

Why the ISO 9001 should be incorporated in procurement systems: Unlocking quality in supplier relationships.

Procurement is the backbone of every manufacturing industry. It's not just about sourcing anything—it's about sourcing the right quality, in the right quantity, at the right price, delivered at the right time, and to the right place. A single misstep in this chain affects quality, disrupts operations, and compromises customer satisfaction. This is why the ISO 9001 should be incorporated into procurement systems, especially in third-world countries where quality assurance often takes a backseat.

In my line of work as a procurement professional, contracts are typically awarded based on three specific criteria: eligibility, technical requirements, and financial requirements. While these are fundamental, I have often felt that they aren't enough to guarantee quality outcomes consistently. Despite meeting these criteria, suppliers may still lack firm quality management systems, leading to unsatisfactory deliverables.

By integrating ISO 9001 into procurement systems, organizations can go beyond basic compliance and establish a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.

The benefits of incorporating ISO 9001 include

1. Risk Mitigation: One of the key principles of ISO 9001 is risk based thinking—risk based thinking enables an organization to determine the factors that can cause its processes to deviate from intended outcomes by putting in place preventive controls to minimize negative outcomes that will cost organizations more money and to make maximum use of opportunities as they arise, by having a risk assessment system, procurement professionals may identify “risky” suppliers early minimizing the impact on operations. Risk based thinking ensures that suppliers have robust contingency plans for emergencies. To gain more insights of risk management, procurement professionals can leverage on ISO 31000 Risk management frameworks. The combination of both frameworks will enable exceptional operational efficiency.

2. Systematic evaluations based on the ISO 9001: I believe to establish a culture of continuous improvement and accountability, suppliers should be systematically evaluated based on the ISO 9001 as it reduces reliance on subjective judgement when selecting suppliers— though we have a system for that there are still loop holes, unprofessional procurement officials may take advantage of so contract is awarded to their favorites. This systematic evaluation minimizes the risks associated with giving contracts to unreliable suppliers and strengthens the supply chain's overall reliability.

3. Continuous improvement: This is the 21st century, and the key to success lies in working smarter and not harder, for any company aiming to remain competitive and sustainable, it must evolve with the changing times. In today's fast-paced world, procurement specialists increasingly demand that suppliers innovate and continuously improve their operations to meet higher standards. Implementing the ISO 9001 goes beyond the basics of traditional procurement systems. It fosters a culture of continuous improvement by encouraging suppliers to refine their processes. This approach isn't just about compliance—it creates a collaborative relationship between procurement teams and suppliers, ensuring that both parties strive for excellence.

By adopting ISO 9001, procurement teams in third-world countries can elevate their operations, ensuring that quality is never compromised. This transition is vital to achieving a competitive edge in global markets while fostering trust and reliability in supply chains.