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Guidance on outsourcing

Lignes directrices relatives à l'externalisation



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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.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

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. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the WTO principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [Foreword - Supplementary information](#)

The committee responsible for this document is Project Committee ISO/PC 259, *Outsourcing*.

Introduction

Around the globe, outsourcing is increasingly an opportunity to add value, tap into a resource base and/or mitigate risk. This International Standard aims to provide general guidance for outsourcing for any organization in any sector. It provides a vocabulary for outsourcing practitioners across all industry sectors. It includes typical outsourcing concepts to improve the understanding of all stakeholders, by providing a set of practices that can be used to manage the outsourcing life cycle.

Outsourcing is a business model for the delivery of a product or service to a client by a provider, as an alternative to the provision of those products or services within the client organization, where:

- the outsourcing process is based on a sourcing decision (make or buy);
- resources can be transferred to the provider;
- the provider is responsible for delivering outsourced services for an agreed period of time;
- the services can be transferred from an existing provider to another;
- the client is accountable for the outsourced services and the provider is responsible for performing them.

This International Standard starts with the precondition that an organization has already established a sourcing strategy and concluded that outsourcing might be a beneficial approach.

Continuation or termination of an outsourcing arrangement forms an integral part of the outsourcing life cycle. Continuation commences as long as the outsourcing business case is valid and the outsourcing option is feasible within the sourcing portfolio. The decision to continue or terminate outsourcing as a sourcing strategy option is an outcome from the sourcing process of the client and is outside the scope of this International Standard.

This International Standard:

- a) covers the entire outsourcing life cycle in four phases, as depicted in [Figure 2](#), and provides definitions for the terms, concepts, and processes that are considered good practice;
- b) provides detailed guidance on the outsourcing life cycle, processes and their outputs;
- c) provides a generic and industry independent foundation, which can be supplemented and tailored to suit industry-specific requirements;
- d) can be used before, during and after the decision is made to outsource;
- e) aims to enable mutually beneficial collaborative relationships.

The description of each outsourcing phase provides information for the client side as well as the provider side.