

WHEN ONE CHAPTER CLOSES: FINDING YOUR “WHAT’S NEXT?”

by Jo Haberstk

Life has a way of shifting the ground beneath our feet. A job ends. A relationship fades. A dream we’ve been chasing for years suddenly feels out of reach. But endings, as painful or disorienting as they may be, are not just closures. Here is another way to look at them. They are invitations – invitations to something new.

Acknowledge the Ending: Before rushing forward, give yourself permission to feel the weight of what’s over. Endings can stir grief, relief, confusion, or even all three at once. Naming those emotions is the first step toward healing and toward moving on.

Pause Before you Leap: We often feel pressure to “figure it out” immediately. But stillness can be powerful. Depending on the situation, you may need to take some time to rest, reflect, and listen to what your inner voice is whispering - not just what the world is shouting.

Revisit Your Values: Ask yourself: *What matters most to me now?* Sometimes endings can help strip away the noise, revealing what’s truly important. This clarity can guide your next move more than any external advice.

Explore Without Commitment: Try new things without the pressure of permanence - a class, a hobby, a trip, a volunteer role. These small experiments can spark unexpected passions or connections. You may learn a new language – or knit a scarf!

Trust the Unwritten Pages: The unknown can be intimidating, but it’s also where new possibilities live. Every ending is proof that change is possible - and that that new beginnings are, too.

The Beauty of “Next”: “What’s next?” is not a demand for immediate answers or actions - it’s an open invitation to curiosity. Life rarely unfolds in a straight line. Sometimes the most beautiful chapters begin in the quiet after an ending, when we allow ourselves to imagine without limits.

Endings are not the opposite of beginnings - they are the soil from which beginnings grow. And while the next chapter may not be fully written yet, you hold the pen.

Closing Thought: When one door closes, it’s not always about finding another door right away. Sometimes it’s about just standing in the hallway for a while, learning to breathe again, and trusting that the next step will reveal itself when you’re ready.



THE UNIFIER EFFECT IN TODAY’S WORKPLACES

by Luigi Sille

In a world that is increasingly divided, the urgency for unification in organizations has never been more pronounced.

Leaders, managers, and employees all have the potential to act as unifiers, regardless of their rank or title. Each person, by encouraging understanding and bridging gaps, contributes to a workplace where collaboration and shared goals can flourish.

Unity does not mean eliminating differences or silencing diverse opinions. Rather, it is about respecting these differences while working collectively toward common objectives. Empathy is at the core of this process. When we take the time to genuinely listen to one another, we gain valuable insights into perspectives that differ from our own. Active listening and open communication are crucial in dismantling barriers, fostering trust and mutual respect among teams.

These qualities – empathy, listening, and communication – are not exclusive to those in positions of formal authority. Every team member can play a role in creating an environment where everyone feels valued and heard.

When individuals feel included, they are more likely to contribute ideas, collaborate effectively, and support one another. This sense of belonging leads to organizations that are more resilient, innovative, and cohesive.

Inclusion and collaboration can turn challenges into opportunities for growth and connection. As we unite, we create workplaces where individuals are inspired, engaged, and prepared to meet the challenges of a changing world. By acting as unifiers, we not only build stronger teams but also lay the groundwork for enduring success.

Luigi Sille is the Quality Manager at the Red Cross Blood Bank Foundation in Curaçao. He holds several ASQ certifications, including CQIA, CQPA, CQA, and CMQ/OE. He also serves as a Technical Reviewer for QP Magazine and is a participating member of the ASQ Belonging Advisory Board. He is the author of The Leadership Lens articles. View his LinkedIn profile [here](#).

February 11, 2026 Invitation from ASQ's Lean Enterprise Division Virtual Webinar

DATE:

Wednesday
February 11, 2026

Embedding Quality as a Mindset: An Approach to Sustainable Layer Process Auditing

This is a virtual/online (Webex) webinar. Log-in information will be provided on the registration confirmation email.



Time:

10:00 am to 11:00 am PST

(check website to confirm time)

Sainyam Arora, LSSGB
Quality Assurance & Systems Engineer, Johnson Matthey

Cost: No charge for ASQ members or non-members

Registration is required.

Attendance at this webinar earns RU credit toward ASQ recertification.

More information about ASQ's Lean Enterprise Division is available [here](https://www.asq614.org).

What if quality wasn't just a department - but a daily way of thinking?

This presentation explores how a Layered Process Audit (LPA) system can transform compliance routines into mechanisms for accountability, engagement, and cultural alignment. Drawing from real-world implementation in a mid-sized manufacturing setting, it will show how tiered accountability, behavioral reinforcement, and feedback loops can make quality everyone's business.

Attendees will learn to:

- ✓ Design and scale an LPA system that drives visibility and ownership
- ✓ Shift Lean and Six Sigma from tools to shared values through everyday practices
- ✓ Foster engagement and cultural buy-in across leadership and shop floor teams

Whether you are establishing a new audit framework or refining an existing one, this presentation offers practical methods to help build a sustainable, people-centered approach to quality that will endure beyond certification.

About the speaker: Sainyam Arora is a Quality Assurance & Systems Engineer at Johnson Matthey, where he integrates Lean, digital tools, and people-centered systems to build sustainable quality cultures.

With a background in Chemical Engineering and Engineering Leadership Development from Penn State University, he has over three years of experience implementing IATF 16949 and ISO 9001 systems, driving predictive maintenance projects, and leading continuous improvement initiatives in manufacturing environments. His work focuses on connecting systems, sustainability, and the human side of quality, helping teams move beyond compliance toward a shared mindset of continuous improvement.

Sainyam currently serves as the Awards & Recognition Chair for ASQ's Lean Enterprise Division, supporting professional development and recognition across the Lean community. A Lean Six Sigma Green Belt and Lead Internal Auditor (ISO 9001:2015), he is also an active member of IEEE, DAMA, SQA, and IOEM.

Invitation from ASQ Phoenix Section February 12, 2026 Webinar

DATE:

Thursday,
February 12, 2026

This is a virtual/online
webinar via Zoom. Log-in
information will be provided
on the registration
confirmation email.

Time: 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm PST
(check website to confirm time)

There is no charge for ASQ
members or non-members

[Advance registration](#) is
required for planning purposes
and to receive RU credit
following the meeting.

More information about the
Phoenix ASQ section is
available [here](#).

Designing Your Quality Career: Leadership in Performance Excellence

Robert “QualityBob” Mitchell

COO, Rocky Mountain Performance Excellence
Principal Consultant at QualityBob™ Consulting



Quality professionals today face more career options - and more uncertainty - than ever before. Traditional “climb-the-ladder” models no longer fit every practitioner, organization, or stage of life.

This presentation will explore career pathing as a strategic and intentional system - one that integrates technical mastery, leadership capability, adaptability, and purpose. The emphasis is on **individual ownership of career development**, alignment with organizational needs, and resilience in the face of disruption (e.g., Quality 4.0, AI, and workforce shifts). It will include practical guidance for crafting a clear career narrative, identifying primary and secondary career paths, and positioning oneself for sustained impact in performance excellence.

Participants will learn how to:

- Distinguish career pathing from traditional employee development
- Identify career path models aligned to personal strengths and motivations
- Understand how leadership in performance excellence transcends job titles
- Apply best practices to intentionally plan, reassess, and communicate their career journey

This session is ideal for early-, mid-, and senior-career quality professionals, leaders, examiners, and those considering their next professional chapter.

About the speaker: Robert “QualityBob” Mitchell, CQA, CQE, CMQ/OE, ASQ Fellow and Distinguished Service Medal recipient, is the Principal Consultant at QualityBob™ Consulting and Chief Operations Officer for Rocky Mountain Performance Excellence - a regional Baldrige-based Alliance program.

Bob has over four decades of experience spanning industry, consulting, and nonprofit organizational excellence networks. During his 34 years at 3M Company, he progressed up a dual-ladder career from product development to manufacturing process engineer to quality assurance to director-level leadership roles while leading process, product, and system improvements in complex, multinational environments.

In his “retirement” Bob has served as Executive Director for Southwest Alliance for Excellence, and designed a Quality & Regulatory systems training curriculum for startups for the Center for Entrepreneurial Innovation. He is an experienced Baldrige Examiner, instructor, mentor, and coach dedicated to developing the next generation of quality leaders.

FREE GIFTS FOR ASQ MEMBERS!

ASQ Member Gifts are an exclusive benefit for all ASQ members. Each monthly gift bundle addresses a specific quality hot topic, method, or tool and can include dozens of valuable resources from ASQ's vast and ever-growing knowledge repository including in-depth expert webcasts, Quality Press eBook samplers, journal articles, industry case studies and benchmarking reports, and downloadable templates.

The January gifts (available through January 31) focused on Career Development and included downloadable articles, videos, and information about the ASQ Career Center.

You can also earn Recertification Units (RUs) for watching ASQ webinars and videos, reading e-books, etc.

Be sure to [access](#) this month's resources by January 31.

UPCOMING ASQ CERTIFICATION EXAMS

Have you been thinking about applying for an ASQ certification? Why not stop thinking about it and just do it! As an ASQ member, you'll save \$100 off the usual (non-member) fee for each exam.

Applications are now being accepted for the following exams scheduled for April 1-30. The application deadline is March 9.

- CQA (Quality Auditor)
- CQE (Quality Engineer)
- CQIA (Quality Improvement Associate)
- CSQE (Software Quality Engineer)
- CSSGB (Six Sigma Green Belt)
- CQPA (Quality Process Analyst)
- CCT (Calibration Technician)
- CPGP (Pharmaceutical GMP Professional)
- CCQM (Construction Quality Manager)

Click [here](#) to sign up or for more information.

DOES YOUR SPIRITUAL ENERGY NEED A BOOST?

Less Stressed Club Virtual Event

February 2 from 11:30 am to 12:00 noon PST

Join Paul C. Casey (Growing Forward Services) and Garth Reed (ExperienceBetter) on February 2. The 30-minute session will focus on supporting your spiritual energy; to help you discover small, practical ways to build your strength so you can show up with focus, patience, and purpose.

The Less Stressed Leaders Club is a community for managers and professionals who want to lead well without running themselves into the ground. It's not another "hustle harder" pep talk. It's about building the habits, rhythms, and mindset that make leadership sustainable.

There is no charge. Register [here](#).

UPDATE ON OUR SECTION

We are getting closer to the end of our Columbia Basin section. The dissolution proposal will likely be approved by the ASQ Board of Directors soon, after which members will be notified of where they will be transferred and given the opportunity to select a different section affiliation, if desired.

THE FUTURE OF WORK: NAVIGATING PERSONAL EXCELLENCE FOR INDUSTRY 5.0 AND BEYOND

ASQ Quality Management Division Webinar

February 4 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm PST

Quality professionals have mixed feelings about the future.

There are a lot of conflicting messages about what to focus on. Some of the common buzzwords include "AI," "Leadership," and "Technical Skills." Achieving personal excellence is more about growing in a few interconnected areas compared to just one.

Presenter Zac Jarrard will share:

- A new framework for professional development
- How to build sustainable teams and organizations
- Best practices to support future leaders

There is no charge, but [advance registration](#) is required.

ASQ CERTIFICATION PREP TRAINING

With over 550,000 certifications issued since 1968, ASQ certifications have helped quality professionals worldwide gain recognition for their skills.

Live virtual courses are an excellent choice if you prefer learning in a collaborative environment. Scheduled sessions remove the guesswork, add structure to your preparation, and help keep you on track.

Plan ahead and register early, as space is limited and courses fill quickly.

- [Certified Supplier Quality Professional](#) (CSQP) - Sessions available in April, June, & August (cost is \$824)
- [Certified Quality Auditor](#) (CQA) - Sessions available in March, May, & July (cost is \$824)
- [Certified Quality Engineer](#) (CQE) - Sessions available in May, July, November, & December (cost is \$1199)
- [Certified Manager of Quality/Organizational Excellence](#) (CMQ/OE) - Sessions available in February, April, June, & August (cost is \$824)

Also, be sure to check the ASQ Events Calendar regularly for virtual certification prep courses offered by some sections during the year.

REGULATORY & STANDARDS LANDSCAPE FOR AI IN HEALTHCARE

Minnesota ASQ Virtual/Zoom Meeting

February 10 from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm PST

Artificial Intelligence is an impressively fast-moving technology in all fields, especially for medical devices. It is already improving patient lives with innovative healthcare, lower healthcare costs, and better patient outcomes but, as with all advances, if not properly regulated these benefits could possibly open risks to safety and security.

Presenter Pat Baird will address new and emerging regulations and standards (national and international) and where this technology is expected to take us in the next few years.

Cost is \$15 for ASQ members or non-members. [Advance registration](#) is required.

EXPLORE ASQ TRAINING – ZOOM EVENT

February 11 from 11:00 am to 11:45 am PST

Join ASQ for a Member Benefit Session featuring Jacob Shefka, Senior Channel Manager, who will explain the wide range of ASQ training opportunities available to members at special pricing.

Highlighted will be key resources and pathways designed to support both organizational and individual development:

For Individual Members:

- Learning paths that connect to specialized credentials
- Certification paths to advance your career
- Trending topics in quality and continuous improvement

For Organizational Members:

- Learning paths designed for companies
- Access to the ASQ Learning Library
- Hands-on simulations to build facilitation skills
- Tailored instructor-led training options

This is a great opportunity to learn more about how ASQ training can support your goals and help you get even more value from your membership.

There is no charge, but [advance registration](#) by February 9 is required.

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS – NETWORKING EVENT

February 12 from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm PST in Richland

The Tri-City Regional Chamber offers monthly opportunities to meet and network with other business professionals at existing and new businesses in our area. Each month a different sponsor hosts the event and has the opportunity to showcase their goods and services amid a fun and social atmosphere.

This month's event is being hosted by Gravis Law at Solar Spirits, located at 702 The Parkway Suite B in Richland.

There will be refreshments and beverages. Bring your business card to enter to win a door prize.

No reservations are required. It's free to attend - bring a friend! More information is available [here](#).

A CRASH COURSE ON AI FOR PRODUCTIVITY

Philadelphia ASQ Section Webinar

February 18 from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm PST

Looking for ways to improve productivity with AI? Curious about generative AI but not sure where to start?

This webinar with Connor Pierce will provide a clear, practical crash course on generative AI, explaining what tools like ChatGPT actually do, how to prompt them effectively, and how to plug them into your personal and professional workflows.

Participants will learn simple prompting frameworks, see examples of weak versus strong prompts, explore high-impact use cases across communication, planning, learning, and operations, and understand common pitfalls like hallucinations and over-reliance.

In this webinar, attendees will also learn how to:

- Describe differences between artificial intelligence, generative AI, and large language models in clear, everyday language
- Identify appropriate generative AI tools and features to support personal or professional use cases (e.g., writing, planning, analysis, learning)
- Create effective prompts using goal, format, warnings, and context to improve the quality, relevance, and reliability of AI outputs
- Evaluate opportunities and risks of applying generative AI in workflows

The session is designed for non-technical audiences, with takeaways including concrete prompt recipes, tools, and next steps you can immediately apply.

There is no charge, but [advance registration](#) is required.

AUTONOMOUS VEHICLE RELIABILITY

Greater Detroit ASQ Virtual Meeting

February 19 from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm PST

This presentation with Jay Zhou offers an overview of Reliability Design and Analysis for autonomous vehicles, focusing on a framework designed to prevent failure modes in the development of autonomous vehicle reliability.

The following topics will be explored: Failures of Different Transport Modes, Motor Vehicle Fatalities (drunk driving, distraction and speeding,) SAE J3016 Levels of Driving Automation, Disengagements of Autonomous Tests, Crashes of ADAS-Equipped Vehicles, AI/Machine Learning in AV, Sensor Robustness (Camera, Radar, Lidar), and Redundancy for Reliability. Failure Mode Avoidance.

There is no charge, but [advance registration](#) is required. View the full meeting flyer [here](#).

LEAN SIX SIGMA AND STATISTICAL PROCESS CONTROL

Boulder ASQ Virtual Meeting

February 26 from 4:45 pm to 6:30 pm PST

Are you new to Lean Six Sigma (LSS) or Statistical Process Control (SPC)? Here is an opportunity to learn more about these quality tools.

Presenter Jay Arthur, author of several books including *Agile Process Innovation*, and *QI Macros* software, will provide insights on:

- Better ways to start LSS initiatives
- How to help math- and statistics-phobes better understand and embrace quality tools
- How control charts, Pareto diagrams, and histograms can help optimize business performance

There is no charge, but [advance registration](#) is required.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“Every sunrise is an invitation to brighten someone’s day – including your own.”

~Author Unknown



4TH ANNUAL ALL-YOU-CAN EAT CRAB FEED

Fundraiser for Safe Harbor Support Center

March 14 from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm PST in Pasco

Safe Harbor Support Center is committed to the prevention of child abuse and neglect by providing a safe and nurturing environment for children and teens when there are no other alternatives. They also provide outreach, support, and training to assist families in establishing a safe and stable environment.

Making an impact never tasted so good! Get your fill of crab and pasta, try your luck with a raffle, and make a difference in our community. Crab feed tickets are \$85/person or \$300 for four tickets, if purchased by February 21.

Can't make it to the feed? You can enter a raffle to possibly win a freezer and 1/4 beef (winner does not need to be present). Raffle tickets are \$20 each or six for \$100. Additional information about both events is available [here](#).



GET REGISTERED FOR WCQI!

May 17-20 in Orlando

The World Conference on Quality & Improvement (WCQI) is celebrating ASQ's 80th anniversary by creating an event filled with a dynamic blend of purpose-driven strategy and actionable solutions to tackle daily challenges. Built to empower professionals at any level, you can choose the experience level, area of interest, and schedule that works for you.

Just a few of the things you can discover at WCQI:

- How to pair AI with fundamental quality tools for complex problem solving
- Ways to improve communication, conceptual, and management skills to develop your own career path
- When and where to cut clutter out of processes to distill systems to their core purpose and shift quality from controlling to coaching

Explore the conference agenda and speaker topics and profiles [here](#). Cost is \$1499 for ASQ members or \$1699 for non-members. Register [here](#).

WIRED FOR EXCELLENCE

KPI Fireside Podcast (YouTube) featuring Chris Hayes

What if the key to sustaining improvement has less to do with tools and more to do with the brain itself?

In this episode, Keith Norris, CEO of KPI Fireside, sits down with Chris Hayes, CEO of Impact Performance Solutions, Shingo Licensed Affiliate, ASQ Fellow, and author of *Wired for Excellence: Harnessing Brain Science for Organizational Success*.

In this hour-long session, learn more about:

- Why improvement wins fade and how the Shingo Model strengthens sustainment
- The brain science of change and how the amygdala triggers threat responses
- Why logic alone never drives change and why people need safety and clarity
- The five domains of the B.R.A.I.N. model and how they shape culture
- How leaders can reduce threat, spark reward responses, and boost engagement
- How clarity, communication rhythms, and small wins support sustainment

Access the podcast [here](#). Information about KPI Fire is available [here](#).

THE INVISIBLE KNIFE: HOW WASTE DERAILS PROJECTS AND PRODUCTIVITY

On-demand video from ASQ's Lean Enterprise Division

If you missed this webinar a couple of months ago, no worries – it's now available to watch on YouTube!

Most projects don't fail because people resist change. They fail because waste quietly consumes all available capacity.

Learn more from Taryn Shipley, MBA, CSSBB, about how unseen waste acts as an "invisible knife" – often derailing projects, draining productivity, and trapping organizations in recurring dysfunction:

- How waste disguises itself as "necessary work"
- Why adding more tools or initiatives often makes things worse
- The critical role of slack in sustaining real improvement
- What leaders can do to reclaim capacity and enable progress

Whether you lead transformations, manage projects, or coach teams, this talk will reshape how you view productivity and improvement. Watch the full webinar [here](#):

WINTER WARM UP / WINTER TUNE UP

from Gorveatte Consulting Newsletter

Now that we are well into our coldest season, it may be time for a reminder to be ready for winter weather. A few important tips and precautions can make all the difference during this time of year.

Make sure your car is winter-ready: Keep an emergency pack in your vehicle filled with an emergency blanket, a first aid kit, some nonperishable snacks, cables, and more. Also, remember to check your fluid levels before each road trip and have your car regularly serviced including winter tires if you are in an area that needs them. Remember to always check your gas level and keep your tank above half full.

Prepare yourself for exposure to winter elements: Dress warmly and limit exposure to cold temperatures to prevent frostbite. Also, try and avoid getting too wet to prevent any risk of hypothermia.

Powerline Safety: If you come across downed powerlines, call emergency services or your local utility provider. If a powerline falls on your car, don't touch the line or the car.

Weatherproof your home against the cold: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" - and that is true when it comes to your home. Make sure to caulk and weatherstrip doors and windows to keep out unwanted drafts and moisture. Ensure your smoke and carbon monoxide detector batteries are working and have your chimney inspected each year.

Has your email address changed? Keep informed of ASQ events and information by updating your contact information and email preferences at <http://www.asq.org/>. Log in and click "My Account" to update your membership record. You can add or make email, address, and phone changes in the "Contact" tab, and then click on the "email preferences" tab to be sure you are subscribed to receive future Section communications.

