



Hands-on Management

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ISO Helpful Hints, Part 2

To continue our discussion on ISO certification from last month, we need to address the issue of forms and controls. Software programs are a great help when storing and printing out forms. Each and every form will require a control number, revision (rev) level, initials of the appropriate manager, and the date of the form at its current rev level.

Preprinted forms are a great time-saver, because they can have the number and initials of the person controlling the form already pre-printed. Training forms may have a list of work instructions in column format, with all the names of the

people tested to those instructions signed off across the rows of the form.

If you are in the habit of making notes on scrap paper, these will need to be replaced by formal work instructions. Customer contracts or telephone log books are not controlled, and should therefore be replaced with a form. Engineering technical review forms are necessary for such tasks as print review, technical review and pricing.

What Controls

Are Necessary on Forms?

The following are required on ISO forms:

1. Control number
2. Revision (rev) level—start at rev 0
3. Authorization initials
4. Date

The ISO 9000 quality systems are a top-down tool to improve the efficiency of a company. This is accomplished by ensuring that everyone in the company—from the top down—is committed to quality, and understands the way the process flows.

What Must Be Measured?

What makes the most difference to customers—the process or profits? Customer complaints is one area that can be measured, by way of a log, in order to improve business performance. Other items to measure include:

- Record of on-time deliveries
- Operator lateness
- Absences or time missed
- Process controls
- Finish quality

Defective material reports (DMRs) from external, as well as internal customers can be measured and reported to management. This allows for a proactive approach to fixing the shop's potential problems.

Calibration dates must first be hard copy-based (*e.g.*, on a calendar), and then the dates may be computer-based. The reason for this is because information can be lost in a computer hard drive if it "crashes." Tools being recalibrated can be checked, based on use: Tools used daily need to be checked more often than tools used monthly. Some gauges, which are

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used only four weeks out of each year (while others are being calibrated), may not need to be calibrated every year.

Purchase orders for the calibrations must clearly state the expected degree of accuracy to which the tools are to be standardized, and must be traceable to the National Institute for Standards (NIST). Gauges and instruments should have a yearly R&R study performed. Be sure to number the gauges (permanently engraved) and place stickers on the storage box (because the stickers can fall off the gauges).

ISO Becomes a Living Document
When you enact ISO, you are creating a living document. The system is continually changing, which can result in deviation from the standard. When these deviations are discovered, everyone scrambles to “put out the fires” and correct the situation. As the program matures, this firefighting declines and continual improvement is possible.

I don’t mean to understate the difficulty of making ISO a reality within any organization. Many of the firms I have talked with state that getting their employees to buy into the program was the toughest part of making it work.

Quality is Not an Isolated Issue
Quality control is not restricted to one department. Front-line operators need to become quality inspectors. At my company, shop cards are signed off by an operator only when that operator’s workmanship is present in the final product. The key to this is training. Sample bags of what to look for as an operator can be maintained and used to set the standards of finishing. No operator error should ever be used as a root cause of rejects. To avoid this, ask what really happened and determine what can be done to fix the problem.

People are the strength and the backbone of any organization. I encourage you to inspire all the people in your shop so that it will become a place where quality motivates every action.

Upper management is the driving force to promote and maintain the company’s quality system. By working together, we can accomplish great things. **P&SF**

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