

ISO 9001:2015 Edition: A Fundamental Contribution to the Most Popular Standard of All Times Standardization and Conformity Assessment Perspective

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Abstract

Quality is intrinsic to mankind, especially if related to quality of life and survival issues. Although the concept of “quality” evolved with time, only during the 20th century did it acquire a systematic perspective and was developed through successive scope broadening stages. The dissemination and adoption of quality management system criteria, procedures and tools were largely promoted by standardization (e.g. through ISO 9000 series) and conformity assessment activities, like third party certification, supporting benefits for organizations worldwide. The scope of management system standardization activities was comprehensively enlarged during the last few years, and now includes most of organizational management areas not just with horizontal and global application, but also according to the specifics of a diverse set of economic sectors. This said, a complex and challenging scenario was set up for the ISO 9001 revision process under ISO Technical Committee 176/ but with contribution from different stakeholders through a systematic and participated process. Supported by a clear base-line and defined goals, standard writers incorporated a new structure and some other key changes, and the revised international standard publication is considered to meet with the initial expectations. Some of the new features of the revised normative reference are supported by ISO’s High Level Structure applicable, since 2011, to all management system standards, but other resulted from the incorporation of predominant interpretations, the inclusion of innovative management tools and the consideration of stakeholders needs. By now, and around the globe, millions of professionals are getting familiar with the new ISO 9001:2015 requirements (e.g. like risk management or context analysis) and are preparing implementation programmes or certification transition plans. The past, present and future efforts of all interested parties will definitely produce an effective contribution to the sustainability of ISO 9001 as the prominent quality management standard and as the most used, most commented and most appreciated normative reference in the world.

Keywords: Quality, Standardization, Conformity assessment, Certification, ISO, Management System, ISO 9001, Revision process, ISO 9001:2015, Changes, Implementation, Transition

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