

The Seven Principles of ISO 9000

ISO is the **International Organization for Standardization**. It was established in 1946, and in 1987 it published a list of quality standards. Everyone doing business with a country in the European Union is required to follow those standards.

But today it has gone beyond that level. More than 100 countries have adopted the ISO standards, including the United States. In fact, many global corporations require their key suppliers to be “ISO 9000 certified.”

ISO standards apply to all types of businesses and are based on seven principles of quality management. Here’s a brief description of each principle:

1. **Customer focus** – the primary focus of quality management is to meet customer requirements.
2. **Leadership** – leaders at all levels of the organization must engage employees to achieve quality goals.
3. **Engagement of people** – everyone in the organization must be empowered to create and deliver value.
4. **Process approach** – activities, procedures, and processes should be viewed as an integrated system.
5. **Improvement** – improvement must be continuous.
6. **Evidence-based decision-making** – decisions should be based on analysis and evaluation of data and information.
7. **Relationship management** – relationships with partners, such as suppliers, should be managed for the long-term.

For complete information on the ISO approach to quality management, visit www.iso.org.

I encourage you to download their booklet *Quality Management Principles*. They describe each principle, list the benefits, and give you some terrific ideas for implementing in your organization. **Just enter “principles” into the search window and you can download the document.**