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Business Relationships

A new specification, produced by BSI and PSL (Partnership Sourcing Limited), is now available providing ‘relationship advice’ for businesses. PAS 11000 Collaborative Business Relationships contains an eight stage approach to help organisations develop and manage their own approaches to working with other organisations more effectively. It will help organisations to:

- Identify where relationship management sits within its business objectives
- Know how others have approached collaborations and therefore identify the right route to take
- Evaluate its preparedness for entering into single or multiple partnerships
- Select the right partner to complement its objectives
- Build a joint approach based on mutual advantage
- Develop added value from the relationship
- Measure and maintain maximum benefit
- Develop and execute an exit strategy

Mike Low, Director of British Standards said, “Working in partnership between businesses has long been recognised as one of the most effective ways of achieving profitable growth and bringing new products to the market place. PAS 11000 provides a common route map that sets the standard for organisations worldwide. It addresses the most challenging aspects of relationship management in a strategic framework that allows a high level of customisation so that any organisation can facilitate its own best approach to cooperation and integration. The UK is the first country to develop such a standard and in doing so continues to put UK plc at the forefront of world business issues.” For further information visit www.bsi-global.com

One of the most common business relationships is that between supplier and customer. *Supplier Partnerships* have a role to play in developing the organisation’s supplier quality assurance strategy. This is developing relationships with suppliers to ensure that they understand the customer’s specific requirements and needs. Further reducing the number of suppliers provides better control and fosters a mutually beneficial climate of continuous improvement. This climate can be used to prevent defects, reduce variation and waste in the supply chain. Often customers will link this continuous improvement and waste reduction to cost and price reduction, i.e. the customer has actively guided and assisted suppliers in reducing waste and improving efficiency. Now, is it unreasonable for the customer to expect some price benefit? It is this (price reduction) side of partnership sourcing and SQA which is difficult for the suppliers to accept. Customers acting as consultants and telling suppliers what is good for them, under the name of improving quality performance and then asking for a price reduction is sometimes hard for suppliers to accept. Never the less this should not detract from what is a widely accepted and respected approach to supplier quality assurance.

Are you prepared for disaster?

A recent survey of FTSE 250 companies showed that 61% recognise the business benefits of Business Continuity Management (BCM). They see that this

- Reduces risk
- Satisfies customer requirements
- Helps them remain competitive
- Helps win new business

The survey, carried out by BSI, also showed that 46% said it would take less than a day for a serious disaster to impact significantly on their business. However, where companies have implemented a standard there is an increased confidence in managing issues such as supply



chain failure and forced business relocation. Chris Green, Vice Chair, Business Continuity Institute and chairman of the BSI business continuity committee stated: "There is little doubt that using standards enhances productivity and competitiveness. Robust BCM standards such as BS 25999 can make supply chains more robust, improve enterprise stability, increase job security and ensure the flow of money into communities. Without this there is a significant risk to both economic growth and employment, let alone the fortunes of individual companies." Further information can be found in BS 25999, the new Business Continuity Management standard, please visit www.bsi-global.com

ISO at Geneva Motor Show

At next year's Geneva Motor Show in March 2007, ISO (International Organisation for Standardisation) with the ITU (International Telecommunications Union) and IEC (International Electrotechnical Commission) will exhibit and run a workshop on *The Fully Networked car, Information and Communication Technologies in Motor Vehicles*. Hans Gierlich, head of Acoustics and Chair of the steering committee for the networked car event said, "The workshop will examine some of the challenges faced in linking the automotive and ICT sectors. There are many hurdles here and standardisation will play an important role in smoothing the way forward for the industry". If you would like further information about this event please visit www.iso.ch

Hydrogen powered phones?

A new standard *ISO/TS 16111:2006*, *Transportable gas storage devices – Hydrogen absorbed in reversible metal hydride* should help promote more widespread use of hydrogen powered fuel cells by encouraging safe design and use of transportable hydrogen gas storage canisters. Randy Dey, Chair of the technical committee that developed the new technical specification has said "We are helping make hydrogen a reality. Next generation hand-held consumer devices will utilise hydrogen to refuel the incorporate micro fuel cells. Several advantages that these new products will provide include the availability of more power, long

user time between refuelling and faster refuelling". Possible uses for these fuel cells are mobile phones and laptops – a laptop that will run for the working day rather than 23 hours. For further information visit www.iso.ch

Social Responsibility Reinforced

The United Nations Global Compact Office (UNGCO) and the ISO have signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance their cooperation of the future of ISO26000 standard guidance on social responsibility). The ISO are stressing that the standard will complement and support the other activities in the Social Responsibility field such as the declarations and conventions of the United Nations. There will be consistency between ISO and the 10 Global Compact principles that address human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. The ISO Secretary-General Alan Bryden commented, "The memorandum of understanding reinforces the global importance of the ISO Social Responsibility standardisation initiative and its future utility to the UN system and global business. It will also help to optimise our collaboration, in particular, within the framework of the Growing Sustainable Business Initiative where international standardisation could help to cement interaction between the UN system and the business community". The ISO26000 standard is targeted for publication in 2009, but for further information please visit www.iso.ch

Awards for Education

ISO have recently announced an award to encourage and recognise successful programmes in Higher Education related to standardisation. The award aims to raise awareness of and support for higher education institutes that have developed and implemented programmes that demonstrate the role of standards in access to world markets, transfer technology and promote good business practices and sustainable development. ISO Secretary General Alan Bryden said "Knowledge of the economic, technical and social importance and benefits of standards is becoming imperative in the curricula of future managers, scientists and technologists. Many universities and other higher education institutions have begun introducing their



students to standardisation. ISO is keen to support them in their efforts and to encourage them to share their knowledge, experience and expertise with other educational establishments". The ISO Award for Higher Education in Standardisation will be presented in September 2007 and the nomination of candidates must be made by 15 February 2007. For further information visit www.iso.ch

The Institute of Quality Assurance (IQA) presented their awards in November 2007. The winners were:

Best IQA Education Centre Award - John Baron Trophy – **Quality Management & Training Ltd**

IQA Highest Achiever Award - Highest Achiever on IQA Diploma: **Michael Copley**
Highest Achiever on IQA Certificate: **Dyan Batterbury (QM&T student)**

UK Quality Leader of the Year award – **Stephen Burnell** (Augusta Westland) and **Angela Nicholson** (RWE npower)

European Quality Leader presentation - The 2005 UK Quality Leader of the Year recipients, **Malcolm Bird and Estelle Clark** received their European Quality Leader 2006 awards. **Steve Burnell and Angela Nicholson** have been nominated for the 2007 award

IQA National Award sponsored by Motorola - **Martin Crewe** for his paper *The Application and Effectiveness of the EFQM Excellence Model within the Voluntary Sector in Scotland*

Branch Award sponsored by NQA - **Thames Valley Branch** collected by chairman Mr W Lord FIQA **West of Scotland Branch** collected by Fiona Foster AIQA

IQA REME Award - **1st Battalion Royal Regiment of Fusiliers Light Aid Detachment REME** Collected by Captain Rob Fyfe REME Officer Commanding LAD REME. Or further information please visit www.iqa.org.uk

Dispute Resolution

A review of the UK Government support for resolving disputes in the workplace is to take place. Alistair Darling, DTI Secretary of State, said "We must make the employment disputes system work better, both for business and employees. By reducing the number of disputes, and resolving those that do happen more quickly, we can raise the UK's productivity and ensure better employer relations. We can also cut the cost of dealing with disputes that can be substantial. At the same time, we are determined to protect the rights of employees and ensure that they have access to justice." For further information please visit www.gmn.gov.uk