Summary

This dissertation is about culture and its overwhelming influence in any organisation. It particularly describes the strategies a quality manager employs to effectively implement the desired quality management systems in any construction project.

Throughout the dissertation, heavy emphasis is placed on recognising and confronting cultural differences in construction organisations. The early chapters provide the basic theories of management and the evolution of concepts tutored by the modern "gurus" of quality management. Then, a brief discussion of the various frameworks of cultures and underlying assumptions that influence management practices are presented in order to achieve a better understanding of cultural influences on organisations.

From a quality manager's perspective, being able to manage individuals, teams and groups of culturally-diverse organisations is required to get the job done. Two approaches to implementing quality management systems are recommended: the technical approach and the non-technical approach. The technical approach focuses on maintaining and continually assessing the ISO 9000 elements such as contract review, document control, design control, corrective action, audits, etc. On the other hand, the non-technical approach advocates strong understanding of people-related issues such as socio-political conflicts brought about by various spheres of cultural influences: industry, corporate, functional, professional and national cultures.
Several models for effective quality management are presented: Kanter's model for effective maintenance of QMS, a model of interpersonal power, a model of empowerment and a model on individual differences that affect job performance.

The last chapter of the dissertation contains two case studies based on the author's personal work experiences in the Philippines and Singapore where the interactions and influences of various cultures greatly impact the implementations of quality management systems. His awareness and proper management of the various non-technical attributes ensured the successful enforcement of the required quality management systems and the completion of both mega-size construction projects.