

# Q & A about QA/QM

September 2010

## Measure of Customer Satisfaction

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## Question:

Is customer survey a requirement of ISO9001:2008 as a means of customer satisfaction measurement per Note of its Clause 8.2.1? Are there any better ways to measure customer satisfaction? Is market share analysis sufficient to measure customer satisfaction? (From a Member of ASQ)

**See next page for our response.**

## Answer:

Customer survey is not a requirement of any management system standard including ISO 9001. There are many ways much better and surer than customer survey to measure customer satisfaction. Each organization can select any means at its discretion. Market share analysis is a different story from customer satisfaction.

According to some statistical data many years ago, customer satisfaction survey turned out to be mostly useless. It cannot reflect the customer satisfaction perception accurately in reality. Many people give no response. Also there are many

such people that give irresponsible or random comments. It does not give you an exact indicator of customer satisfaction. In most cases, it seems to be serving only for survey service provider's satisfaction.

I, as one of the customers of various devices and services, receive lots of customer survey quite often. It is merely disturbing my daily business, and contributing to my dissatisfaction very much. All manufacturers and service providers must take such customer's feelings into their consideration.

As to the methods for obtaining and using the information on customer satisfaction and perception, ISO 8.2.1 says "it shall

be determined.” This means that you may determine and use the methods fittest to your company and type of product.

The method of measuring and monitoring customer satisfaction depends on the types of products and services, and the supplier has to determine it in accordance with their experience. In general, the live data of customer feedback about conformance to contract specification and supplier’s promise to customer are the best data. Each supplier should develop its own method to measure and monitor customer satisfaction, fittest to its products and services. It is not for the sake of ISO certification but for the supplier’s own management, which is more serious and important than ISO for the supplier.

In reality, we have to minimize Customer complaints because it is a very serious problem. Before customer satisfaction, you have to eliminate customer dissatisfaction. Besides deficient or nonconforming products, delayed or inappropriate responses are the causes of customer dissatisfaction.

Analyzing customer complaints and dissatisfaction data is very important.

If you are good in response and handle customer complaints in a timely and appropriate fashion, you can not only eliminate the customer dissatisfaction but you can increase their satisfaction.

If the customer has neither complaints nor dis-satisfaction, the most effective method would be “face-to-face meetings” between customer and your sales staff. If you (or your sales staff) visit your customer for a face-to-face meeting, you will have the chance to make any type of discussion with them, and it will help you collect live data on customer feedback and perception.

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