

Quality through standards

Implementing a quality system - internal

A system is a group of interrelated parts that make up a whole. A quality system therefore consists of parts (such as policies and processes) designed to ensure quality.

A variety of organizations work with BSI to create standards for QMS. The standard specifies requirements for a QMS where an organization:

i. needs to show that it can consistently provide products that:

- a) meet customer requirements
- b) meet any legal requirements.

ii. aims to improve customer satisfaction as a result of applying the system. This includes continually improving the system.

ISO 9001 sets out eight quality management principles. These include:

- * customer focus
- * leadership - a commitment to quality by the leaders of the organization
- * involvement of people - everyone in the organization having a part to play
- * making sure that those processes which create quality are identified
- * continual improvement of the system.



In practical terms, organizations wishing to apply QMS take the following steps:

1. Read and understand the standard. They read through the literature and discuss any issues with BSI.
2. Use supporting literature and software tools to help understand, develop and implement QMS.
3. Involve top management (heavily) in developing a quality management plan. Typically a Quality Manager will be responsible for the initiative.

4. The Quality Manager can be trained in ways of implementing the standard.
5. The QMS is then created and put into practice.
6. When the organization feels confident it is meeting the standard, it informs an assessor, who will assess the effectiveness of the QMS. If it meets the standard a certificate will be awarded. This is subject to regular reviews.