
Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for codes of conduct for organizations

Management de la qualité — Satisfaction du client — Lignes directrices relatives aux codes de conduite des organismes

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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.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/176, *Quality management and quality assurance*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Supporting technologies*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 10001:2007), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared with the previous edition are as follows:

- alignment with ISO 9000:2015;
- alignment with ISO 9001:2015;
- improved alignment with ISO 10002, ISO 10003 and ISO 10004.

Introduction

0.1 General

Maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction is a significant challenge for many organizations. One way of meeting this challenge is to put in place and use a customer satisfaction code of conduct. A customer satisfaction code of conduct consists of promises and related provisions that address issues such as product and service delivery, product returns, handling of personal information of customers, advertising and stipulations concerning particular product and service attributes or performance (examples are given in [Annex A](#)). A customer satisfaction code of conduct can be part of an effective approach to complaints management. This involves:

- a) complaints prevention, by making use of an appropriate customer satisfaction code of conduct;
- b) internal complaints handling, for instances when expressions of dissatisfaction are received;
- c) external dispute resolution, for situations in which complaints cannot be satisfactorily dealt with internally.

This document provides guidance to assist an organization in determining that its customer satisfaction code provisions meet customer needs and expectations, and that the customer satisfaction code is accurate and not misleading. Its use can:

- enhance fair trade practices and customer confidence in the organization;
- improve customer understanding of what to expect from the organization in terms of its products and services and relations with customers, thereby reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings and complaints;
- potentially decrease the need for new regulations governing the organization's conduct towards its customers.

The satisfaction of persons or organizations that could or do receive a product or a service from a public or a private organization is the focus of this document.

0.2 Relationship with ISO 9001 and ISO 9004

This document is compatible with ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 and supports the objectives of these two standards through the effective and efficient application of a process to develop and implement a code of conduct related to customer satisfaction. This document can also be used independently of ISO 9001 and ISO 9004.

ISO 9001 specifies requirements for a quality management system. A customer satisfaction code of conduct implemented in accordance with this document (ISO 10001) can be used as an element of a quality management system.

ISO 9004 provides guidance to achieve sustained success of an organization. The use of this document (ISO 10001) can further enhance performance regarding codes of conduct, as well as increase the satisfaction of customers and other relevant interested parties to facilitate the achievement of sustained success. It can also facilitate the continual improvement of the quality of products, services and processes based on feedback from customers and other relevant interested parties.

NOTE Apart from customers, other relevant interested parties can include suppliers, industry associations and their members, consumer organizations, relevant government agencies, personnel, owners and others who are affected by an organization's customer satisfaction code of conduct.

0.3 Relationship with ISO 10002, ISO 10003 and ISO 10004

This document is compatible with ISO 10002, ISO 10003 and ISO 10004. These four documents can be used either independently or in conjunction with each other. When used together, this document, ISO 10002, ISO 10003 and ISO 10004 can be part of a broader and integrated framework for enhanced

customer satisfaction through codes of conduct, complaints handling, dispute resolution and monitoring and measurement of customer satisfaction (see [Annex B](#)).

ISO 10002 contains guidance on the internal handling of product- and service-related complaints. By fulfilling the promises given in a customer satisfaction code of conduct, organizations decrease the likelihood of problems arising because there is less potential for confusion regarding customer expectations concerning the organization and its products and services.

ISO 10003 contains guidance on the resolution of disputes regarding product- and service-related complaints that could not be satisfactorily resolved internally. When disputes do arise, the existence of a customer satisfaction code of conduct can assist the parties in understanding customer expectations and the organization's attempts to meet those expectations.

ISO 10004 contains guidance on establishing effective processes for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction. Its focus is on customers external to the organization. Guidelines given in ISO 10004 can support the establishment and implementation of customer satisfaction codes of conduct. For example, the processes described in ISO 10004 can assist the organization to monitor and measure customer satisfaction with the codes (see [8.3](#)). Likewise, customer satisfaction codes of conduct can assist the organization in defining and implementing processes for monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction. For example, an organization can establish a code of conduct with respect to the confidentiality of customer information in monitoring and measuring customer satisfaction (see ISO 10004:2018, 7.3.4).

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Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for codes of conduct for organizations

1 Scope

This document gives guidelines for planning, designing, developing, implementing, maintaining and improving customer satisfaction codes of conduct.

This document is applicable to product- and service-related codes containing promises made to customers by an organization concerning its behaviour. Such promises and related provisions are aimed at enhanced customer satisfaction. [Annex A](#) provides simplified examples of components of codes for different organizations.

NOTE Throughout this document, the terms “product” and “service” refer to the outputs of an organization that are intended for, or required by, a customer.

This document is intended for use by any organization regardless of its type or size, or the products and services it provides, including organizations that design customer satisfaction codes of conduct for use by other organizations. [Annex C](#) gives guidance specifically for small businesses.

This document is aimed at customer satisfaction codes of conduct concerning individual customers purchasing or using goods, property or services for personal or household purposes, although it is applicable to all customer satisfaction codes of conduct.

This document does not prescribe the substantive content of customer satisfaction codes of conduct, nor does it address other types of codes of conduct, such as those that relate to the interaction between an organization and its personnel, or between an organization and its suppliers.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements 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 9000:2015, *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.

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <http://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1

customer satisfaction code of conduct

promises, made to *customers* (3.4) by an *organization* (3.9) concerning its behaviour, that are aimed at enhanced *customer satisfaction* (3.5) and related provisions

Note 1 to entry: Related provisions can include objectives, conditions, limitations, contact information, and complaints handling procedures.

Note 2 to entry: Hereafter in this document, the term “code” is used in place of “customer satisfaction code of conduct”.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.5, modified — The term “code” has been added as an admitted term and Note 2 to entry has been replaced.]

3.2 complainant

person, *organization* (3.9) or their representative making a *complaint* (3.3)

3.3 complaint

<customer satisfaction> expression of dissatisfaction made to an *organization* (3.9), related to its product or service, or the complaints-handling process itself, where a response or resolution is explicitly or implicitly expected

Note 1 to entry: Complaints can be made in relation to other processes where the organization interacts with the *customer* (3.4).

Note 2 to entry: Complaints can be made directly or indirectly to the organization.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.3, modified — Notes 1 and 2 to entry have been added.]

3.4 customer

person or *organization* (3.9) that could or does receive a product or a service that is intended for or required by this person or organization

EXAMPLE Consumer, client, end-user, retailer, receiver of product or service from an internal process, beneficiary and purchaser.

Note 1 to entry: A customer can be internal or external to the organization.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.2.4]

3.5 customer satisfaction

customer's (3.4) perception of the degree to which the customer's expectations have been fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: It can be that the customer's expectation is not known to the *organization* (3.9), or even to the customer in question, until the product or service is delivered. It can be necessary for achieving high customer satisfaction to fulfil an expectation of a customer even if it is neither stated nor generally implied or obligatory.

Note 2 to entry: *Complaints* (3.3) are a common indicator of low customer satisfaction but their absence does not necessarily imply high customer satisfaction.

Note 3 to entry: Even when customer requirements have been agreed with the customer and fulfilled, this does not necessarily ensure high customer satisfaction.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.2]

3.6 customer service

interaction of the *organization* (3.9) with the *customer* (3.4) throughout the life cycle of a product or a service

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.4]

3.7**feedback**

<customer satisfaction> opinions, comments and expressions of interest in a product, a service or a complaints-handling process

Note 1 to entry: Feedback can be given in relation to other processes where the *organization* (3.9) interacts with the *customer* (3.4).

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.9.1, modified — Note 1 to entry has been added.]

3.8**interested party**

stakeholder

person or *organization* (3.9) that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity

EXAMPLE *Customers* (3.4), owners, people in an organization, providers, bankers, regulators, unions, partners or society that can include competitors or opposing pressure groups.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.2.3, modified — Note 1 to entry has been deleted.]

3.9**organization**

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its objectives

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to, sole-trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, association, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

[SOURCE: ISO 9000:2015, 3.2.1, modified — Note 2 to entry has been deleted.]

4 Guiding principles

ISO 10001:2018

4.1 General

Effective and efficient planning, design, development, implementation, maintenance and improvement of a code is based on adherence to the customer-focused guiding principles set out in 4.2 to 4.13.

4.2 Commitment

The organization should be actively committed to the adoption, integration and dissemination of a code and the fulfilment of its promises.

4.3 Capacity

Sufficient resources should be made available for code planning, design, development, implementation, maintenance and improvement, and should be managed effectively and efficiently.

4.4 Transparency

A code should be communicated to customers, personnel and other relevant interested parties. Individual customers should be provided with adequate information about the code and its implementation as it applies to them.

4.5 Accessibility

A code and relevant information about it should be easy to find and use (see [Annex D](#)).