



Managing Quality in Architecture

First edition 2006 Reference Library

A Handbook for Creators of the Built Environment

An Owner's Perspective

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Chapter Reference: MQIA first edition Ch. 5.1

This is Hideki Kiyono's contribution to the first edition of MQIA.

Owners develop and manage condominiums or commercial buildings as their business. Keys for success in business are customer satisfaction, speed, and ambitions (goals). Customer satisfaction is the most comprehensive and important factor. Owners are customers for architects but customers to owners are users, which means users are the *real* customers for any project.

When we think of condominiums, users choose only one among a lot of condominiums, and their measurement is how they will be satisfied with the condominium. Consequently, architects should consider how users would make a good living in the condominium and evaluate that in their design considerations. and evaluate that in their design considerations. Users don't buy a unit by itself – but a *life* there.

First Impressions

Customers who buy condominiums have uneasy days, thinking whether it was a good choice or not. The process of buying a condominium takes some days, of course, but most people have almost decided when they have good, strong impressions at the first glance of excellent model rooms (display suites) or a beautiful exterior. Mitsui Fudosan expects these impressions to be carefully planned, designed and directed by its architects. This is the beginning of winning customer satisfaction

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Total Quality

The first impression (of a new project) is the 'Wow! factor', which touches the customer's heart in looking at the building or being inside it. A 'touching space' contributes to customers' experiential satisfaction, and we call it EQ, for experiential quality. EQ comes from creativity in the design approach. Mitsui Fudosan also defines two more qualities, LQ and OQ. LQ, latent quality is the opposite of latent defects, which might cause loss to customers in the future. As LQ will be hidden after completion, we are very careful in construction process. OQ, object quality, is the obvious finish or surface.

These three kinds of quality put together are the total quality. The architect should understand the required standards of the three kinds of quality in the project, to accomplish total quality. Total quality is evaluated by prospective purchasers and finally valued by owners. Customers are not professionals regarding quality, but they actually evaluate and pass judgment on the condominium. Architects are expected to express the feeling of total quality in the project by realizing the three kinds of design quality.