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Quality management — Customer satisfaction — Guidelines for codes of conduct for organizations

Management de la qualité — Satisfaction du client — Lignes directrices relatives aux codes de conduite des organismes



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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

International Standards are drafted in accordance with the rules given in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2.

The main task of technical committees is to prepare International Standards. Draft International Standards adopted by the technical committees are circulated to the member bodies for voting. Publication as an International Standard requires approval by at least 75 % of the member bodies casting a vote.

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights.

ISO 10001 was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 176, *Quality management and quality assurance*, Subcommittee SC 3, *Supporting technologies*.

Introduction

0.1 General

Maintaining a high level of customer satisfaction is a significant challenge for many organizations. One way of meeting this challenge is to put in place and use a customer satisfaction code of conduct. A customer satisfaction code of conduct consists of promises and related provisions that address issues such as product delivery, product returns, handling of personal information of customers, advertising and stipulations concerning particular attributes of a product or its performance (see Annex A for examples). A customer satisfaction code of conduct can be part of an effective approach to complaints management. This involves:

- a) complaints prevention, by making use of an appropriate customer satisfaction code of conduct;
- b) internal complaints handling, for instances when expressions of dissatisfaction are received;
- c) external dispute resolution, for situations in which complaints cannot be satisfactorily dealt with internally.

This International Standard provides guidance to assist an organization in determining that its customer satisfaction code provisions meet customer needs and expectations, and that the customer satisfaction code is accurate and not misleading. Its use can:

- enhance fair trade practices and customer confidence in an organization;
- improve customer understanding of what to expect from an organization in terms of its products and relations with customers, thereby reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings and complaints;
- potentially decrease the need for new regulations governing an organization's conduct towards its customers.

0.2 Relationship with ISO 9001 and ISO 9004

This International Standard is compatible with ISO 9001 and ISO 9004 and supports the objectives of these two standards through the effective and efficient application of a process to develop and implement a code of conduct related to customer satisfaction. This International Standard can also be used independently of ISO 9001 and ISO 9004.

ISO 9001 specifies requirements for a quality management system that can be used for internal application by organizations, or for certification, or for contractual purposes. A customer satisfaction code of conduct implemented in accordance with this International Standard (ISO 10001) can be an element of a quality management system. This International Standard is not intended for certification or for contractual purposes.

ISO 9004 provides guidance on continual improvement of performance regarding quality management systems. This International Standard (ISO 10001) can further enhance performance regarding codes of conduct, as well as increase the satisfaction of customers and other interested parties. It can also facilitate the continual improvement of the quality of products and processes based on feedback from customers and other interested parties.

NOTE Apart from customers, other interested parties can include suppliers, industry associations and their members, consumer organizations, relevant government agencies, personnel, owners and others who are affected by an organization's customer satisfaction code of conduct.

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0.3 Relationship with ISO 10002 and ISO 10003

This International Standard is compatible with ISO 10002 and ISO 10003. These three standards can be used either independently or in conjunction with each other. When used together, this International Standard, ISO 10002, and ISO 10003 can be part of a broader and integrated framework for enhanced customer satisfaction through codes of conduct, complaints handling and dispute resolution (see Annex B).

ISO 10002 contains guidance on the internal handling of product-related complaints. By fulfilling the promises given in a customer satisfaction code of conduct, organizations decrease the likelihood of problems arising because there is less potential for confusion regarding customer expectations concerning the organization and its products.

ISO 10003 contains guidance on the resolution of disputes regarding product-related complaints that could not be satisfactorily resolved internally. When disputes do arise, the existence of a customer satisfaction code of conduct can assist the parties in understanding customer expectations and the organization's attempts to meet those expectations.

0.4 Statements regarding conformity

This International Standard is designed to be used solely as a guidance document. Where all applicable guidance provided in this International Standard has been implemented, statements that a customer satisfaction code of conduct is planned, designed, developed, implemented, maintained and improved based on that guidance can be made.

However, any statements claiming or implying conformity to this International Standard are inconsistent with this International Standard, and it is therefore inappropriate to make such statements.

NOTE Statements claiming or implying conformity to this International Standard are thus inappropriate in any promotional and communication material, such as press releases, advertisements, marketing brochures, videos, staff announcements, logos, slogans and catch lines for diverse media, ranging from print and broadcasting to Internet and multi-media applications, to product labels, signs and banners.