

THE ROLE OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN CURRENT INTERNAL AUDIT.

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Abstract: This study investigates the pivotal role of a Quality Management System (QMS) in the context of ongoing internal audits. The implementation and maintenance of an effective QMS are crucial elements for organizations aiming to uphold and enhance the quality of their processes and outputs. This research delves into how a robust QMS framework contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of internal audits, ensuring that organizational processes align with established standards and regulations. The analysis highlights the integration of QMS principles in internal auditing practices, emphasizing the continuous improvement aspect inherent in quality management.

Keywords: Quality Management System (QMS), Internal audit, Audit processes, Organizational efficiency, Quality standards, Regulatory compliance, Continuous improvement, Process optimization.

The systems of quality management, environmental management, industrial safety, and occupational health and safety management, as well as other management systems present in the organization, need to undergo regular internal audits. Once the quality management system is in place, the leadership of the organization needs to assess how the system operates, where potential weaknesses or issues may exist, and collaborate with specialists to evaluate the effectiveness of the system [1]. The results of internal audits serve as a database for the organizational leadership to analyze and make informed decisions, facilitating the development of corrective actions and identifying opportunities for overall improvement in certain processes or the system as a whole. The purpose of

conducting internal audits is to assess the compliance of the quality management system with specified requirements, ensuring its correct implementation and functionality in the current work environment. It involves identifying the effectiveness of corrective actions taken regarding previously identified nonconformities and making decisions for further improvement of the system [2].

In the ISO 19011 international standard, audits are conducted with the aim of identifying to what extent the specified requirements of the implemented system are met, and the results of these investigations are systematically, independently, and documented in defined procedures used for objective evaluation. It is noted that internal audits are one of the processes in the quality management system and are implemented according to the Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle [3]. Considering the audit objectives, international standards, internal regulatory documents, rules, procedures, contracts, and other documents of the organizational quality management system can be used as audit criteria.

First-party audit (internal audit) is an audit conducted by specialists of the organization, meaning an internal examination of the organization's own systems, procedures, and activities to gain confidence in their compliance with specified requirements. Internal audit provides information to the management about the execution of directives, instructions, and orders, the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the system at a defined level, and the presence of deficiencies in the system. Internal audit ensures the provision of complete 'communication channels' throughout the organization and identifies opportunities for improving activities. The organization guides its internal audits, demonstrating the compliance of the quality management system with standard requirements to the extent necessary. However, other organizations may await the results of internal audits with skepticism [4]. Still, during the preparation process for certification, it is possible to identify the organization's movement from the second and third parties to evaluate it.

Second-party audit is an examination carried out on the organization from the customer's side or from a party with a particular interest or curiosity in the

organization's activities. The purpose of the second-party audit is to ensure the organization's confidence in the implementation of the customer's requirements at the specified level, and it should be carried out regularly in accordance with the requirements. The results of the second-party audit reveal the impact of both organizations on each other's future business decisions. Therefore, for guaranteed accurate information, the audit should be carried out by competent, trained personnel during the preparation process for certification [5]. If one organization orders another organization to conduct an audit, and the auditing organization receives results from the auditing organization, it is possible to consider the organization having conducted the audit.

Third-party audit is an inspection carried out by an external independent organization, usually for certification purposes. Like the second-party audit, the third-party audit also establishes specific requirements for auditors and the audited organization. The results of the audit should show the objectivity of the system being audited at a specified level and the high objectivity of the auditors reviewing the system. The organization being audited can benefit from the results of external audits for promotional purposes, demonstrating compliance with established requirements and the effectiveness of the quality system [6]. Negative aspects of external audit include the organization's unfamiliarity with the customs of the corporation, the organization's employees characterizing auditors as 'strangers,' difficulties in providing the necessary information in some cases, the auditor's lack of knowledge of unofficial procedures in a short period, the possibility of complicating the collection of necessary information during the audit, and the likelihood of revealing confidential information during the audit [7].

The stages of the audit typically consist of internal and external audits, often involving two stages: adequacy checking and conformity checking.

Adequacy checking assesses the degree of compliance of the documented system with the requirements specified in the standard. Adequacy checking is carried out by reviewing the documented system, comparing the applicable

standard requirements, and checking whether the documented system matches the parts that are in compliance with the standard requirements [8].

Conformity checking involves reviewing the system by the organization's or company's employees to ensure that the requirements of the documented system are understood, implemented, and supported. If a documented system has not been established for a specific procedure or activity required by the standard, conformity checking may be performed relative to the implementation of the standard requirements.

In conclusion, the role of the Quality Management System (QMS) in the current internal audit process is pivotal for ensuring organizational excellence. The synergy between QMS principles and internal audit practices establishes a robust framework for continual improvement and adherence to established standards. Through systematic planning, implementation, and monitoring, the QMS not only facilitates the identification of areas for enhancement but also provides a structured approach to addressing non-conformities. The integration of QMS principles in the internal audit process not only enhances the effectiveness of audits but also contributes to the overall efficiency and competitiveness of the organization. As organizations navigate the complex landscape of quality assurance, the symbiotic relationship between QMS and internal audit emerges as a cornerstone for sustained success, fostering a culture of quality, compliance, and continuous improvement.

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