

Guide to

INSTALLING QUALITY SYSTEMS FOR SMALL COMPANIES

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PRACTICAL SERVICES
for
BUSINESS DIRECTORS

Quality is a difficult concept because it can mean different things to different people. The cost and practicality of a people carrier can be a quality car for the family; the affluent young driver may, however, prefer the coupe.

Quality can generally be expressed as "conformance to requirements".

To conform to requirements you have to identify them, understand them and then meet them.

As a successful company you will identify and aim to meet the needs and expectations of your customers to achieve a competitive advantage. You will also wish to meet your own needs and expectations (a wage, a profit, a healthy working environment, etc.).

This can, therefore, mean that quality is something you are already doing

After all, if your company remains in business, makes a reasonable profit and keeps your customers happy, you must be doing something right.

The next question to ask is "Are you doing the right thing right first time, on time and every time?"

If you do not always do things right or on time then you may not be as profitable as you could be and your customers may not be as happy as they might be.

Striving for a "right first time approach" does not have to be difficult. The value of a quality management system is that you can get it right first time in an efficient and effective manner.

Deciding not to have a quality management system is easy, just carry on the way you are. Developing a quality management system and implementing it will require resources and commitment.

An effective quality management system will also require:

- Awareness: a shift in the company culture, which everyone understands, and which involves everyone.
- Leadership: management that is personally, actively and visibly involved.

Any quality management system must of course meet your requirements. It can be developed in a bespoke manner to fit in with your company or it can follow a recognised and standard approach.

A quality management system is a collection of management tools to improve the company.

The most commonly recognised and widely implemented quality management system is the ISO9001:2008 standard. It is recognised internationally and certification to the standard is frequently demanded by clients as a mark of quality.

The standard specifies the minimum quality management system requirements where an organisation needs to:

- consistently provide a product or service that meets customer requirements, and will
- address customer satisfaction through the effective application of a system of processes for continual improvement and the prevention of errors.

An ISO 9001:2008 based quality management system must be documented, implemented and then, to obtain certification compliance, demonstrated by an external audit.

A documented quality management system must reflect your company, not restrict your company.

What is needed is just enough documentation to enable you to run your company effectively, and that will allow you to quickly spot where things need improving — no more!

If you are serious about the quality of your products and the services, then why not show it and at the same time find improvements in your profits?

Improved efficiency, reduced waste and continual improvement are the real benefits from installing a quality management system.

If you are interested in our Quality Services please telephone us on 01225 480325 or complete the contact form on our website www.practicalservices.co.uk to arrange a free discussion.

The author of this article is available for group presentations to your business or organization. If interested, please call us on 01225 480325 to arrange.

See the downloads section of our website for similar guides for small business owners.

About Christopherson Associates

Christopherson Associates help business owners achieve their goals by providing a whole range of practical services.

These services include boosting profits, increasing sales and marketing activities, streamlining operations, installing Quality or IT systems, ensuring compliance with Health and Safety regulations or Employment legislation, raising finance, planning and implementing an exit strategy or helping with any business problem outside of the experience of the business owner.

All our associates are seasoned and mature business professionals with decades of relevant business experience either at board or director level of major companies or have run their own businesses.

All our associates are well trained in working with business owners and take a highly practical approach to solving problems and enhancing your business by working closely with you every step along the way.