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How to find the right AS9100 help?

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29th April 2009, 04:08 PM

Post Number #1

Aero_engineer

Total Posts: 3

How to find the right AS9100 help?

I work for a small company that is interested in getting ISO 9001 / AS9100 certified. The owners have decided to that the best approach would be to find an outside source to come in and do as much as possible. The idea being that someone with specific experience could build the system up faster and more efficient than tasking the engineers with it.

So here's my question. **What's the best way of finding a "consultant" company that fits our needs?** Someone who has build up a system for an avionics software development (and some hardware) company would certainly have a head start on all of it. We've seen where both ISO 9000 and AS9100 would help grow the available work and would like to end up with both certifications. Which from my understanding ISO is a subset of AS.

There seems to be a flood of "consultants" out there when I search the web. **Is there a way to sort through them other than one by one?** Is there an association or accreditation that is listed somewhere?

Our company does mostly engineering services for larger companies and it can be any portion of the avionics development lifecycle. We presently don't produce any completed products of our own, but the owners do want to move in that direction.

All of our product development work already falls under the required guidelines of SAE 4754 & 4761, and RTCA DO-178B & DO-254. And certainly we need a QMS that takes into account the massive amount of Plan documentation that goes into place under those FAA imposed standards.

I hope you guys can help me out, Thanks in advance.

-- Chris

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29th April 2009, 04:38 PM

Post Number #2



Sidney Vianna

Total Posts: 8,124

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?



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[SAE - Society of Automotive Engineers](#)

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I guess you are going to get a lot of PM's.... 😊

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29th April 2009, 04:51 PM

Post Number #3

Total Posts: 698



BadgerMan

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?

If you are complying with the RTCA standards, you should have little trouble meeting the requirements of section 7.3 of the AS9100 standard.

However, that is only one section of the standard. You really need to find someone (a consultant or not) who can, among other things, educate your management team regarding the commitment it will take to ensure continued compliance to the rest of the AS 9100 requirements.

BTW, remember that the software and electronic hardware development services that you currently provide are your "products".

29th April 2009, 05:13 PM

Post Number #4

Total Posts: 11,014



Wes Bucey

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?

Quote:

In Reply to Parent Post by BadgerMan

If you are complying with the RTCA standards, you should have little trouble meeting the requirements of section 7.3 of the AS9100 standard.

However, that is only one section of the standard. You really need to find someone (a consultant or not) who can, among other things, educate your management team regarding the commitment it will take to ensure continued compliance to the rest of the AS 9100 requirements.

BTW, remember that the software and electronic hardware development services that you currently provide are your "products".

I think BadgerMan is on the right track here. You really want someone who can help you ALL learn how to run your organization within the guidelines AFTER the consultant is gone. Be extremely wary of the outfit that advertises "registration within 40 days" by providing you a bunch of boilerplate documents you "word process" to insert your company name. The ideal is a consultant who can recognize and help you understand how much of what you do already fits into the guidelines and help you, yourselves, identify the gaps and find ways to fill them.

You really should be looking for an advisor and teacher, not a dictator to tell you how to do it his way.

29th April 2009, 05:37 PM

Post Number #5

Total Posts: 646

Jeff Frost

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?

The first step would be to develop a list of the key qualities that you wish in a consultant. Some ideas would be:

Location of consultant to your business - If you're in metro Phoenix area your choices will be greater. If you in Yuma this will limit the number of available consultants if any.

What role will the consultant play in the development of the QMS? Will this someone guide you through the process as you develop your own documentation? Or will it be a consultant that does it all for you?

How involved will your organization be with the process? Non-involvement usually results in an ineffective QMS system that will require rewrite of documentation in the future. Full involvement usually results in an effective QMS system with documentation that meets the company's needs and is maintainable by the company.

What is the estimated budget for hiring a consultant? You more than likely be shocked by what consultants will charge but as the adage goes you get what you pay for.

Last edited by Jeff Frost; 29th April 2009 at 05:43 PM.

29th April 2009, 06:14 PM

Post Number #6

[Aero_engineer](#)

Total Posts: 3

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?

Through all the research I've been doing on this I think I understand the fundamental changes required in the way the company runs and the effort that it might take.

"Educating management" is sometimes a different case. I have explained that it is a significant effort and seems to require high level of commitment. I think that's one reason why they asked me to look into bringing outside expertise in.

I already have some experience with the "fill in the blanks" documentation, An AS9100 documentation package that was purchased. I was trying to align with it as we installed new configuration management software (our old SW had inadequate change control). I found the package docs pretty skimpy. Things like, it listed "None" for CM software and had a crude (and inadequate) paper problem tracking/change system. There may be a few aerospace companies out there without any CM software, but I wouldn't think it's the norm. Needless to say, one size doesn't fit all.

29th April 2009, 07:29 PM

Post Number #7

[Aero_engineer](#)

Total Posts: 3

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?

Quote:

In Reply to Parent Post by Jeff Frost

How involved will your organization be with the process? Non-involvement usually results in an ineffective QMS system that will require rewrite of documentation in the future. Full involvement usually results in an effective QMS system with documentation that meets the company's needs and is maintainable by the company.

I understand what you're saying about the level of involvement. The workers need to buy into the processes and process improvement for it to be effective. Certainly if one helps create a process then it'll be closer to the actual process and there's going to be more of a sense of ownership/stewardship. But presently they are leaning towards having most of it done from outside.

29th April 2009, 07:53 PM

Post Number #8



Randy

Total Posts: 8,334

Re: How to find the right AS9100 help?

Let me ask a question or twelve before I answer yours.

Why do you think you need help to begin with? Are you selling yourself and your organization short? AS9100 isn't rocket science and understanding how to use it as a management process doesn't require a PhD. Odds are, if you are a current aerospace manufacturer of widgets, do-hickeys or thing-a-ma-bobs and are meeting some type of regulatory requirements, like under 14CFR, you probably have 50-75-80% of what you need to do in place already. (Hey I understand a bit about rocket science after working around Aerojet, Northrop, Lockheed, Boeing, and the Marshall Space Flight Center and AS9100 ain't it)

Now to answer....You're gonna wind up with a bunch of slicks talking trash and telling you how they helped Orville, Daedalus, von Braun, and Ruttan build stuff that flew without themselves ever having bent tin, punched rivets, strung wire, doped cloth or sewed a single baseball stitch. (Now to let you know that I'm not talking trash, I've been an A&P for 20 years or so and I did all that stuff and more for my practical exam and no, I do not want to, nor can I work for you. I can teach you AS9100, but I can't do it for you).

You really, really, really need to find someone with hands on, practical experience in aviation manufacturing or maintenance (not just some support staff puke either, real experience), with AS9100 and the FAA and other specifications you gave.

Let's see what you get ... Good luck



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How to find the right AS9100 help?

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