


## 10 people who shaped our view of industry best practice

**F**rom automotive emission scandals and ISO revisions to new guidance for excellence in hospitals – 2015 has been a big year for the quality industry. Some stories surprised us, others have reassured us and some we just simply didn't see coming. But, the only way to truly understand the future of the profession and where it's

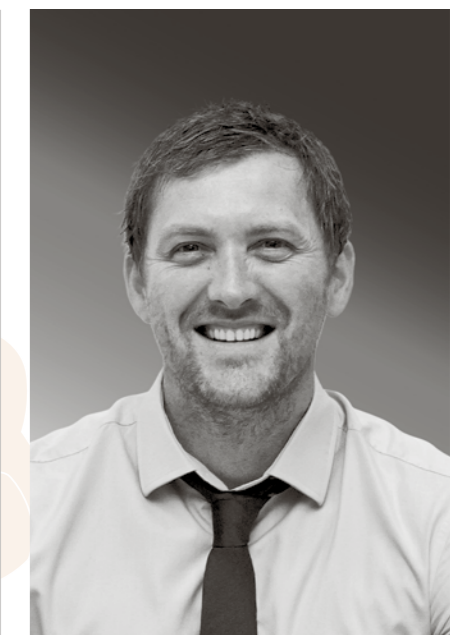
going is to get to grips with the past. With that in mind, *QW* spoke to a selection of leading industry experts – from forecasters to CEOs – who have embraced the latest trends that are shaping, and will continue to shape, best practice. They reveal what lessons they've learned this year and how it has changed their views on the business environment.



 **James Woudhuysen,**  
Forecaster, journalist,  
public speaker and  
occasional broadcaster  
for Radio 4



 **Alison Monroe,**  
CEO and co-founder  
of HR consultancy  
Sageco, and a Pay Equity  
Ambassador



 **Jason Arkell,**  
Head of Business  
Improvement and  
Quality Management at  
Amec Foster Wheeler

### 1. Data-driven forecasting can support strategy decisions

“Many forecasts are clichéd and the obvious danger is to extrapolate trends in the present unthinkingly. Getting data on corporate operations – sales, your market share, the prices of your competitors – is a big job. Forecasting is about how well you weld all of these factors into a coherent whole. My advice to quality professionals is not to be evangelical or technocratic, but rather to read more widely and deeply and have a critical attitude – not just toward the profession. You’ve got to sketch the mediations between the big picture and your sector, look at what you’ve got and see if there are links. The emphasis on quality today is, in my view, too much on customer experience and not enough on customer purpose.”

### 2. Leadership behaviours are constantly evolving

“I still draw from the quality lessons I learned in the past to enhance my leadership strategy. I try to stay true to myself as a CEO and ensure I have a clear vision to communicate to stakeholders. Leadership is about striving to strike a balance between being nimble, adaptable, dynamic and creative, as well as ensuring good governance, process and policy. The best leaders make sure their employees have opportunities to shape, create, evolve and imagine the future, rather than feel as if they are stuck on a conveyor belt or stagnating. Nurturing the creative spirit can be challenging. However, boldness equals genius, so encourage curiosity and strive to empower people. There is a lot average in the world – choose not to be average.”

### 3. The time to engage with the boardroom is now

“I wanted quality to be recognised as a key competitive differentiator and this meant informing everyone – from the frontline to directors – about the value of quality management. To get buy-in, I explained that through a robust quality management system (QMS) we could implement a QMS activity matrix to show measured deliverables based around risk mitigation, continuous improvement initiatives and process efficiencies – all factors that impact [Amec Foster Wheeler’s] commercial success. I gained the directors’ funding and support to grow the function, expanding the team from six people to more than 100 in just 12 months. I also launched our first Graduate and Trainee Quality Programme.”






 **Steve Dalton,**  
OBE, Managing  
Director at the Sony  
UK Technology Centre



 **Ellen Willoughby,**  
founder of leading  
consultancy firm  
All About Quality



 **Richard Green,**  
Head of Professional  
Networks at the CQI  
and a Principal Auditor



 **David Hutchins,**  
CQP FCQI, Chairman  
of David Hutchins  
International Quality College



 **Gabbi Loedolff,**  
Creative Buyer  
at Lush Fresh  
Handmade Cosmetics

“Social media is very powerful in helping potential clients decide if they want to do business with you. If your social media presence is professional, helpful and positive it helps reinforce that message”

#### 4. Company culture impacts the bottom line

“At the Sony UK Technology Centre we live by the mantra of ‘doing something better today than yesterday’. We want our people to take this to the next level. To help bring this to life, we have an employee recognition scheme where staff can recognise their colleagues for activities they’ve done well and we’ll reward them. We also reward those who put their hands up and admit they’ve made a mistake. Human error, to some extent, is inevitable. What we’re trying to achieve with this ‘putting your hands up culture’ is a minimisation of the human impact on production runs. We value honesty because it’s better for us to capture a problem on-site than let it go out the door – there’s no 1980s blame culture here.”

#### 5. Social media can boost your professional profile

“Social media is a great way to spread the quality message. Learn to use one social media platform really well. It doesn’t matter if it’s LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or one of the many other platforms – just pick one and learn how to use it. There are plenty of tutorials online or social media companies offering face-to-face training, so it’s quite easy to become a competent user. I think social media is very powerful in helping potential clients decide if they want to do business with you. If your social media presence is professional, helpful and positive it helps reinforce that message to potential clients. My top tip is to be positive. Online it is easy to join in negativity but that creates a bad image. The aim is to create a better image of you and the profession.”

#### 6. Top management take note of Annex SL

“While a lot has been written about the impact of the introduction of Annex SL for those performing management system audits, less has been penned in respect of how these changes will affect those charged with leading organisations. The introduction of Annex SL-based standards represents something of a double-edged sword, offering top management opportunities to streamline management systems and reduce costs, but at the same time requiring changes in behaviour and a greater investment of their time and effort than they are likely to be making at present. If you’re a member of top management then you need to understand the implications of these changes for you and your business. After all, they directly affect you.”

#### 7. Total Quality Management is changing

“We’re falling behind the rest of the world in terms of new ways to approach quality and it’s because the UK and Europe are suffering from glorious isolationism. We need to change in order to compete. *Dantotsu* (断トツ) – the Japanese term for number one thinking (this is one interpretation) – is the latest development in Total Quality Management’s evolution. It’s a driving force for companies in the Far East to attempt to be number one, not just as a whole organisation against its competitors, but in terms of every individual product they produce. The goal for this innovation push is for organisations to be so far ahead with key features of products that it would take a competitor at least five years to catch up.”

#### 8. Sustainability and ethics are now a top priority for businesses

“Lush has started to move beyond just buying top quality materials to working to understand our supply chains – where materials come from and who produces them. We realised that the traditional profit distribution model did not benefit the people growing or producing raw materials, so we have made an effort to reduce the number of hands taking a cut of the profit. We work directly with growers, where possible, to do more capacity building on the ground to introduce that value-adding process. It’s about clear, collaborative planning and understanding expectations, as well as monitoring development through reports, visits where feasible, videos and photos. Feedback is really important for creating a transparent system.”


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 **Ian McCabe,**  
Head of Quality  
at CQI Corporate  
Partner Nuvia



 **Jake Dyson,**  
Inventor and  
Non-Executive Director  
on the Dyson board

**“Repositioning the profession requires us to recognise existing misconceptions, address them head on and raise people’s awareness of what the modern quality professional believes”**

**9. The profession is changing – its time to change with it**

“Unfortunately many people, even those who accept its importance, hold negative views about quality and how the quality profession conducts itself. Repositioning the profession requires us to recognise existing misconceptions, address them head on and raise people’s awareness of what the modern quality professional believes. I found job titles have a big impact on both how the job is done and perceived (behaviour and attitudes). We need to disassociate the word ‘quality’ from ‘manager’. Our job is not to manage quality, it is to understand the outcomes required, advise on the constraints, help identify the risks and opportunities, and provide advice and guidance on mitigating actions where appropriate.”

**10. Be persistent – success lies in not giving up**

“Keep making something until it works. It’s easy to give up on something after six months because it’s not working. You feel completely dejected and depressed, and you go up and down like a yo-yo. The important thing is to believe that you can do it. I’ve had moments where I’ve felt very depressed, but the elation when you finally get something right is unbelievable. You feel on top of the world because you’ve achieved something no one else has done. It instils belief that you’re not going mad trying things over and over again. Repetition isn’t bad. Incidentally, engineers have the lowest suicide rate and the biggest job satisfaction because they’re always seeing the results of what they do.”

**Join in the debate**

What is the biggest lesson you’ve learned this year?

Tweet us **@Qualityworld** or join in the discussion on the CQI LinkedIn page.

**Compiled by: Amanda Pauley**  
**Illustration: Richard Osley**  
**Photos: Chris Renton, Dean Belcher, Duncan Soar, Connor Williams and Anthony Haydock**

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**“I’m now able to use quality tools and theory with a lot more confidence”**  
Fabio Miceli,  
Associate Director of Quality

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