



TenStep Supplemental Paper

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A Quick Overview of ISO 9001:2000

Today, high quality is not a mere benchmark entity. Companies require high quality standards to ensure that customer satisfaction leads to profits. Clearly, the need for high quality has never been so important. Consequently, everyone from restaurants to high technology manufacturing facilities displays ISO (International Organization for Standardization) certifications. The latest of the ISO certifications is: ISO 9001:2000.

ISO 9001:2000

The ISO 9001:2000 is an international standard that recognizes “quality management systems” in organizations. This latest version of the ISO 9001 series has replaced the old ISO 9001:1994 standard. The old ISO quality standards (ISO 9002:1994 and ISO 9003:1994) have been discontinued.

Prior to ISO 9001:2000, there were three ISO standards – 9001, 9002, 9003. Each of these standards was unique to the field in which it was applied. ISO 9001 was the quality assurance for design and development, ISO 9002 was quality assurance in servicing and installation, and ISO 9003 was for quality assurance in testing and final appraisal. Different standards meant that organizations acquired certification based on their area of interest. Hence, there was no uniform international standard. However, with ISO 9001:2000, these three standards have been replaced with one.

To be ISO 9001:2000 compliant, organizations have to meet the following five directives:

- Quality Management System (QMS)
- Management Responsibility
- Resource Management
- Product Realization
- Measurement, Analysis, and Improvement

ISO 9001:2000 is a Quality Management System enhancement tool. However, it often seems that organizations aim for ISO 9001:2000 certification only to attract customer orders rather than to improve their processes.

The Process Approach

To achieve ISO 9001:2000 compliance, the documentation must reflect a process approach to their Quality Management System that focuses on meeting customer requirements by improved quality. The process approach for the QMS focuses on:

- Meeting customer requirements
- Value addition to the customer
- Achieving process improvements as desired and



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- Continuous Improvement of the QMS

Summary

As a Quality Management System, ISO 9001:2000 is a very important tool, and one that will lead to an overall improvement in quality. It is important that the motivation behind achieving ISO 9001:2000 certification is not just to attract customers, but rather to actually improve processes.