

Why is ISO 9001 a good idea for your organisation?

The benefits of ISO 9001 are not overstated; companies large and small have gained great benefits from using this standard by discovering cost and efficiency savings. Here are the explanations of six main benefits and why they are important:

Improvement of your credibility and image – Because ISO 9001 is an internationally recognised standard, it has become the basis for creating a quality management system around the world, replacing many previously published requirements. When a company is looking for a supplier, it is often a requirement to have a QMS based on ISO 9001 in order to be considered. This is particularly the case if you are competing for public sector jobs in many countries. Attaining ISO 9001 certification can be a powerful marketing tool.

Improvement of customer satisfaction – One of the quality management principles that are the foundation of the ISO 9001 requirements is to improve customer satisfaction by planning for and striving to meet customer requirements. By improving your customer satisfaction you will retain more repeat customers since happy and satisfied customers are the key to keeping customer loyalty. And such customers bring in additional revenues.

Better process integration – By looking at the overall process interactions through the process approach of ISO 9001, you will be able to more easily find improvements in efficiency and cost savings. This is done through eliminating the waste that can occur when processes are maintained without a view of the inefficiencies that can arise during process handoff. The better process flow can also be used to drive efficiencies towards fewer errors and resulting reworks, which can improve cost savings.

Improve your evidence for decision making – A second quality management principle of ISO 9001 is the need to use evidence-based decision making. By driving your decisions based on the evidence, rather than on “gut feelings,” you can be more focused on applying resources to the areas that will improve efficiencies and increase cost savings with less trial and error to find the right decision. In addition, by monitoring the process you are improving, you will be able to see how much improvement has happened based on the data.

Create a continual improvement culture – Continual improvement is a third quality management principle of ISO 9001. By adopting this culture to improve your processes and organizational output, you will find efficiencies and cost savings, including the use of systematic processes when problems occur in order to reduce the impact of the problem and increase the speed of recovery. By making this continual, improving year after year, the company can see continuing benefits from this.

Engagement of employees – Employees who are involved in the improvements of the processes they work with are happier and more engaged employees. Who better than the people working on the process to best identify the areas that need improvement, and to help to test and advance these improvements when they are implemented? Engaged employees are more productive and will help the company better improve and save, especially when they understand how the quality of the process depends on them.

Why ISO 9001 as your starting point? - The international nature of ISO 9001 has already been identified; and, in fact, ISO 9001 is such a basic and influential standard that it is used as the basis when industry groups want to add specific industry requirements, thus creating their own industry standard. These include AS9100 for the aerospace industry, ISO 13485 for the medical devices industry ISO 22716 for personal care industry, and ISO/TS 16949 for the automotive industry.

ISO 9001 is also a good foundation for implementing many other management standards, such as ISO 14001 for environmental management and ISO 18001 for Safety management, which follow much of the same structure and organisation. ISO 9001 is the start of good things for your company's efforts to gain better process control and

improvement. By implementing the gains available through an ISO 9001 quality management system, you can build to even higher savings and improvements.