ISO 9001: 2015 – QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND HOW IT AFFECTED ME

by:
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ISO 9001 is the international standard that specifies requirements for a quality management system (QMS). Organizations use the standard to demonstrate the ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements. It is the most popular standard in the ISO 9000 series and the only standard in the series to which organizations can certify.

ISO 9001:2015 applies to any organization, regardless of size or industry. More than one million organizations from more than 160 countries have applied the ISO 9001 standard requirements to their quality management systems.

Organizations of all types and sizes find that using the ISO 9001 standard helps them:

- Organizing processes
- Improving the efficiency of processes
- Continually improving

In October, 2017, the DepEd SDO of Bataan, began its bid to be certified as complying with the said quality management system. Procedures being done on various office functions were evaluated and aligned with the standards called for in all aspects of the organization. A consultant was hired to guide each and every employee for them to know how to properly document the different steps involved in the discharge of their assigned tasks, with everything geared towards better service to their clientele. Days and
months of checking and rechecking methods being implemented by all the sections were undertaken to make sure and ascertain that the level of excellence required is being met. The rendering of service needed by all stakeholders at the shortest possible time is always of prime consideration. The conscientious use of the meager government resources was also given attention. Initiatives were taken to guarantee the security and safety of records, buildings, equipment, all other government properties and personnel within the premises. Possible threats were identified and ways of mitigating them were put in place.

In my particular post, being part of the Bids and Awards Committee, forms were systematized, bearing the quality form logo, reference no., and control numbers of the documents, among others. At first, the action seemed laborious. There are times when the process looked too complicated to comprehend but giving up is not an option. Since its inception, it’s a do or die situation. There is no turning back. It’s always a moving forward kind of thing. Little by little, slowly but surely, with the able assistance of our adviser, everything has fallen into place.

On January 25, 2018 a pre-audit was tackled by an independent certifying firm and areas of concern were identified so corrective measures may be installed. Finally, on March 22, 2018, the Stage 2 Audit was performed by DQS Certification Philippines, Incorporated. Everyone was on tenterhooks that day and I am no exception. However, the personnel of the aforecited company assured us that we shouldn’t be too worried as they are not there to bully us but only to assess the management. At the end of the audit, the verdict was that we passed and garnered our much coveted certification, with a few fields needing improvement. Everybody breathed a sigh of relief that the hard work paid off. I felt happy, too, that the Office is successful. However, the feeling in just short-lived. We all knew the challenges do not stop with that piece of paper confirming our compliance. I, for one, believe that this is just the beginning of another chapter, another hurdle to overcome, another road less-travelled to take as I am to compete with oneself in transcending what I have achieved so far in terms of client’s satisfaction, internal or
otherwise. ISO 9001:2015 are not just letters and numbers. It has affected me in more ways than one. It has taught me that I am here to serve and to avoid mediocrity at all costs and continuously improve when I can, what I can, where I can.

Reference:

Oscar Combs, Standard Wise