

A briefing for an organization

[Business](#), [Organization](#)



Company ABC is a medium-sized health services provider in Dubai that has been operational for the last fifteen years. Its early years were focussed on delivering optical and dental care to upper middle income families but for the last ten years they have developed to offering medical care in fields ranging from dermatology to paediatrics. Following the Dubai government's move towards quality management in business organisations, the management team at Company ABC decided to implement ISO 9000 standards solely for the internal benefits they bring in increased effectiveness and efficiency of operations.

Choosing this option helped them benefit from the system without incurring the investment required in an actual certification programme. Recently, however, with the updating of the ISO 9000 family, more and more firms in Dubai are seeking to get certified. This has helped many firms pull in more customers primarily assuring them of high quality standards that are internationally approved. The management at Company ABC are in a state of dilemma.

While convinced of the benefits of conforming to such standards, they are still in doubt of the financial feasibility of the same. The actual certification process with the revised standards will not be too tedious as all their business processes already adhere to ISO 9000: 1994 standards. The issue stems from the fact that they do not seem to have much strategic direction of what to do after gaining certification. Should they rest with the ISO 9000: 2000 certification or should they take their quality levels a step higher.

The following brief has been designed to present to the management of Company ABC a summary of the revised requirements of ISO 9000: 2000 and also explains the extra requirements of ISO 9004: 2000, keeping in mind the benefits and problems of accrediting to the 'higher' standard of ISO 9004: 2000. Management at Company ABC is primarily seeking to become ISO 9000 certified because of the internal improvements and strategic benefits associated with this particular quality tool.

The internal improvements include requiring that all business activities related to their health services be conducted in a three-part continuous cycle of planning, control, and documentation. The strategic benefits include gaining access to a vast number of educated customers who are seeking to avail of the services of an internationally certified health service provider. The dilemma rests with the management who wish to maintain high quality levels but still want to keep their costs low.

The earlier ISO 9000 standards adopted by the company ensure that everyone within the organisation understands the importance of quality and of implementing documented processes. As a reminder, let us now go through a few of the main concepts related to the ISO standards. The International Organisation for Standardization defines quality as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs. 1 Specifically, quality is achieved when the nature of the service meets the need.

The nature of the service with regard to the product or service provided also includes information and customer contact. Needs refer not only to the

customer's desires and expectations but the aspirations and obligations of society (environmental protection and safety) and those of the service provider himself (costs and deadlines). In our case, the customer or patient that comes to us for treatment has the need to recover from their illness, expects a clean and pleasing environment in which to consult us and a qualified doctor to prescribe treatment.

Company ABC of course wants to do all this as cost effectively as possible within a given time frame so as to best utilize all its resources. A large number of books and papers exist on the topic of ISO 9000 and its related programs. For example, Clements² and Zuckerman³ have written books that provide step-by-step guidance on how to standardize procedures and how to ensure that those procedures are being followed. The entire quality management focus is tightly based on eight management principles⁴ that are to be employed by management in their quest to direct their firm towards improved performance. Read also when delivering a briefing volume and rate are classified

These principles are generic, similar to the quality system itself, and hence can be used in context of any organisation, of any size, in any given industry. The processes that were adopted at Company ABC over the last five years are not very dissimilar to the certification process being recommended. The revised version of ISO 9000 takes account of the accumulated experience with the ISO 9000 standards family, on one hand, and the environmental management rules (ISO 14000), on the other.