

## **SETTING QUALITY OBJECTIVES**

### **Difference between Goals & Objectives**

**Goals** are statements you make about the future of your business. **Objectives** are the exact steps your company must take to reach its goals.

E.g.: A goal from our Quality Policy reads, "Providing effective and prompt service to achieve total customer satisfaction at all times". So, one of our objectives might then be to improve on-time delivery from 90% to 95% within the next year. In doing so, the improvement derived from the Quality Objectives is directly linked to the needs of the customer.

**So then, setting objectives is an integral part of any organization. But here we will concentration on Quality Objectives**

### **Why are Quality objectives requirements of the ISO 9001 standard?**

The quality objectives are the main method used by companies to focus the goal(s) from the Quality Policy into plans for improvement. The Quality Policy is created with the Customer Requirements in mind, then quality objectives are linked back to the Customer Requirements through the Quality Policy.

### **How to Make the Quality Objectives Work for You**

After deciding which things to monitor, measure and improve, the important thing is to make the Quality Objectives effective in addressing what needs to be improved. The objectives should be designed to be S.M.A.R.T (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-based) and should have relevance at all levels of the company, meaning that each employee should understand how their job supports meeting the Quality Objectives.

### **Setting Quality Objectives**

This is a great way for a business to identify areas of inefficiency. For example to improve delivery times or reduce customer complaints.

To develop objectives is not a job for one person. All departments and Executive management must be involved. It should also be communicated to the relevant individuals and he/she should understand his/her own involvement. This will provide a list of objectives with measurable criteria, review dates and actions required to implement, measure and record them.

**An example:** Quality Objective - Improve Delivery Times by 50%

- Ensure paperwork is complete before delivery
- Have a Satnav in each vehicle
- Check with the client that they are ready for the delivery
- Check vehicles daily to ensure no defects and full of fuel

Measurable results: Date and Time of delivery on Invoice vs Date and Time of actual delivery. So if before only 50% of deliveries were on time and after implementation of the Quality Objectives, on time deliveries were increased to 75%. This would be a 50% improvement on the previous measurement and the objective has been met.

Also, each employee at each level (e.g. the employees working on paperwork) need to understand not only what the objective says, but how it will be measured, plans in place to make it happen, and how they will impact the plans to move them forward.

Quality Objectives must cover all areas of the business, not just product or service related. For example HR, an objective here could be related to staff retention or training.

It is important to think carefully about the Quality Objectives that are established in your business and the timeframes you set for them to be completed. We should be able to measure them during their implementation to see if they are on course to achieve the desired outcome and if not, what needs to be done to correct it.

**Quality Objectives, if chosen carefully, will have a significant impact on a Business's Continuous Improvement!!**