for the repose of his soul. It is, further, an act of Christian faith and charity and an occasion of prayer for the consolation of the family and friends of the departed. And it is the primary purpose of the preacher on such an occasion to declare the word of God in a way that will be helpful to God's people.

We turn then to the Scriptures for a lesson from the Second Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians. There we hear the Apostle say to the Church:

*We do not lose heart. Though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed every day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, because we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.*

Dear friends, the Holy Bible teaches us in many places that God has made us to be "like" Himself. That means, first of all, that we are to manifest His character and live "godly" lives in this world. We are to "be holy" even as He is holy. We are to "love one another" even as Christ has loved us. We are to do the work God directs us to do in righteousness and truth, as **His servants**, and for the common good. This is God's word to us.

I think that Dr. Deming's commitment to "total quality" in all things and at all levels had its roots and origin in his deep religious faith. I think that his own "quality life" was a concrete expression of his inner belief in God who is at work in us to transform us and to make his whole creation new and glorious. I think that Dr. Deming's character and exemplary life and his mission on earth to transform human systems and to strive for quality at all levels is the outcome of his desire, in the proper Biblical understanding of it, to be "like God"—and that means a life **submitted to God** and **oriented** toward **His** truth and the accomplishment of **His** work. There is something of the gloriousness of God in it when men, like Edwards Deming, become *the glory of their times*. Thanks be to God for that.

But, as Saint Paul shows us, in this mortal life we are bound to age and to suffer affliction. *Our outer nature is wasting away.* Sickness will overtake us and death will eventually take us out of this world.

I came to know Dr. Deming very well through his illnesses. I was one of the priests who would visit him often and pray with him and bring him the sacraments of the Church. He was most reverent when we prayed and devout in signing himself with the cross and in receiving Holy Communion. Sometimes he would pose theological questions and I would try to answer them (not always to his satisfaction!). Always he received me with the utmost courtesy and good humor and he was literally profuse in his expressions of gratitude that I had come to him. ("Thank you very much for coming; thank you very much for coming; thank you very much for com-



ing...") It really was remarkable, I thought, because often people who are very ill will indulge in self-pity and the placing of blame for their misery. Sometimes they even reject the Church and its ministry. But Ed Deming did none of that. Which is not to make him out to be a saint far above all the rest of us, but it does suggest an uncommon awareness of what Saint Paul calls *the things that are unseen which are eternal*. And **that makes a difference** in a person's life.

Dr. Deming was **in every way** a "quality" man. I think he knew something about being the servant of God in truth and for the common good. Which, I believe, gave him the commitment and the fortitude not only to make such an enormous contribution to the world but to be a faithful, generous, and loving man, **even through suffering**. It also **prepared him for the life to come**. He *looked to the things that are unseen*; he apprehended that which is *eternal*. Which is to say that he was able to glimpse something of the glorious God who is drawing us to Himself and who is *preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison*—and that is **TOTAL QUALITY, THE RESURRECTION LIFE**.

And so Saint Paul writes:

*For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Here indeed we groan, and long to put on our heavenly dwelling, so that by putting it on we may not be found naked. For while we are still in this tent, we sigh with anxiety; not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.*

It never ceases to amaze me that whenever I came to visit Dr. Deming to bring him the sacraments in his illness and when he wasn't up to coming to church, I was not permitted to enter into his presence unless and until he was fully dressed in shirt, tie, and business suit! (The only exception was when he was confined to bed in Sibley Hospital and couldn't get dressed up; but he was never comfortable about that.) He was a gentleman of the old school, I guess you would say, and I gather (from one of his memoirs published in Ceil Kilian's book about him) that it goes back to the way his mother required him to dress every day when he was a young boy. But then I saw in that a symbol, a symbol of what Saint

Paul is saying. The life of the world to come is not a matter of shedding our old body of mortality and just drifting off into the great beyond like a vapor or something. This would be a denial of our essential nature as human beings. Instead, it's a matter of **being clothed with immortality—“getting dressed up” in the glory of Christ—“putting on” the new creation** which comes from God, so that *what is mortal may be swallowed up by life*. This is what it is to be **A COMPLETED HUMAN BEING: “TOTAL QUALITY” HUMANITY, in the image of God.**

We can all be thankful that Dr. Deming was such a celebrated and decorated human being while he lived among us. I know how much he valued the award he received in 1960 from the Emperor of Japan, the Second Order Medal of the Sacred Treasure. It's the first thing he wanted to tell me about and show me a representation of when I entered his house for the first time several years ago. And it pleased him to a great degree to have the Deming Prize established in his name to recognize Japanese manufacturers who made significant advances in the quality of their products. Over the years his super-human (and it was that) lecturing schedule brought him considerable prestige and material reward. Yet he never became overly impressed with his position and wealth, nor did he allow himself to become secularized. He was no slave to mammon. How succinctly the London *Daily Telegraph* article put this in its concluding sentence: “He [Deming] lived modestly and gave much of his income to his local church and to medical charities.” The reward of eternal life was more important to Edwards Deming than the rewards of this world. The glories of God's heavenly kingdom outshone for him the glitter of earthly success. He never forgot **who he was** and **Whose he is**.

W. EDWARDS DEMING:  
 child of God,  
 friend to man,  
 faithful brother in Christ

We shall not forget him. In love and gratitude we commend him to God's eternal keeping and glory. May he shine with the radiance of Christ and rejoice in the fellowship of all the Saints, now and forever, and unto ages of ages. *Amen.*

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Dr. Deming would have wanted you to know the names of the participants in his requiem:

The Reverend Doctor Richard Cornish Martin  
*Celebrant*

The Reverend August W. Peters  
*Assisting and Homilist*

The Reverend Gregory G. Harrigle  
*Assisting and Old Testament Lector*

The Reverend E. Perren Hayes  
*Assisting and New Testament Lector*

Jeffrey Smith  
*Organist and Choir Director*

The Choir of Saint Paul's Parish

David Parker  
*Baritone soloist*

Amanda Guilford  
*Soprano soloist*

Lowell I. Miller  
*Master of Ceremonies*

Members of the Saint Paul's Parish Guild of Acolytes

Herbert B. Thompson  
*Head Usher*

The Ushers of Saint Paul's Parish

## Victory

*Antiphon (at the beginning)*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

*Ped.* *p*

1 The strife is o'er, the bat - tle done, the vic - to -  
 2 The powers of death have done their worst, but Christ their

4 He closed the yawn - ing gates of hell, the bars from  
 5 Lord! by the stripes which wound - ed thee, from death's dread

1 ry of life is won; the song of tri - umph  
 2 le - gions hath dis - persed: let shout of ho - ly

4 heaven's high por - tals fell; let hymns of praise his  
 5 sting thy serv - ants free, that we may live and

1 has be - gun. Al - le - lu - ia!  
 2 joy out - burst. Al - le - lu - ia!

4 tri - umphs tell! Al - le - lu - ia!  
 5 sing to thee. Al - le - lu - ia! [Ant.]

*Antiphon (at the end)*

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

*Ped.* *p*

Words: Latin, 1965; tr. Francis Pott (1832-1909), alt.  
 Music: Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina (1525-1594); adapt. and arr. William Henry Monk (1823-1889).