

PROQUIS

ISO 9001 Compliance made easy with an Automated Quality System

Over time, ISO 9001 has gained global credibility and acceptance among organizations in various industries. Today, ISO 9001, a widely recognized international standard, provides a clear and time tested framework for quality management. The big question that remains is why organizations should become ISO compliant and the unified answer is, to ensure high quality of products and customer satisfaction. According to an online source, ISO 9001 compliance means

- Staying competitive
- Exceeding customer expectations
- Reducing risks and unnecessary costs
- Surviving in the market and driving business growth
- Motivating employees and improving productivity

ISO 9001 specifies the basic requirements for a Quality Management System (QMS) that an organization must fulfill in order to demonstrate its ability to consistently provide products (which include services) that enhance customer satisfaction and meet applicable statutory and regulatory requirements. The basic requirements of the standard have been specified by the International Standards Organization and includes -

- Maintenance of procedures and policies that cover all core business processes
- Regular process reviewing, monitoring and analysis
- Keeping documents and records up to date
- Optimization of resource allocation and management
- Driving continuous improvement throughout the organization

These key requirements are based on the quality management principles and take a process-oriented approach to continual improvement. In order to meet these requirements, the organization must ensure its quality system is prepared for effective documentation and process management. Paper-based quality systems are cumbersome and do not sufficiently meet these specifications, thus the need for automated solutions that achieve and maintain compliance with comparable ease.

Three ways in which automated quality systems makes ISO 9001 compliance easier:

Simplify and visualize

An automated quality system standardizes and improves process visibility, enables automatic notifications and escalations for pending tasks, provides a "big picture" to the management through real-time reporting and analysis. and makes document search and retrieval easy. These functions all simplify maintaining conformance to the requirements of ISO 9001. With an electronic document control system, the organization can easily update documents, procedures and communicate these changes to all members of an organization.

Ensures closed loop processes

One of the most effective ways of reaching ISO compliance is through closed loop processes. ISO 9001 requires every organization demonstrate that all issues raised are visible and that required corrective, preventive or improvement actions are done on time. Automation enables integration of document control, CAPA, audits and customer complaints to ensure that monitoring, analysis and resolution of issues are handled effectively and timely.

Training integrated in the quality system for continuous improvement

ISO 9001 requires organizations to invest in their employees and ensure they have the education, experience and training to do their job properly – all of this leads to achieving continuous improvement in the business. Automated quality systems support the training requirements through easy planning, monitoring, and analysis of personnel training needs. Some of the features of an electronic system for training may include –

- Easy creation of training plans
- Ensuring that personnel competencies match the job requirements
- Automatically raising training events based on job skills
- Regular review of personnel appraisals
- Quick access to personnel certificates
- Attaching and regularly updating the training documents to personnel

For more information, visit us at www.proquis.com.

Please note this article was published in February 2010 edition of Proquis Newsletter. Proquis' e-newsletter is a complementary information source mailed to subscribers on a monthly basis. We take pride in keeping our worldwide subscriber base of 11,000 up to date with the recent company news, product tips and hot topics in the compliance industry. Subscribe today to receive our monthly newsletter!