



/// Our Quality Management Philosophy

Do you know how Toyota really beat GM and Chrysler? It's more complex than many people seem to believe but rest assured, an aggressive and effective Quality Management system played a key and crucial role, both in their rise to world-class performance in developing the Toyota Production System, AND in recovering from their recent quality difficulties. Quality and Quality Management mean many different things to different organizations. And, they're all correct! No one can really write down a precise definition of quality, but we sure 'know it when we see it' in products and services when we are the customer.

X-Stream Leadership Group brings expertise in many different approaches to Quality Management Systems. We will guide you in selecting the right fit for your business. But it does not end there. Our goal is for you to have effective, systematic processes and World-Class business practices. We will work with you to identify and implement the appropriate methods and tools, and help you establish and train your own teams to develop and maintain the Quality Management Systems that you choose. We have diverse experience that will help you uphold your policies, realize your objectives, sustain your gains, and move you to World-Class Performance. Members of our team are on the ASQ Board that establishes the ISO 9001; 901014; AS9100 Standards and structure for Industry.

Early quality functions and implementations were focused on determining if an item was acceptable to be sold or delivered—pure fit, form and function issues. There was direct contact between the craftsman and the customer. Feedback was immediate and customized units were the standard. The customer almost always got what he wanted. After the industrial revolution, when repetition and speed of production became critical objectives and interchangeable parts were required, the customer was distanced from the craftsmen. Factories with assembly lines made it possible to sell the customer a standard item for the best price—it was a tradeoff—customizing was traded for affordability for the masses. Moreover, the acceptability of the product became standardized by passing the quality judgment function from production to independent inspectors. In fact, at times, an adversarial relationship developed between quality control and production when inspectors demanded to stop production for defects. This was pure “Quality Control” in all its glory.

Even though many organizations now refer their quality organization as Quality Assurance, the culture and the mindset of Quality Control has been difficult to dispel in many work environments. But if you honestly assess the effectiveness of these activities in your organization, you will find that many of the old school quality practices can often impede progress. We strongly advocate the process approach to provide effective Quality Management.

The purpose of the process approach is to enhance an organization's effectiveness and efficiency in achieving its defined objectives and meeting goals and expectations of the Customer. Consistent performance driven by effective Quality Management builds customer confidence. Effective utilization of resources leads to lower costs and shorter cycle times. Focused and prioritized improvement initiatives encourage enthusiastic employee involvement and clarification of responsibilities. Our proven techniques have resulted in measurable improvements in employee participation and improvement in productivity.

Our experience has shown us that processes and procedures are not effective if they are viewed as simple sequential activities that run within the traditional department silos with little or no interdepartmental cooperation. To counteract the typical isolation that many business units and functions operate within, we prefer to begin with performing an Organizational Analysis to determine the appropriate organizational structure and interdepartmental interfaces to enhance effective communication and increase the organizations ability to work as a high performance team. We determine actual organizational effectiveness through proven measures and demonstrate improvement by reporting results for these measures utilizing systematic methods and processes that align with the organization's needs. We encourage our clients to open lines of communication in "webs of interaction". Inter-related processes and systems within the modern organization demand internally transparent operations. Sharing resources among work groups enhances the effectiveness and productivity of well cross-trained organizations.

We believe it is a fallacy to consider that everything done in the past was wrong. We strive to implement a blend of traditional and modern approaches in our Quality Management Systems, effectively utilizing the best practices of time-honored traditional management with proven new strategies and techniques. The squads of quality inspectors roaming the floor with clipboards and stop watches are fading into the past. Line managers are taking back the responsibility of defect identification. The quality function is being cross-pollinated in many organizations, causing them to train their top executives in the principles of quality management. It just makes good business sense.

Quality Management is so much more than ISO 9001 certifications. Many more organizations than ever before have achieved ISO 9001 certifications in the new millennium. With its emphasis on the process approach for management systems, the standard has encouraged many service organizations to adopt the ISO 9001 quality management system business model. This is quite a transition from the traditional emphasis on manufacturing and the military style of quality control and configuration management.

Some industries' leaders have developed their own derivative standards based on 9001, such as aerospace, medical devices, automotive, telecommunications, and the oil and gas industry. The FDA, NFPA, and even organizations with environmental concerns have provided standards to guide their peers in developing a management system geared to those issues. Safety and Risk Management will soon have their own ISO international standards. In addition to the advanced Malcolm Baldrige Award criteria, many states in the US, some provinces in Canada and the European Union have adopted quality awards and marks of acceptability.

Our experience in working with the US Military quality systems and US government prime contractor supply chains have trained us to understand the strict compliance requirements of manufacturing flight-critical hardware and space-based equipment. These devices must be the Best-Of-The-Best, or we cannot let them be used. We helped develop the Quality Management System for an AS9100-certified aerospace government contractor that had no product returns and no late deliveries for seven consecutive years. That same plant also manufactured diverse temperature sensors and electronic devices for nuclear, aircraft, and commercial space-flight applications. The rigor of near-perfection must be passed on to the entire supply chain.

We understand the similarities and the differences between government entities, production, and service industries. We bridge the gaps between these apparently disparate management cultures with extensive domestic and international experience working with organizations of many different types and industries. We also have experience in guiding successful quality system registrations for organizations that never handle any material or parts at all. This particular example is engaged in planning and logistics information transacted in the worldwide shipping industry. Their services rendered are their commodity and they have successfully adopted the ISO 9001 culture to their logistics offices.

Furthermore, an effective Quality Management System is comprised of many different facets and techniques. ISO is just the beginning. Even though it is a great accomplishment to achieve certification—and to keep it for the full three-year cycle—ISO certification is only the basic compliance model for business success. You can be ISO certified and make concrete life preservers. Without a desirable product, good, or service, you still won't have a market, no matter how well you write your quality manual and procedures.

There are several methodologies that will help you to improve your business and to accurately measure that improvement. We have extensive expertise in developing documentation for Quality Management Systems that can be custom tailored to meet your specific needs. We recommend that you select procedures and techniques for their usefulness and their application for your unique requirements. We offer the best and brightest individuals who are Subject Matter Experts in the use and application of these methods and tools. We will select the appropriate approach for your business.

Achieve the world-class performance goals you set out to accomplish when you first stepped into the business world. Allow us to help you attain your greatest potential.

[Contact us today.](#)

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