Root Cause Analysis

Root Cause Analysis (RCA) is a method that is used to address a problem or non-conformance in order to get to the "root cause" of the problem. It is used to correct or eliminate the cause and prevent the problem from recurring. It is not 'rocket science' – anyone can do it. You probably do it on a day-to-day basis without thinking about it. RCA is simply the application of a series of well known, common sense techniques which can produce a systematic, quantified and documented approach to the identification, understanding and resolution of underlying causes.

A mini-guide to Root Cause Analysis is now available for your Kindle from Amazon. (http://www.amazon.co.uk/Mini-Guide-Cause-Analysis-ebook/dp/B005LGBY30/ref=sr)

Update on ISO 9001

This year, 2012 was the 25th anniversary of the ISO 9001 standard – it was 1987 when ISO published its first quality management standard. It is now one of the world's leading standards with more than a million users worldwide.

The next revision is due for release in 2015 and the technical team are already working hard on it. The aim is to ensure that ISO 9001 is kept relevant, reflecting the changes in its environment. According to the draft design specification, the revised standard should:

- Provide a stable core set of requirements for the next 10 years or more
- Remain generic, and relevant to all sizes and types of organisation operating in any sector
- Maintain the current focus on effective process management to produce desired outcomes
- Take account of changes in quality management systems practices and technology since the last major revision in 2000
- Reflect changes in the increasingly complex, demanding and dynamic environments in which organisations operate
- Apply Annex SL of the ISO Directives to enhance compatibility and alignment with other ISO management system standards
- Facilitate effective organsational implementation and effective conformity assessment by first, second and third parties
- Use simplified language and writing styles to aid understanding and consistent interpretations of its requirements

Further information is available from the www.iso.org

Management System for Road Traffic Safety

ISO 39001, a management system standard for road traffic safety has been released by ISO. It is aimed at governments, vehicle fleet operators and other organisations who want to reduce the impact of road accidents. It provides a set of requirements for safety aspects such as speed, driver awareness and vehicle condition.

Claes Tingvall, Chair of the ISO technical committee that developed the standard said, "Road accidents account for some 1.3 million fatalities each year. The number of people killed is on the increase, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. It is crucial that governments commit to implementing a series of specific and attainable actions, including the setting of ambitious road casualty reduction targets. The sharing of know-how and experience is also needed. ISO 39001 will assist governmental and private sector organisations alike by providing a structured, holistic approach to road-traffic safety as a complement to existing programmes and regulations. It is based on the process approach, proven by successful ISO standards such as ISO 9001 for quality management, including the plan-do-check-act cycle, and a requirement for continual improvement."

For more details, please visit www.iso.org

New Standard for Project Management

ISO 21500:2012 "Guidance on Project Management" provides guidance on good practice in Project Management with the aim of increasing efficiency. According to Miles Shepherd, Chair of the ISO project committee that developed the new standard, "ISO 21500 enables people in any organisation to understand how the discipline fits into a business environment. It is also intended to be used as a basic guide, aimed at the informed reader without an in-depth knowledge of project management."

ISO also point out some additional benefits of ISO 21500 including:

- Encourage transfer of knowledge between projects and organisations for improved project delivery
- Facilitate efficient tendering processes through the use of consistent project management terminology
- Enable the flexibility of project management employees and their ability to work on international projects

- Provide universal project management principles and processes

This standard is the first in a planned family of project management standards and is designed to work with other project management standards such as ISO 10006:2003, *Quality management systems - Guidelines for quality management in projects*, ISO 10007:2003, *Quality management systems -Guidelines for configuration management*, ISO 31000:2009, *Risk management – Principles and guidelines*, and some sector-specific standards in industries such as aerospace and IT.

Involving People

Many organisations use Investors in People as a framework for developing and involving their staff in quality and other aspects of the business. There is now an ISO standard, ISO 10018:2012 "Quality Management – Guidelines on people involvement and competence", that may also be helpful. As the introduction to the standard explains, "The overall performance of a quality management system and its processes ultimately depends on the involvement of competent people and whether they are properly introduced and integrated into the organisation. The involvement of people is important in order for an organisation's quality management system to achieve outcomes which are consistent and aligned with their strategies and values. It is critical to identify, develop and evaluate the knowledge, skills, behaviour and work environment required for the effective involvement of people with the necessary competence. This International Standard provides guidelines for human factors which influence people involvement and competence, and creates value that helps to achieve the organisation's objectives."

It describes:

- Processes which an organisation can use to implement and maintain people involvement and competence in quality management systems

- Actions which may be taken to strengthen people involvement
- Actions which can be taken to meet individual quality management system requirements, such as those specified in ISO 9001, although ISO 10018 can be used with other management system standards

For further information, please visit www.iso.org

Information Security

The ISO 27001 standard for information security management system requirements is gradually becoming more popular particularly as more and more businesses are reliant on the internet for sharing information, making payments, sales and marketing. There is now a new standard to add to the family - ISO 27032:2012 Information technology – Security techniques – Guidelines for cyber security. This new standard looks at how to deal with the security gaps that are caused through lack of communication between different providers and users of cyberspace.

Johann Amsenga, Convenor of the working group that developed the standard said, "Devices and connected networks that support cyberspace have multiple owners – each with their own business, operational and regulatory concerns. Not only do the different users and providers share little or no input, but each has a different focus when dealing with security. Such a fragmented state opens up vulnerabilities in cyberspace. ISO/IEC 27032 will provide an overarching, collaborative, multi-stakeholder solution to reduce these risks."

For further information, please visit www.iso.org

Health and Safety

Quality managers may be asked about the benefits of going for OHSAS 18001, the Occupation Health and Safety Management System, certification, particularly if the organisation is aiming for an Integrated Management System. A report from BSI, showed that 76% of their OHSAS clients showed improved senior management involvement, reduction in workplace accidents, safer working conditions and an improved health and safety culture.

If you are being pulled more and more towards involvement in Health and Safety management, you may find that you would benefit from some additional training to support your quality knowledge with some Health and Safety knowledge. NEBOSH offers some well recognised courses and these can be studied either face-to-face or through distance learning. If you are interested in a distance learning approach you may like to look at the NEBOSH course offered by QMT (www.qmt.co.uk)

World Standards Day

This year's World Standards Day was celebrated on 14th October and this year's theme was "Less waste, better results – Standards increase efficiency".

According to the World Standards Day official message, "the state-of-the-art know-how contained in international standards is accessible to all, including developing countries, helping them make the best use of their human and material resources. More efficient industrial and business processes, facilitated by standards, empower companies to compete globally, and produce faster for more markets at a lesser cost.

In this way, standards help organisations meet their customers' needs while focusing and optimising company processes. Regulators can use international standards as a means to show compliance and as a basis for market- and consumer-friendly regulations. And consumers can rest assured that international standards promote efficiency on issues that matter to them, like product labelling or safety."

More information can be found at www.iso.org

Merry Christmas