

The Benefits of a Certified Quality Management System

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Many groups in the background screening industry have at one time or another asked, what are the benefits of a certified Quality Management System (QMS)? This is a rather open-ended question, considering the many benefits that come from having a certified QMS. Although it is not absolutely necessary to have a 'certified' quality management system to flourish in this industry, it is the goal of this article to demonstrate how both research providers and their clients stand to benefit from implementing some form of a QMS.

There are several benefits to be gained from having a QMS. Most notably is an immediate increase in efficiency, through more clearly defined processes and training. Efficiency leads to higher levels of productivity when employees learn what is expected of them, and work to provide a more consistent service. Consistency lends itself to a reduction in waste, or in our industry, it minimizes the amount of total errors. It stands to reason, the more productive a company is while committing fewer errors, the greater the potential for increased revenues.

These are basic benefits of a QMS, but how does it impact a company's 'bottom line', in our industry? Quality management systems are by nature suited for manufacturing companies. It's quite obvious why manufacturing companies would benefit from a quality control process. For example, if you have an explosive manufacturing company, a quality control process that prevented the premature detonation for the product is a key selling point. If your company does not manufacture explosives, or some other widget, then why have a QMS? The reason is because the primary motivation behind a QMS is customer satisfaction. In our industry, customer satisfaction could be what sets you apart from your competitors. It could also mean the right person getting hired, or better yet, the wrong person not getting hired for a job.

Customer satisfaction could mean the repeat sex offender who lied on their job application did not get a job where they would be working closely with minors. Customer satisfaction, in our industry, equals loss prevention. Having a certified QMS means a company is absolutely committed to customer satisfaction, by enabling them to be performance-based in nature. The company's clients, and also the third-party which has certified their QMS, provide a review of overall company performance.

Does this mean a firm with a certified QMS has a product equal to perfection, or that they can ensure their client base 100% accuracy, 100% of the time? The answer, in a word, is no. Companies with a certified QMS offer a systematic approach to attaining a measurable and realistic objective. How can a QMS, certified or not, equal 100% accuracy? The answer is that this is not an obtainable goal. We are human, after all, and mistakes will happen which means errors will occur. A certified QMS does not serve to

make a company infallible, however, it does serve to make them more accountable. In fact, having any form of QMS helps companies illustrate and face just how infallible they actually are by forcing them to track, monitor, and audit themselves and their mistakes by documenting their actions. A company's QMS ensures that they face their imperfections, daily, so that strides can be taken to improve upon them. There exist clearly defined procedures in place to help define the problem, determine the root cause, and prevent its recurrence.

Aside from benefits such as, 'increase productivity and minimize errors', there are a myriad of reasons why implementing a quality management system stands to benefit a company. Possessing a QMS forces the leadership of the company to look at their company in the mirror and face their flaws, and more importantly, improve upon them to prevent future mistakes. Once a company realizes that mistakes will happen, it can move forward while developing methods of improving. Research providers in the NAPBS can improve performance and gain greater knowledge by implementing a quality management system, en route to obtaining certification through a third party such as ISOQAR, or Six Sigma, so their clients can obtain a superior product.

