# The Seven Quality Management Principles (ISO 9001)

ISO 9001 is an international standard for quality management systems, published by the International Organization for Standardization. It is built on seven quality management principles, which are explained in a companion standard, ISO 9000. The principles are a way of thinking about quality, not a checklist of rules. This video explains the seven in order.

## 1. Customer Focus

The first principle is customer focus. Its aim is to meet customer requirements and to try to exceed their expectations. This means understanding the needs of current and future customers and checking their satisfaction regularly.

**Example:** A restaurant owner asks regular guests what they would like to see on the menu. Applying customer focus, the owner adds a vegetarian dish, and the guests are pleased.

**At work:** Salma, the quality manager of an office chair company, meets key customers to learn what they need next. Applying customer focus, she hears that they want chairs delivered assembled, and she passes this to the design team.

## 2. Leadership

The second principle is leadership. Leaders at all levels set a clear purpose and direction, and they create conditions in which people work together towards the same quality goals. Their visible commitment matters as much as the written policy.

**Example:** A head teacher explains why reading matters and joins the weekly reading hour too. Applying leadership, the teachers and the pupils follow the same goal.

**At work:** The director of Salma's company explains the quality goals to every team and attends the monthly quality review. Applying leadership, the director gives every team the same direction.

## 3. Engagement of People

The third principle is the engagement of people. An organisation does better when people at every level are competent, empowered and involved. They need training, a voice and recognition for their contribution.

**Example:** A café manager asks the baristas how to improve the morning routine and thanks them for their ideas. Applying engagement of people, the team feels responsible for the service.

**At work:** Salma trains the assembly operators and invites them to suggest improvements. Applying engagement of people, an operator proposes a simpler fixture that reduces errors.

## 4. Process Approach

The fourth principle is the process approach. Results are achieved more efficiently when activities are understood as interrelated processes that work as one system. Managing each process and the links between them makes the whole organisation more predictable.

**Example:** A bakery sees ordering, baking and delivery as one linked chain. Using the process approach, the owner notices that late orders cause late deliveries.

**At work:** Salma maps the process from the customer's order to the delivery. Using the process approach, she finds that most mistakes happen at the handover between sales and production.



This document is a property of Asaseeyat Academy - © Copy Right Protected.

## 5. Improvement

The fifth principle is improvement. Successful organisations keep a constant focus on improving, because needs and conditions change. Improvement includes correcting problems, preventing them and changing how work is done.

**Example:** A runner keeps a training diary and improves one small thing each month. Following the improvement principle, the runner gets faster step by step.

**At work:** When a defect appears, Salma's team looks for the root cause and changes the work method. Following the improvement principle, the same defect is much less likely to return.

## 6. Evidence-Based Decisions

The sixth principle is evidence-based decision making. Decisions based on the analysis of data and information are more likely to produce the results we want. Even so, the evidence should be checked for accuracy, and experience and judgement still matter.

**Example:** A shop owner checks sales records before ordering more stock. Using evidence-based decision making, the owner orders less of the items that sell slowly.

**At work:** Before changing a supplier, Salma compares the defect data of recent months. Using evidence-based decision making, she finds that the problem comes from the packing, not from the supplier.

## 7. Relationship Management

The seventh principle is relationship management. Organisations depend on interested parties such as suppliers, partners and customers, so they manage these relationships for lasting success. Sharing plans and solving problems together usually works better than only pressing for a lower price.

**Example:** A restaurant shares its weekly needs with the farmer who supplies its vegetables. Using relationship management, the farmer plans the crops, and the supply becomes more reliable.

**At work:** Salma shares the sales forecast with the supplier of foam. Using relationship management, they solve the delivery delays together and agree on a clear schedule.

## Conclusion

In summary, the seven quality management principles are customer focus, leadership, engagement of people, process approach, improvement, evidence-based decision making and relationship management. Together they describe a way of managing quality in any organisation. Customer focus is the main aim of quality management, but the principles are not ranked by importance; they work together, and leaders, people, processes, improvement, evidence and partners all help to achieve it. They can also be used as simple questions about daily work, such as what evidence supports this decision.

### Sources


• ISO 9000 (Quality management systems: Fundamentals and vocabulary), International Organization for Standardization – https://www.iso.org/standard/45481.html

• ISO: ISO 9001 quality management (what businesses need to know) – https://www.iso.org/quality-management/iso-9001-2026


• ISO and ISO 9001 are names of the International Organization for Standardization and its standards. This video is an independent explanation in our own words and is not affiliated with or endorsed by ISO. The standards themselves are copyrighted by ISO and can be obtained from ISO or national standards bodies.



This document is a property of Asaseeyat Academy - © Copy Right Protected.