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2021 New Year's Resolutions

Manual adjustments

Ah, the start of a new year.

Our resolutions are still fresh and crispy (like the salads we've committed to eat more of this year…).

We have new calendars and wall planners, just waiting for the imprints of our fabulous new year.

But before you leap into the year ahead, there's a couple of things you should do. First, review the events and lessons of the last year and second, review your Quality Manual.

We'll look at the lessons learned in another article but today let's talk about the **Quality Manual.**

You may have carried out a brief review of your manual during the year. Perhaps something changed and this required an update. In many cases, organisations would have been scrambling to alter their working from home policy.

However, the start of the year is the perfect time to sit down and go through the manual, your policies and procedures and make sure they reflect (a) what's actually happening in the organisation and (b) they're in line with your objectives.

MAS Management Systems is a consultancy service. We support organisations to work better and smarter. However, we have our own policies, procedures, and quality manual and of course, we practice what we preach.

That's why the spotlight is now on our own Maree Stuart, Principal of MAS Management Systems, to explain just how this is done.

Do you carry out a review every year and if so, why?

Yes, I do. It's important to see if I've missed incorporating any system changes into our procedures.

I also need to ensure that our practices and quality documentation continues to align with our strategy and plans.

What's the first step in your process?

I start by reviewing any planning documents I have and making a note of anything that could present a change. Then I hit the books (so to speak) and dive into the Quality Manual and procedures. Reading these with a fresh set of eyes is always good.

And I do mean reading, just like you read a book.
What story does it tell?
Is it telling the story that you want to live every day?
Does it reflect your business and your goals?

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Do you consult with anyone else during this process?

I always consult the staff during the review process.

Other people in the organisation often have great ideas. Also, because they're coming to it fresh, they can often see flaws you've completely missed. They're able to see if the information in your quality documents is clear and makes sense.

How do you communicate any changes?

We use our electronic system to do this and it's also on the agenda of our staff meetings.

I give people time to read the changes and if there's something they don't understand, we discuss it and find a way to clarify or explain in more detail. That mindset – can we do better? – is the crux of continuous improvement.

Is this a requirement if your organisation operates under a standard?

Yes, it is but honestly, that's not the main reason to do it.

Think about it this way - if you didn't have a third-party organisation looking at your system, what would you leave out? Would you throw out your procedures? Would you stop checking to see if those pesky methods are still current? Perhaps you'd avoid keeping records of staff training.

Reviewing your Quality Manual shouldn't be done as a box ticking exercise for an external body. It's a vital part of maintaining and growing your business.

Do organisations have to do this work themselves?

Not at all!

We can come in and carry out this entire activity on behalf of a client. Alternatively, we can do a review of what they've done and if necessary, make suggestions for improvement.

As we always say, you don't have to do this alone!

So, there you have it!

If your organisation needs a manual adjustment, call Maree on 0411 540 709 or email info@masmanagementsystems.com.au

Plus we have a training course on writing documents that will definitely help this process.

Book into '**From dot points to documents**' here or head to the training page on our website for more details.

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