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ISO 9001 Proven to Help Win New Business



By: [British Assessment Bureau BAB](#)

Build a better process and they will come

According to data from The British Assessment Bureau's (BAB) independent 2011 Client Satisfaction Survey, 44 percent of respondents said that they had won business as a result of becoming certified to ISO 9001, the quality management system standard from the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).



The survey, which was carried out by specialist market research organization, Lake Market Research (LMR), showed that for many organizations, the prospect of winning more work was the primary motivation for implementing the standard. When asked, 57 percent said that a client requirement motivated them to obtain certification, with 31 percent responding that winning more business was their incentive.

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For more than 20 years, ISO 9001 has been recognized as the ideal way to prove an organization has a quality management system in place. There are differing opinions regarding the history of ISO 9001, but the committee that wrote the standard that we know as ISO 9001 was formed in the late 1970s. The standard was released in 1987 with three revised editions released in 1994, in 2000, and in 2008. Public and private sector organizations have stipulated ISO 9001 certification when awarding contracts so they can ensure potential suppliers meet expectations.

ISO 9001 is intended to help improve internal management processes, leading to greater efficiency. However, 'improving internal processes' was only the third most popular reason for seeking ISO 9001 certification, with 24 percent confirming this. However, the results of BAB Client Satisfaction Survey didn't prove a surprise to BAB's director of marketing, Robert Fenn. "Prospective clients have often mentioned that they require the [ISO 9001] standard to qualify for a particular tender," says Fenn. "However, what we didn't know is how many of our clients had actually won work as a direct result of achieving certification. With the latest results now in, we're delighted to confirm that certified organizations are getting the reward they deserve from implementing a robust, recognized quality management system."

Verbatim feedback from the survey backed up the figures, with some clients suggesting that ISO 9001 carried real weight. "We have won several government contracts which we couldn't even have attempted without ISO 9001," says Debbie Horlock from Screenfix Windscreens.

It isn't just the government that insists on certification either. "We are starting to win new accounts that we could not have approached in the past as they insisted on having ISO 9001," says Christian Stoneham from Masters Exhibitions & Shows.

BAB is accredited and regulated by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS). This ensures that BAB is impartial, objective, and competent to undertake certification; and they comply with the standard ISO 17021—"Conformity assessment—Requirements for bodies providing audit and certification of management systems." The UKAS is the sole national accreditation body recognized by government; and UK businesses and the public sector are encouraged by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to seek UKAS-accredited certification where it is available.

This has proven essential for some of BAB's clients that have applied for central and local government tenders. "The amount of work coming in has increased especially with the UKAS accreditation," says Rhian Wilcox from the Spectra Group (UK) Ltd.

The ISO, developer and publisher of more than 18,000 international standards, commissioned its own survey in 2009 showing that more than 40,000 ISO 9001 certificates were issued in the UK in that year. With 96 percent of BAB's clients recommending the standard to other organizations, that figure looks set to increase.

To view all of the facts and figures from BAB's independent 2011 Client Satisfaction Survey, visit www.british-assessment.co.uk/survey [1].



About The Author

The British Assessment Bureau (BAB), accredited and regulated by the UKAS, is a specialist in certification scheme management. From government agencies to small businesses, thousands of organizations trust in BAB's systems and services to measure, test, and monitor the competence and performance of their people and processes. BAB is active in setting national standards and are expert contributors to the British Standards QS/01 and AUS/01 committees, which represent the UK in quality management and audit standards issues as an International Organization for Standardization (ISO) member.

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[1] <http://www.british-assessment.co.uk/survey/index.htm>