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*"We engineer the quality of your success"*

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## ISO Registration Works For Sparton Of Canada

### CLIENT'S SITUATION:

Sparton of Canada is a supplier to the international defence organizations (eg. NATO), foreign, and domestic governments, and to research organizations for high-tech instrumentation. They were qualified to AQAP 1 but needed to move to the ISO 9001 standard. Their sister company had already started implementation of ISO 9001 with a \$250,000 budget. Due to recession & customer timetable, certification had to be obtained for less than \$120,000 and within 12 months.

### PQA's TASK:

Lead Sparton's efforts in ISO 9001 certification, train the ISO 9001 steering committee on the main issues, and supply ISO 9001 expertise, interpretation, and applications methods.

### PQA's ACTION:

PQA helped Sparton obtain government funding assistance for 50% of the project costs and the certification fee. Monthly meetings were held, an overall schedule was developed, and the system manual was completed. Implementation goals were monitored and problems resolved promptly.

### CLIENT'S RESULTS:

Sparton of Canada achieved their ISO 9001 certification in less than one year and 26% under budget. Eight minor observations were noted during the Registrar's audit. Certification is now used to expand export markets & obtain additional business. Improvements achieved during the project are seen as an additional source of profits.

### TODAY:

Sparton has effectively used their ISO 9001 certification to find big, new markets in the non-military fields.

## The Road To Registration

Following are some tips to help you through your ISO 9000 registration process:

- Do a "Gap Audit" to see exactly where you need to focus your efforts.
- Develop a realistic timetable. If you rush things, you won't have time to work the bugs out of new systems before the auditors see them. Twelve to 18 months is a realistic timetable for most companies.
- Make someone an in-house expert on the ISO 9000 standards. Use all available resources for advice, guidance and information. You can turn to outside consultants to assist you. A consultant's role is to act as a technical guide, assist in the documentation of quality manuals, train employees, and provide internal audits before registration.
- The ISO 9000 team needs to attend a 2 or 3-day training course. These courses provide the participant with an overview of the ISO 9000 quality system, and give some guidelines on how to implement it.
- Group training is another alternative. It's for companies who don't have the funds to hire their own consultant, but who need more than the expertise that exists inside their company at present. It's designed so that a small group of companies can develop and document their quality system together. The network of companies provide support, shared experiences, and the motivation to keep up through peer pressure.
- Talk to customers or other firms who have already completed the registration process. They are usually very happy to offer advice.
- Research and select your registrar early in the process. The interpretations of the Standard vary from registrar to registrar, and by working with your registrar when you develop systems, you can be confident they will meet your registrar's standards. Also, many registrars are heavily booked and there may be a significant delay (up to 12 months) before they can schedule a registration audit.
- Document, document, document. Provide evidence the auditors can easily follow that proves you are doing what you say you are. Forms are a good way to make sure documentation gets done. Always sign and date any documentation. Any forms, instructions, procedures and specs should be controlled documents. The best rule of thumb is to control any document used by more than one person.
- Don't overkill procedures. You don't have to go into minute details of what is done in a process. Also, never tie yourself into a procedure you can't always follow. Avoid saying "always," "never," and "must," if there are occasional exceptions to the way something is normally done. Give yourself some latitude. Remember, the auditors will be looking to see if you are following *your* procedures. As long as the procedures comply with the provisions of the ISO 9000 standard, and meet your customer's requirements, don't make them too strict.
- To maximize the chances of obtaining ISO approval on the first audit, it pays to arrange for a preliminary audit. An independent consultant may be best suited to organize this trial run. Due to their familiarity with the operation, company personnel might overlook mistakes that would be readily apparent to an independent observer. You will learn what corrective actions you will need to make. A preliminary evaluation includes a detailed review of the company's quality system to ensure that provisions have been made to address all of the requirements contained in the applicable standard.