REAPING THE BENEFITS OF ISO 9001:2015

ISO 9001 is a standard that sets out the requirements for a quality management system. It helps businesses and organizations to **be more efficient** and **improve customer satisfaction.**

What is a management system?

A management system is a way of defining an organization's operations to help it meet its objectives.

So, what is a "quality" management system?

A quality management system is a way of defining how an organization can meet the requirements of its customers and other stakeholders affected by its work. Other ISO standards look at other types of management systems, such as ISO 14001 for environmental management or the upcoming ISO 45001 for occupational health and safety management. ISO 9001 is based on the idea of **continual improvement**. It is designed to be flexible enough for use by many different types of organization, so does not specify what the objectives relating to "quality" or "meeting customer needs " should be. Instead, it requires organizations to define these objectives themselves and continually improve their processes in order to reach them. Once these targets have been attained, they must be reassessed… in a quest for continual improvement. A good quality management system can bring benefits to organizations of all sizes and all sectors, from the small manufacturer of bicycle parts to a hospital employing 5000 people. In fact, when ISO 9001:2015 was revised, one of the main improvements was to make it accessible to all types of enterprises, including service-oriented organizations.

What benefits will it bring to my business or organization?

Implementing a quality management system will help you:

- Assess the **overall context** of your organization to define who is affected by your work and what they expect from you. This will enable you to clearly **state your objectives and identify new business opportunities.**
- Put your **customers first**, making sure you consistently meet their needs and enhance their satisfaction. This can lead to repeat custom, new clients and increased business for your organization.
- Work in a **more efficient way** as all your processes will be aligned and understood by everyone in the business or organization. This increases productivity and efficiency, bringing internal costs down.
- Meet the necessary statutory and regulatory requirements.
- **Expand into new markets**, as some sectors and clients require ISO 9001 before doing business.
- **Identify and address** the risks associated with your organization.

Should I get certified?

Certification to ISO 9001 is not a requirement and you can use the standard to improve the way you work without being certified. However, third-party certification – when an independent certification body audits your practices against the requirements of the standard – is a way of signalling to your buyers, customers, suppliers and other stakeholders that you have implemented the standard properly. For some companies, however, third-party certification may be a requirement. For example, some governments or public bodies may only contract suppliers that have been certified to ISO 9001. Although ISO developed and published the standard, ISO does not perform certification.

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