

Article

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Poor Pareto

Pareto's Law or the 80/20 rule, suggests that many things are trivial (80%) and a few things are vital (20%). I am frequently struck by how often we give the principle lip service, but seldom operate, in ways that are consistent with it. I have been thinking about a number of questions that follow the logic of Pareto:

- Why do we continue to tolerate 20% of our employees who create 80% of the problems?
- How is it that the 20% of employees who create 80% of the results, almost never get rewarded accordingly?
- Why are the 80% of the customers that generate 20% of our revenues, permitted to command so much of our attention?
- Are we satisfied that the 20% of customers, who deliver 80% of the profitable business, enjoy a commensurate level of unforgettable service?
- Why do we continue to offer the 80% of products that generate only 20% of revenues?
- If 20% of our sales force delivers 80% of the results, why do we have the other 80% of sales people?
- If we focused on the right 20% of our issues wouldn't that deliver relief from 80% of our problems?
- If 20% of projects (the first 10% and the last 10%) consume 80% of time and resources, why not improve the effectiveness of project teams' start-up's and wrap up's?
- Would we not be better off focusing on the 20% of opportunities that will deliver results, rather than the 80% that are simply close to our hearts?
- If we get 80% of satisfaction from the first 20% of a bottle of wine, why do we finish it (and often start another)?
- Finally, if this list is only 20% right, why did I write the remaining 80%?

