



Principle of Stakeholder Focus as per ISO 9001:2015

It is commonly understood that the basic principle of quality management is “Customer Focus”, which was the first one to be established in the Eight Principles of Quality Management for ISO 9001:2008. The principle states that “Organizations depend on their customers and therefore should understand current and future needs, should meet customer requirements and strive to exceed customer expectations.”

There is no change in the heading of this principle as per ISO 9001:2015, but it states “the primary focus of quality management is to meet customer requirements and to strive to exceed customer expectations.”

Quality in this case means conforming to customer requirements. Customer requirements can be quantified by a set of quality attributes, such as performance, reliability, durability, serviceability and brand image. These quality attributes can be assessed by customers through weighting (importance) and ranking (priority), with the total score reflecting the level of customer satisfaction.

Once the customer requirements have been identified, they must be linked with business processes to improve the quality management system that delivers customer value.

Traditionally, there are multiple customer information systems in different functions or division within an organization as each will contain pieces of knowledge about customer requirements.

Customer focus means building direct, interactive and knowledge-intensive relationships with customers to create distinctive value. This requires the organization to redesign its core business processes with customer requirements in mind to transact business, access and approve bills for payment and process new services. Most importantly, the organization needs to create a knowledge base system to consolidate all product, service, customer and marketing information into an easily searchable knowledge base on the Intranet.



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Merely meeting customer requirements will no longer be enough to sustain competitive advantage for the organization. Customer requirements may change due to technological, societal, economic and environmental factors. The approach to sustain long-term success is to anticipate future customer requirements and expectations.

ISO 9001:2015 makes it clear that quality forms an integral component of sustainable development. Sustainable development means meeting the needs of the organization and its stakeholders today, while also protecting, sustaining and improving the business, social and environmental resources needed for the future.

In addition to meeting the customer and legal requirements for quality, the organization should take into consideration of health, safety, and sustainability factors to strive and exceed customer expectations. Understanding the current and future needs of customers and other stakeholders strongly contributes to the sustained and continuous success of an organization.

An organization achieves sustained success by attracting and retaining the confidence of not only its customers, but also the other stakeholders.. Therefore, “customer focus” is used to determine the current customer requirements. It is advisable for organizations to look at every customer interaction and spot for opportunities which could create further customer value.

To strive and exceed customer expectations, the organization should adopt the “stakeholder focus” which essentially identifies the risks and opportunities of the organizational in relation to the relevant needs of stakeholders. It should evaluate the impact of each issues in terms of strategic direction, operations, products and services.

“Customer focus” is the primary core of quality management’s goal to meet customer current requirements. However the organization should aim to strive and exceed customer expectations with the “stakeholder focus” in order to achieve long-term success.