

Why Do Manufacturing Certifications Matter?

Certifications vary from industry to industry, and while they may not be a necessity to work in the manufacturing industry, they help you stand out above the rest.

You may have seen tool and die, CNC, and injection molding manufacturers toting their certifications adorned with seemingly random numbers and letters, and have little idea what any of these distinctions really mean. However, these recognitions are important for customers to understand as they pertain to a company's supply chain and management process.

ISO 9001

The ISO 9001 is awarded to manufacturing companies that have a superior quality management system. By meeting the requirements of the ISO 9001 certification, businesses demonstrate that their customers get consistent, high-quality products and services.

International experts in ISO/TC 176 have developed several quality management principles (QMPs) that outline the prerequisites for achieving the ISO 9001:

Customer focus. Meet and exceed client expectations.

Leadership. Create engaging work conditions that increase efficiency, reliability, and quality.

Engagement of people. Involve and respect the entire staff in order to facilitate a high quality organization.

Process approach. Develop a process that ensures consistent, predictable, high-quality products and services.

Improvement. Manufacturers should demonstrate an ongoing focus on improving their processes.

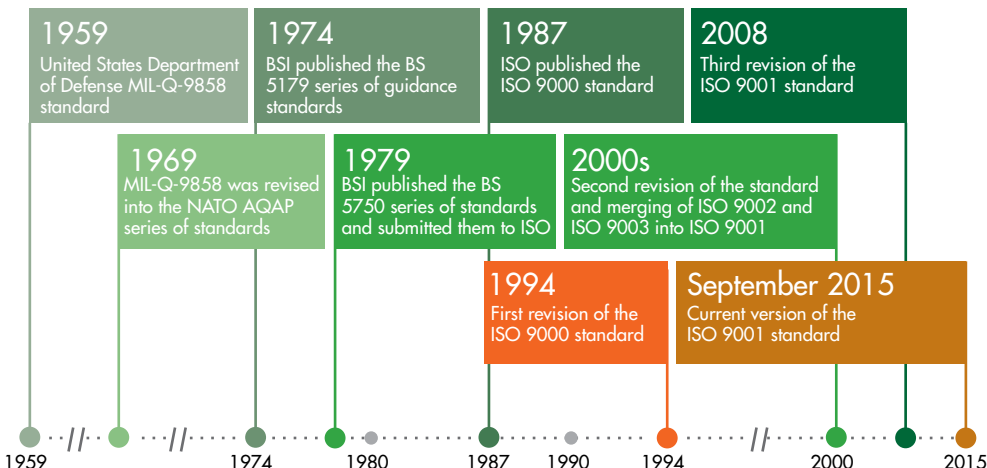
Evidence-based decision-making. Proper reasoning through analysis, evaluation, and data are critical for producing quality results.

Relationship management. Sustain successful relationships with all interested parties, from staff to suppliers.

Why is it important to obtain an ISO 9001 and an IATF ISO/TS 16949?

The main function of the ISO 9001 is to provide proof of a manufacturer's quality management standards from their production process to customer relations. Companies with this ISO 9001 are vetted for excellence, making the choice between a manufacturer that has certification and one that does not is

HISTORY OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM STANDARDS



The timeline shows how quality standards have developed for the last 60 years. (Image courtesy of Advisera.com)

a no-brainer.

In addition to the ISO 9001 certification, the experts of ISO/TC 176 developed the ISO/TS 16949 to further ensure quality management systems. While the requirements for obtaining this certification are similar to other distinctions, the demands are lengthier and more stringent. The following link contains the 30-page PDF checklist for the ISO/TS 16949 issued by the International Automotive Task Force (IATF). Among the criteria:

1. The organization will identify the processes needed for the quality management system.
2. The organization will have documentation of their quality policy, objectives, requirements, etc.
3. The organization will have an established quality manual.
4. Engineering standards/specifications and changes are based on customer schedules.
5. The organization will have an established documentation procedure that is maintained appropriately.
6. Management will provide evidence of its commitment to developing and improving quality management systems.
7. The organization has a strong focus on customer satisfaction
8. Top management is ensuring quality policy is met and appropriately outlined.

Why is it important to obtain a Bureau Veritas / IATF ISO/TS 16949?

The idea behind the ISO 9001 and ISO/TS 16949 certifications is to create a nationally recognized standard for improving product and service quality in the automotive industry. Clients of manufacturers that have earned these certifications can count on consistency and high-caliber work. Additionally, implementation of standards outlined in the ISO 9001 and ISO/TS 16949 have helped companies make significant improvements in the supply chain process.

In order to achieve this certifications of distinction in the automotive and motorcycle industry, companies needs to demonstrate the ability to overcome a multitude of challenges that are present in the manufacturing space.

Meeting the above requirements is imperative for good business in general. However, demonstrating your ability to meet each of these qualifications by obtaining this certification provides legitimacy to your company's competencies and expertise. In fact, many manufacturers only contract suppliers that are ISO/TS 16949 certified.

Do Certifications Matter?

Is having a certification the end-all-be-all of manufacturing? No. However, as a customer it is a great way to narrow down your search. Look for companies such as aluminum die casting manufacturers PHB Corp that have their certifications readily available. Knowing you are safe right from the start can

save you many headaches down the road.

With proper certifications come higher-quality products and services, better customer service, and up-to-date solutions to the many challenges the manufacturing industry can present.