

Q: What is a Quality Management System?

A: A Quality Management System is a systematic way of monitoring and controlling the essential activities of a business. The development of a Quality Management System starts with a defining of the company organizational structure, responsibilities, procedures and resources needed to achieve a quality product or service. Once defined, this becomes the benchmark for management to measure and verify compliance to the necessary conditions to ensure quality.

Q: Why do I need one?

A: A Quality Management System provides management with the tools and measurements needed to make effective business decisions. A Quality Management System brings together all the activities of the company to focus on efficiency, reduction of manufacturing cost, scrap minimization, continuous improvement, and, most importantly, customer satisfaction. Many industries require suppliers to demonstrate compliance to a quality standard (i.e. ISO 9001, API Q1). This compliance is intended to give the purchaser confidence that the supplier is capable of systematically meeting agreed requirements for a product or a service. The mutual acceptance of the ISO quality standards throughout the world has provided an effective program for companies to meet their customer requirements in a competitive global market economy.

Many suppliers that choose to implement a Quality System, quickly realize the rewards of having an organized and controlled management system. Purchasers obviously have more confidence in well organized and consumer- oriented company, and this can become for a supplier a competitive edge in the marketplace. But even more than that, the implementation of a Quality Management System simply makes good business sense.

Q: What is certification?

A: Quality Management System Certification (or Registration) is the evaluation (assessment or audit) of a supplier Quality Management System for conformity to particular, i.e. ISO 9001, quality standard by a third party organization, known as a Quality Management System Registrar. If the supplier Quality Management System conforms to the particular quality model, the registrar issues to the supplier a certificate where the scope of the supplier certified Quality Management System has been described. All the certified companies are listed in a registrar directory which is available to the public. A certified company may display on its marketing and advertising materials, business cards, and letterheads as evidence of certification.

Q: Why obtain certification?

A: Certification of a Quality Management System is a documented evidence of conformity to the particular standard or a quality model. Certification brings to the supplier an international recognition. Certification reinforces the effectiveness of a supplier operation and advertises a supplier position in the world market.

BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

There are many benefits of a Quality Management System Certification, such as:

- Increased productivity and quality
- All activities are planned and coordinated
- Tangible, monetary savings
- International Recognition
- Improved entry to EC and other international markets
- Better competitive edge
- Fewer customer surveys
- Recognizable logo on sales and advertising materials
- Customer needs and requirements are better understood and met