



Compass Quality Solutions

ISO 9001 Implementation: Getting started

Your organization has decided to pursue ISO 9001 certification. Where do you start? This article provides an overview of the preparation needed to guide your company through the process.

1. Develop a thorough understanding of the standard

This is a continuous process that starts with learning the requirements, their meaning, and how they apply to your business. First, purchase a copy of the standard and become familiar with the requirements. Next, read ISO 9001-based resources such as blogs, articles and LinkedIn groups. Lastly, consider taking a training course or bringing one in-house for your team to get a more complete overview. For more resources, please review the Articles in the right-hand column of our web site, www.compassqs.com.

2. Perform a gap analysis

With good understanding of the standard, assess your current Quality Management System (QMS):

- Develop a checklist based on the ISO 9001 requirements.
- Compare current practices and procedures to those required by the Standard.
- Interview and observe employees, evaluate the work environment and facilities, and review existing documentation (procedures and records).
- Determine where changes are needed in your system and the specific actions to close the gaps.

3. Create a project plan

The results of the gap analysis show where to focus your efforts. A project plan provides a roadmap and a way to track progress towards certification. A good plan:

- Outlines your approach to the QMS implementation and certification with required resources and time.
- Includes milestones and specific actions from the gap analysis with assigned responsibilities and target dates.
- Is updated regularly with the status of actions.
- Keeps management informed of progress.

These steps will get you off to a good start with your ISO 9001 implementation.

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Our clients' results:

- 20% reduction in costs
- 35% reduction in defects
- 40% improvement in productivity
- ISO 9001 certification achieved within 6-8 months

"Certification is a continuous process."

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