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**Managing for the sustained success of an  
organization — A quality management  
approach**

*Gestion des performances durables d'un organisme — Approche de  
management par la qualité*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 9004 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*, Subcommittee SC 2, *Quality systems*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO 9004:2000), which has been technically revised.

Managing for the sustained success of an organization is a major change in focus for ISO 9004, leading to substantial changes to its structure and contents.

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## Introduction

This International Standard provides guidance to support the achievement of sustained success for any organization in a complex, demanding, and ever-changing environment, by a quality management approach.

The sustained success of an organization is achieved by its ability to meet the needs and expectations of its customers and other interested parties, over the long term and in a balanced way. Sustained success can be achieved by the effective management of the organization, through awareness of the organization's environment, by learning, and by the appropriate application of either improvements, or innovations, or both.

This International Standard promotes self-assessment as an important tool for the review of the maturity level of the organization, covering its leadership, strategy, management system, resources and processes, to identify areas of strength and weakness and opportunities for either improvements, or innovations, or both.

This International Standard provides a wider focus on quality management than ISO 9001; it addresses the needs and expectations of all relevant interested parties and provides guidance for the systematic and continual improvement of the organization's overall performance. An extended model of a process-based quality management system incorporating the elements of ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 is given in Figure 1.

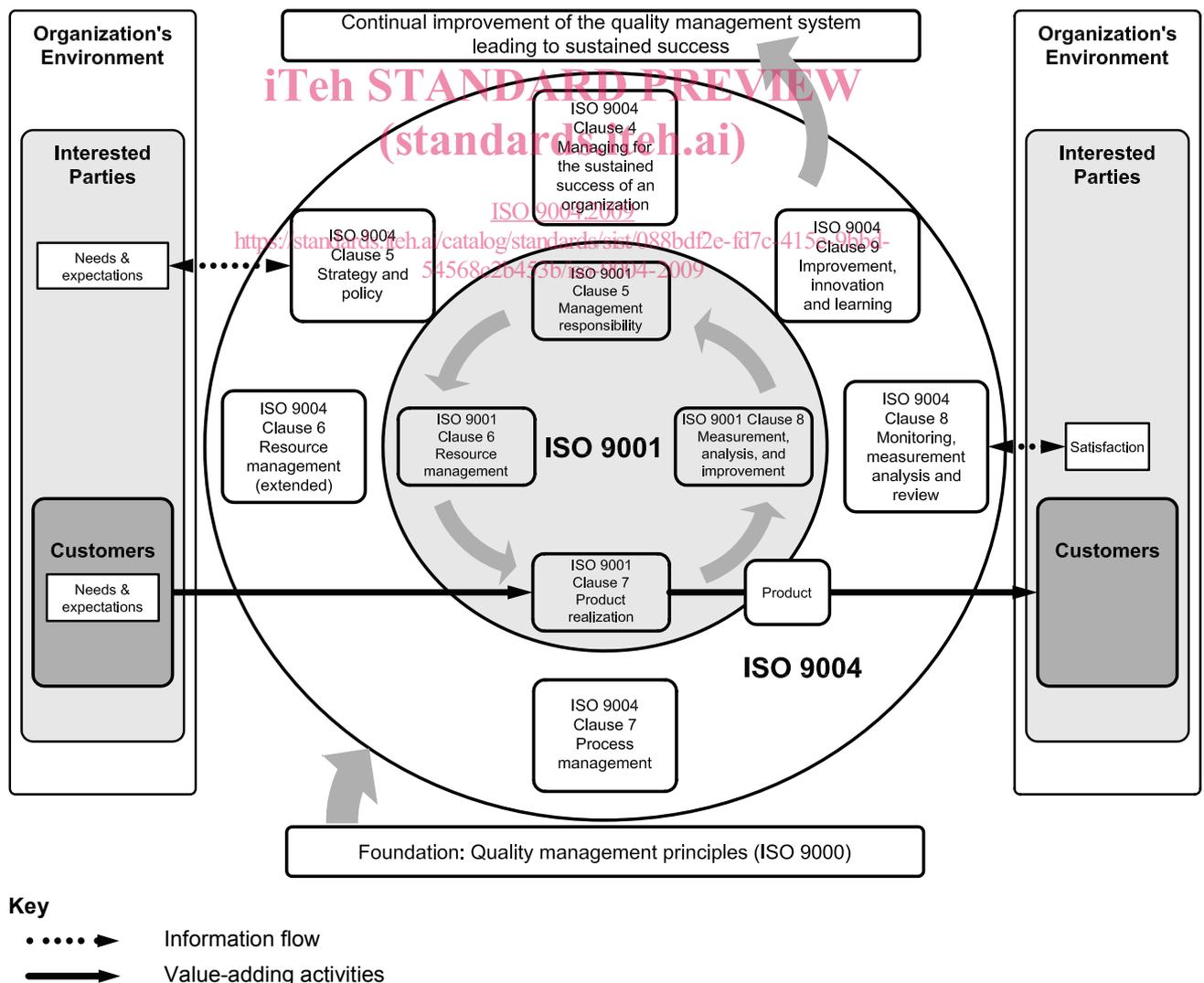


Figure 1 — Extended model of a process-based quality management system

## ISO 9004:2009(E)

This International Standard has been developed to maintain consistency with ISO 9001 and be compatible with other management system standards. Such standards complement each other, but can also be used independently.

Annex A provides a tool for organizations to self-assess their own strengths and weaknesses, to determine their level of maturity, and to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation.

Annex B provides a description of the quality management principles that are the basis of the quality management standards prepared by ISO/TC 176.

Annex C gives a clause by clause correspondence between ISO 9001:2008 and this International Standard.

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# Managing for the sustained success of an organization — A quality management approach

## 1 Scope

This International Standard provides guidance to organizations to support the achievement of sustained success by a quality management approach. It is applicable to any organization, regardless of size, type and activity.

This International Standard is not intended for certification, regulatory or contractual use.

## 2 Normative references

The following referenced documents relate to the application of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 9000, *Quality management systems — Fundamentals and vocabulary*

## 3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 9000 and the following apply.

### 3.1

#### sustained success

(organization) result of the ability of an organization to achieve and maintain its objectives in the long term

### 3.2

#### organization's environment

combination of internal and external factors and conditions that can affect the achievement of an organization's objectives and its behaviour towards its interested parties

## 4 Managing for the sustained success of an organization

### 4.1 General

To achieve sustained success, top management should adopt a quality management approach. The organization's quality management system should be based on the principles described in Annex B. These principles describe concepts that are the foundation of an effective quality management system. To achieve sustained success, top management should apply these principles to the organization's quality management system.

The organization should develop the organization's quality management system to ensure

— the efficient use of resources,

- decision making based on factual evidence, and
- focus on customer satisfaction, as well as on the needs and expectations of other relevant interested parties.

NOTE In this International Standard, the term “top management” refers to the highest level of decision making authority in an organization and the term “the organization” covers all people in an organization. This is consistent with the definitions of these terms given in ISO 9000.

## 4.2 Sustained success

The organization can achieve sustained success by consistently meeting the needs and expectations of its interested parties, in a balanced way, over the long term.

An organization's environment is ever-changing and uncertain, and to achieve sustained success its top management should

- have a long-term planning perspective,
- constantly monitor and regularly analyse the organization's environment,
- identify all its relevant interested parties, assess their individual potential impacts on the organization's performance, as well as determining how to meet their needs and expectations in a balanced way,
- continually engage interested parties and keep them informed of the organization's activities and plans,
- establish mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers, partners and other interested parties,
- make use of a wide variety of approaches, including negotiation and mediation, to balance the often competing needs and expectations of interested parties,
- identify associated short and long-term risks and deploy an overall strategy for the organization to mitigate them,
- anticipate future resource needs (including the competences required of its people),
- establish processes appropriate to achieving the organization's strategy, ensuring that they are capable of responding quickly to changing circumstances,
- regularly assess compliance with current plans and procedures, and take appropriate corrective and preventive actions,
- ensure that people in the organization have opportunities for learning for their own benefit, as well as for maintaining the vitality of the organization, and
- establish and maintain processes for innovation and continual improvement.

## 4.3 The organization's environment

An organization's environment will be undergoing change continually, regardless of its size (large or small), its activities and products, or its type (for profit or not-for-profit); consequently this should be monitored constantly by the organization. Such monitoring should enable the organization to identify, assess and manage the risks related to interested parties, and their changing needs and expectations.

Top management should make decisions for organizational change and innovation in a timely manner in order to maintain and improve the organization's performance.

NOTE For more information on risk management, see ISO 31000.

#### 4.4 Interested parties, needs and expectations

Interested parties are individuals and other entities that add value to the organization, or are otherwise interested in, or affected by, the activities of the organization. Meeting the needs and expectations of interested parties contributes to the achievement of sustained success by the organization.

In addition, the needs and expectations of individual interested parties are different, can be in conflict with those of other interested parties, or can change very quickly. The means by which the needs and expectations of interested parties are expressed and met can take a wide variety of forms, including collaboration, cooperation, negotiation, outsourcing, or by terminating an activity.

**Table 1 — Examples of interested parties and their needs and expectations**

Interested party	Needs and expectations
Customers	Quality, price and delivery performance of products
Owners/shareholders	Sustained profitability Transparency
People in the organization	Good work environment Job security Recognition and reward
Suppliers and partners	Mutual benefits and continuity
Society	Environmental protection Ethical behaviour Compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements

NOTE Although most organizations use similar descriptions for their interested parties (e.g. customers, owners/shareholders, suppliers and partners, people in the organization), the composition of those categories can differ significantly over time and between organizations, industries, nations and cultures.

## 5 Strategy and policy

### 5.1 General

To achieve sustained success, top management should establish and maintain a mission, a vision and values for the organization. These should be clearly understood, accepted and supported by people in the organization and, as appropriate, by other interested parties.

NOTE In this International Standard, a “mission” is a description of why the organization exists, and a “vision” describes its desired state, i.e. what the organization wants to be and how it wants to be seen by its interested parties.

### 5.2 Strategy and policy formulation

Top management should set out the organization's strategy and policies clearly, in order to get the mission, vision and values accepted and supported by its interested parties. The organization's environment should be regularly monitored to determine if there is a need to review and (when appropriate) revise the strategy and policies. In order to establish, adopt and sustain an effective strategy and policy, the organization should have processes to

- continually monitor and regularly analyse the organization's environment, including its customers' needs and expectations, the competitive situation, new technologies, political changes, economic forecasts, or sociological factors,
- identify and determine the needs and expectations of other interested parties,

- assess its current process capabilities and resources,
- identify future resource and technology needs,
- update its strategy and policies, and
- identify the outputs necessary to meet the needs and expectations of the interested parties.

These processes should be established in a timely manner, with any necessary plans and resources being provided to support them.

The formulation of an organization's strategy should also consider activities such as analyses of customer or regulatory demands, its products, its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. A defined process should exist for the formulation and review of the organization's strategy.

NOTE A "strategy" means a logically structured plan or method for achieving objectives, especially over a long period of time.

### **5.3 Strategy and policy deployment**

#### **5.3.1 General**

To implement a strategy and policies for sustained success, the organization should establish and maintain processes and practices that

- translate its strategy and policies into measurable objectives for all relevant levels of the organization, as appropriate,
- establish timelines for each objective and assign responsibility and authority for achieving the objective,
- evaluate strategic risks and define adequate counter measures,
- provide the resources required to deploy needed activities, and
- execute the activities needed to achieve these objectives.

#### **5.3.2 Processes and practices**

In order to ensure that its processes and practices are effective and efficient, the organization should perform activities for

- anticipating any potential conflicts arising from the different needs and expectations of its interested parties,
- assessing and understanding the organization's current performance and the root-causes of problems in the past, in order to avoid their recurrence,
- keeping interested parties informed, gaining their commitment, keeping them aware of progress against plans, and obtaining feedback and ideas for improvement from them,
- reviewing the management system and its processes, and updating them as necessary,
- monitoring, measuring, analysing, reviewing and reporting,
- providing any required resources, including those for improvement, innovation and learning,

- the development, updating and accomplishment of its objectives, including defining timeframes for their achievement, and
- ensuring that the results are consistent with the strategy.

### 5.3.3 Deployment

To deploy its strategy and policies, the organization should identify the relationships between its processes. A description of the sequence and interaction of the processes can assist review activities by

- showing the relationship between organizational structures, systems and processes,
- identifying potential problems in the interactions between processes,
- providing a means for prioritizing improvement and other change initiatives, and
- providing a framework for setting, aligning and deploying objectives to all relevant levels of the organization.

## 5.4 Strategy and policy communication

The effective communication of the strategy and policies is essential to the sustained success of the organization.

Such communication should be meaningful, timely and continual. Communication should also include a feedback mechanism, a review cycle and should incorporate provisions to proactively address changes in the organization's environment.

The organization's communication process should operate both vertically and horizontally and should be tailored to the differing needs of its recipients. For example, the same information can be conveyed differently to people within the organization than to customers or other interested parties.

## 6 Resource management

### 6.1 General

The organization should identify the internal and external resources that are needed for the achievement of the organization's objectives in the short and long term. The organization's policies and methods for resource management should be consistent with its strategy.

To ensure that resources (such as equipment, facilities, materials, energy, knowledge, finance and people) are used effectively and efficiently, it is necessary to have processes in place to provide, allocate, monitor, evaluate, optimize, maintain and protect those resources.

To ensure the availability of the resources for future activities, the organization should identify and assess the risks of potential scarcity, and continually monitor current use of resources to find opportunities for improvement of their use. In parallel, research for new resources, optimized processes and new technologies should take place.

The organization should periodically review the availability and suitability of the identified resources, including outsourced resources, and take action as necessary. The results of these reviews should also be used as inputs into the organization's reviews of its strategy, objectives and plans.

## 6.2 Financial resources

Top management should determine the organization's financial needs and establish the necessary financial resources for current and future operations. Financial resources can take many different forms such as cash, securities, loans or other financial instruments.

The organization should establish and maintain processes for monitoring, controlling and reporting the effective allocation and efficient usage of financial resources related to the organization's objectives.

Reporting of such matters can also provide means for determining ineffective or inefficient activities, and initiating suitable improvement actions. Financial reporting of activities related to the performance of the management system and product conformity should be used in management reviews.

Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the management system can positively influence the financial results of the organization in many ways. Examples include

- internally, by reducing process and product failures and eliminating the waste of materials or time, and
- externally, by reducing product failures, costs of compensation under guarantees and warranties, product liabilities and other legal exposure, costs of lost customers and markets.

NOTE ISO 10014 provides examples of how an organization can identify and obtain financial and economic benefits from the application of the ISO 9000 quality management principles.

## 6.3 People in the organization

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### 6.3.1 Management of people

People are a significant resource of an organization and their full involvement enhances their ability to create value for interested parties. Top management should, through its leadership, create and maintain a shared vision, shared values and an internal environment in which people can become fully involved in achieving the organization's objectives.

As people are a most valuable and critical resource, it is necessary to ensure that their work environment encourages personal growth, learning, knowledge transfer and teamwork. People management should be performed through a planned, transparent, ethical and socially responsible approach. The organization should ensure that the people understand the importance of their contribution and roles.

The organization should establish processes that empower people to

- translate the organization's strategic and process objectives into individual job objectives, and to establish plans for their achievement,
- identify constraints to their performance,
- take ownership and responsibility to solve problems,
- assess personal performance against individual job objectives,
- actively seek opportunities to enhance their competence and experience,
- promote teamwork and encourage synergy between people, and
- share information, knowledge and experience within the organization.

### 6.3.2 Competence of people

In order to ensure that it has the necessary competences, the organization should establish and maintain a “people development plan” and associated processes; these should assist the organization in identifying, developing and improving the competence of its people through the following steps

- identifying the professional and personal competences the organization could need in the short and long term, in accordance with its mission, vision, strategy, policies, and objectives,
- identifying the competences currently available in the organization and the gaps between what is available and what is currently needed and could be needed in the future,
- implementing actions to improve and/or acquire competences to close the gaps,
- reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of actions taken to ensure that the necessary competences have been acquired, and
- maintaining competences that have been acquired.

NOTE See ISO 10015 for further guidance on competence and training.

### 6.3.3 Involvement and motivation of people

The organization should motivate people to understand the significance and importance of their responsibilities and activities in relation to the creation and provision of value for the customers and other interested parties.

To enhance the involvement and motivation of its people, the organization should consider activities such as

- developing a process to share knowledge and use the competence of people, e.g. a scheme for collecting ideas for improvement,
- introducing an appropriate recognition and reward system, that is based on individual evaluations of the accomplishments of the people,
- establishing a skills qualification system and career planning, to promote personal development,
- continually reviewing the level of satisfaction and needs and expectations of people, and
- providing opportunities for mentoring and coaching.

NOTE For more information about the “involvement of people”, see the related quality management principle in Annex B.

## 6.4 Suppliers and partners

### 6.4.1 General

Partners can be suppliers of products, service providers, technological and financial institutions, governmental and non-governmental organizations or other interested parties. Partners can contribute with any type of resource, as agreed and defined in a partnership agreement.

The organization and its partners are interdependent and a mutually beneficial relationship enhances their capabilities to create value. The organization should consider partnership as a specific form of relationship with suppliers, where suppliers can invest in and share the profits or losses of the organization's area of activity.

When an organization is developing partnerships, the organization should give consideration to issues such as

- the provision of information to partners, as appropriate, to maximize their contributions,
- supporting partners, in terms of providing them with resources (such as information, knowledge, expertise, technology, processes, and shared training),
- the sharing of profits and losses with partners, and
- improving the performance of partners.

NOTE For more information about “mutually beneficial relationships”, see the related quality management principle in Annex B.

#### **6.4.2 Selection, evaluation and improvement of the capabilities of suppliers and partners**

The organization should establish and maintain processes to identify, select, and evaluate its suppliers and partners, in order to continually improve their capabilities and to ensure that the products or other resources they provide meet the needs and expectations of the organization.

In selecting and evaluating suppliers and partners, the organization should consider issues such as

- their contribution to the organization's activities and ability to create value for the organization and its interested parties,
- the potential for continually improving their capabilities,
- the enhancement of its own capabilities that can be achieved through co-operation with the suppliers and partners, and
- the risks associated in the relationships with the suppliers and partners.

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Together with its suppliers and partners, the organization should seek to continually improve the quality, price and delivery of products provided by the suppliers and partners, and the effectiveness of their management systems, based on periodic evaluation and feedback of their performance.

The organization should continually review and strengthen its relationships with its suppliers and partners, while considering the balance between its short- and long-term objectives.

#### **6.5 Infrastructure**

The organization should plan, provide and manage its infrastructure effectively and efficiently. It should periodically assess the suitability of the infrastructure to meet organizational objectives. Appropriate consideration should be given to

- the dependability of the infrastructure (including consideration of availability, reliability, maintainability, and maintenance support),
- safety and security,
- infrastructure elements related to products and processes,
- the efficiency, cost, capacity and work environment, and
- the impact of the infrastructure on the work environment.

The organization should identify and assess the risks associated with the infrastructure and take action to mitigate the risks, including the establishment of adequate contingency plans.

NOTE For more information about environmental impacts, see ISO 14001 and other standards prepared by ISO/TC 207.

## 6.6 Work environment

The organization should provide and manage a suitable work environment to achieve and maintain the sustained success of the organization and the competitiveness of its products. A suitable work environment, as a combination of human and physical factors, should include consideration of

- creative work methods and opportunities for greater involvement to realize the potential of people in the organization,
- safety rules and guidance and the use of protective equipment,
- ergonomics,
- psychological factors, including workload and stress,
- workplace location,
- facilities for people in the organization,
- maximization of efficiency and minimization of waste,
- heat, humidity, light, airflow, and
- hygiene, cleanliness, noise, vibration and pollution.

The work environment should encourage productivity, creativity and well-being for the people who are working in or visiting the organization's premises (e.g. customers, suppliers, and partners). At the same time, the organization should ensure that its work environment complies with applicable statutory and regulatory requirements and addresses applicable standards (such as those for environmental and occupational health and safety management).

## 6.7 Knowledge, information and technology

### 6.7.1 General

The organization should establish and maintain processes to manage knowledge, information and technology as essential resources. The processes should address how to identify, obtain, maintain, protect, use and evaluate the need for these resources. The organization should share such knowledge, information and technology with its interested parties, as appropriate.

### 6.7.2 Knowledge

Top management should assess how the organization's current knowledge base is identified and protected. Top management should also consider how to obtain the knowledge required to meet the present and future needs of the organization from internal and external sources, such as academic and professional institutions. There are many issues to consider when defining how to identify, maintain and protect knowledge, such as

- learning from failures, near miss situations and successes,
- capturing the knowledge and experience of people in the organization,