

# Q & A about QA/QM

August 2010

## About Innovation

# About Innovation

## Question:

I wonder why there is no requirement of “innovation” in the ISO 9001 management system standard. I think “innovation” is indispensable for the company to continue to exist, in addition to “improvement”. (From a Member of IQAI)

**See next page for our response.**

## Answer:

The reason why ISO 9001 does not require “innovation” is that it is not the matter to be regulated by the standard and not mandatory in any regulation and standard. It is entirely left to the discretion of each individual company whether to do innovation. If they think it necessary, they may do it, and if they do not think it necessary, they do not have to do it. The method and program is also left to them. The company should do it in the most appropriate way to them.

ISO 9001 is merely the list of the basic minimum requirements for the company management. Also it does

not specify anything of the matter of common sense or the matter of course stipulated in laws and regulations. The company needs to do any right thing necessary for their management even though it is not written in ISO 9001 standard. Also it is not forbidden by ISO 9001 to do the right thing necessary for the company.

There are many companies that take that they have to do anything if written in ISO 9001 or any other applicable standards, and they do not have to do anything not required in such standards. Such thought is altogether wrong and useless for the company management, even though the company can get certified to the standard(s).

“Innovation” is important for the company management, as well as “improvement”. Before attempting innovation, we have to grasp everything in management system, and prepare good plan and procedure carefully because innovation involves many changes in the existing resources and processes. Also we have to be conscious that the change for the sake of changing as many Lean kaizen companies are doing is meaningless and harmful in most cases.

*Akio Miura, ASQ CQA/CQE/CMQOE/CRE/CBA/CHA/CSSBB*