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"obscure quality kitemarks"

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Started by **will787** at 12:37pm Nov 23, 2003 BST

**Today's Observer includes an interview with Nandan Nilekani, CEO of Infosys. Faisal Islam explains that Infosys has taken a global view 'adopting US accounting standards and obscure quality kitemarks'.**

**Could this be a reference to ISO 9000? Recently revised as ISO 9000 2000? This would not be surprising. The UK attitude seems to be that quality is something that may or may not matter and that ISO 9000 is a bit of an imposition so things might be just as well without it.**

[See more on first message](#)

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**will787** - 12:43pm Nov 23, 2003 BST (#1 of 14) | [Delete](#)

UK positioning after 15 December

The 2000 revisions were intended to make it easier for system review to support strategic management. In the UK this has been seen as yet another requirement for documented minutes. Those case studies reporting any welcome for this usually quote the quality manager rather than any other level of management.

In December the deadline for transition will arrive. From last year's survey on the ISO site it seems likely that the UK total for certificates will decline. However there are many new sites in China and Japan. This is in stark contrast to the numbers before 2000, when the UK had a lead through BS5750.

I am working on a website trying to link ideas about quality and 'learning' organisations. <http://www.learn9.net>

Recently I have been looking at Deming's system of profound knowledge and the 'plan-do-study-act' cycle. I am not sure whether American pragmatism is the sole source for this. In Japan the values behind it may have been something else. PDSA is included in the 2000 revisions for ISO 9000. Is there something about this that is difficult in the UK? (The figures for certificates in the US are not much better by the way)

'obscure' may come to describe ISO9000 in the UK, but not on the planet.

<http://www.ciionline.org/Common/201/default.asp?Page=Introduction.htm>

<http://www.infosys.com/quality/default.asp>

<http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/iso9000-14000/iso9000/iso9000index.html>

<http://www.iqa.org/deming/>

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**Fezziwig** - 02:15pm Nov 24, 2003 BST (#2 of 14)

BS5750 and ISO 9000 are a farce.....a total waste of time and money.

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**will787** - 05:28pm Nov 24, 2003 BST (#3 of 14) | [Delete](#)

Could you say some more?

Why do you think this?

Is there any form of quality system that you think is helpful?

Are you in the UK? Is there anything difficult about quality as an idea?

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**Fezziwig** - 07:39pm Nov 24, 2003 BST (#4 of 14)

I am in the UK.

A quality system which tests a product which has to meet certain standards is generally a good thing.

I run a small business and right from the start in 1987 BS5750 was pushed continually as being necessary. Quite an industry sprang up on the back of it with many companies dealing in that alone.

BS5750/ISO9000 is a vague concept.

To be of any use a company with it should stand out from those who don't have it. That has never been the case from my experience.

E.G....In the late 80s or early 90s TNT were the only carrier with BS5750 and they were useless, worse than the rest.

I have twice threatened companies who were offering bad service that I would challenged their BS5750 registration. One couldn't have cared less and the other did seemed concerned that it may cost them money. That latter was overcharging us for delivery.

Other people running small businesses have made similar comments to me. I have seen criticisms in trade papers and in the Federation of Small Business mag..First Voice.

The clamour for BS or ISO has died in recent years.

The people who should judge the performance of a company are its customers and not some third party.

"obscure quality kitemarks"

[will787](#) - 11:23am Nov 26, 2003 BST (#5 of 14) | [Delete](#)

Thanks for this statement, a view probably shared by many others. There have been examples of ISO9000 being seen as just a certificate for the wall with no connection with actual quality as seen by customers.

The 2000 revision was intended to encourage more use of the standard for actual quality. However, in the UK there seems to have been few examples of companies trying to work with this.

When you say "the clamour for BS or ISO has died down in recent years" I think this is only true for the UK. When the new figures come out after the December deadline I think they will show a sharp decline in the UK, but significant growth in Asia.

The Infosys site shows a quality story that seems to have started with ISO 9000 and moved on to a model based on Baldridge.

Do you think that there is any form of quality policy that could be useful?

By the way, I used to work on an ISO system but the project was cancelled. So I can't really say it is easy to get a result from ISO 9000 but I continue to think it worth exploring.

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[Fezziwig](#) - 03:30pm Nov 26, 2003 BST (#6 of 14)

Sounds like you think it is all a waste of time and money.

*Do you think that there is any form of quality policy that could be useful?*

Only if it measureable like the quality of product or service. Even that can be vague...e.g I never understood what is meant by guaranteed overnight deliveries when very often they fail and the carrier doesn't care and tracking systems are a joke.

Basically a customer is after PQD... Price, Quality and Delivery. A marketing course I went on brought into all sorts of spurious elements like whether a salesman shoes were clean or not.....I don't give a sod whether if he is wearing fluffy slippers as long as the product meets my PQD requirements.

If you can't use common sense and be responsive to customers then you shouldn't be in business.

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[will787](#) - 01:02pm Nov 29, 2003 BST (#7 of 14) | [Delete](#)

Your PQD sounds ok, at least quality is in there and delivery can be worked on within a quality approach. Even price if you stretch a point. Not to be ignored anyway.

I think we're getting somewhere but may leave this till the actual transition deadline in December. My guess is there will be some other comment then. Maybe general UK welcome for collapse of ISO 9000?

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[foilist](#) - 11:33am Dec 4, 2003 BST (#8 of 14)

Fezziwig- it sounds to me as if you've made a pretty common misunderstanding about ISO 9000. ISO 9000 doesn't mean "High Quality" it means a system is in place to meet a **separately** stated quality standard. ie silicon chip manufacturers, with a failure rate of 98% or something, can still be ISO 9000.....

So you can say "we're generally OK on PDQ", and if you have a system to guarantee that you are indeed "generally OK", then you can be ISO 9000 accredited.

Next time to ask for a supplier to be ISO 9000, also ask what the quality level is. In the case of TNT that you raise, is delivery times one of their criteria? If so, what is their stated target for delivery times?

It's all about knowing how to procure something properly.....

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[Fezziwig](#) - 12:54pm Dec 4, 2003 BST (#9 of 14)

ISO 9000 is a farce. Means nothing.

I know who are good and bad suppliers. I have been dealing with them, some for nearly 30 years.

TNT were (haven't used then for ages) crap.....The only carrier with BS5750 at the time.

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[Fezziwig](#) - 01:18pm Dec 4, 2003 BST (#10 of 14)

The only people who support ISO 9000 are those who make a parasitical living out of it.

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[foilist](#) - 01:20pm Dec 4, 2003 BST (#11 of 14)

Well, as you know your suppliers very well, you don't really need to use ISO 9000. I often have to use new suppliers of materials and equipment, and so asking for ISO 9000 means I don't need to see their QA/QC system when I ask them to pre-qualify for a project, just their target quality levels and a copy of their ISO 9000 certificate. For large or critical orders, it also means I can assess whether or not I'm going to have to put my own QA/QC inspectors in their plant.

So ISO 9000 is very, very useful to many people worldwide.

Just like any other type of certification or standards, you just have to know what it means and what it was designed to do: who could fix your car: a mechanic with an NVQ or an MSc Automobile Engineer? But who could design you a new one?

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[Fezziwig](#) - 01:34pm Dec 4, 2003 BST (#12 of 14)

*So ISO 9000 is very, very useful to many people worldwide.*

Rubbish..... Bureaucratic nonsense.

I come back to TNT and others. To mean anything they have to stand out as being better.

I had bit of row with Cellnet (now O2). They dropped us at one time because our 'procedures' weren't right??? We didn't have BS5750. They were getting

deliveries early, at a good price and they have never rejected anything. They even rang up at 8pm one night wanting some cables wiring up for delivery that night. We did it! They came crawling back when their BS5750 companies with posh brochures let them down.

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**[foilist](#)** - 02:10pm Dec 4, 2003 BST ([#13](#) of 14)

Well, Fezziwig, I use it, and so do many other people in the companies I've worked for, when we are trying to find a supplier in an area that we haven't worked in!

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**[Fezziwig](#)** - 02:19pm Dec 4, 2003 BST ([#14](#) of 14)

Take it with a big pinch of salt.

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