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The purpose of a quality policy

By Kelly Huckabone

A Quality Policy is a requirement of any formalized quality management system (QMS), and its purpose is to set the framework for the commitment of the scope of the QMS for internal and external stakeholders.

A Quality Policy is typically a brief statement that aligns with an organization's purpose, mission, and strategic direction. It provides a framework for quality objectives and includes a commitment to meet applicable requirements (ISO 9001, customer, statutory, or regulatory) as well as to continually improve.

But a Quality Policy can be so much more. It can become a way to drive passion for cultural change within an organization by incorporating pieces of it into routine meetings and embedding it into employee objectives and performance measurement.

For example, some companies will incorporate a quality objective directly into an employee's annual goals. Examples could include being involved in a continual improvement project or simply maintaining compliance.

Most companies will post their Quality Policy on their websites and within company buildings as a visual reminder to employees, customers, and suppliers about their commitment to quality.

Here is our Quality Policy that we believe reflects the everyday way of life and commitment to quality practiced at Thermo Fisher Scientific:

Quality Policy

We fulfill our Mission to enable our customers to make the world healthier, cleaner, and safer by continuously improving the quality of our products and services and by ensuring global regulatory compliance.

- Quality for our customers means they can rely on our products and services to consistently meet their specifications and requirements.
- Quality for our colleagues means we take personal ownership to ensure our work meets customer requirements and is error free from design through use.
- Quality for regulatory authorities means that we operate at the highest ethical standards and meet or exceed all applicable regulatory requirements.
- Quality for our company means we drive a continuous improvement culture that is enabled by practical process improvement (PPI) and our company's quality system.

About the Author

Kelly Huckabone is the North American Audit Program Manager who oversees the Unity Lab Services internal and external customer and supplier audit programs. Kelly is a certified risk manager, lead auditor with the American Society for Quality (ASQ), and has been conducting audits for over 25 years for different quality systems, including ISO 9001, 13485, and 17025, as well as Health Canada and the FDA.

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