

## **Double the ways to stand out from the crowd!**

*Combining service with quality...*

*Increasingly businesses are turning to third party certification to ensure their business has the proper management fundamentals, and to differentiate themselves in a competitive market. The RCSA Service Delivery Standard has taken many businesses on this fantastic journey. Now there is the opportunity to combine the power of this new Standard with the reputation of the original quality certification, the ISO 9000 series.*

The RCSA Service Delivery Standard was launched in March 2005 to establish a benchmark for recruitment excellence in an industry, which had a reputation for varied levels of service. The objective of the Standard was two fold – to assist businesses to increase customer satisfaction and to establish management controls to ensure their business ran reliably.

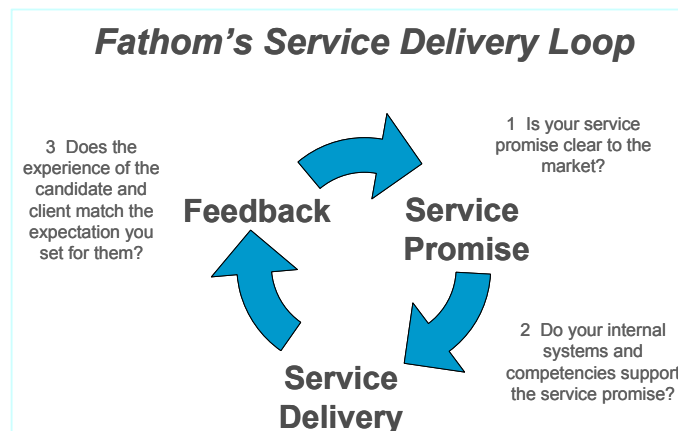
A number of recruitment companies have had quality certification in place. Initially the QMS certification came from a manufacturing perspective with the intention of reducing rework, error rates and wastage. Since its release in 1987 it has been extended to include customer requirements. A survey last year revealed that 17% of RCSA Members have certification in ISO 9001:2000. Generally speaking these are the larger businesses, often because the investment necessary to establish and maintain the quality system and documentation is substantial, which puts it out of reach of smaller businesses.

The fundamental intent of both Standards is very complementary and now there is the opportunity for RCSA Members to gain the benefits of both certifications.

### **RCSA Service Delivery Standard**

The RCSA Service Delivery Standard was developed from a number of international standards, including the ISO 9000 Quality Standard. Its focus is on service industries and the particular issue they have in dealing with intangible service delivery. As a fleeting product, services can be difficult to define, to demonstrate delivery and to match against customer needs and expectations. Often the lasting memory of a service received is just one element of an extensive and complex delivery process. Starting with defining the service on offer, it moves through delivery of the service, managing the customer, responsiveness to concerns and then to satisfactory closure of the service. Getting any one part of this wrong can damage the customer's perception of the overall process.

The Service Delivery Loop describes this delivery process as a dynamic interaction of three key elements – the service promise, service delivery and feedback.



### **1. Service Promise**

The business must be clear on the nature of the services it offers to the market and the benefits to the target market. The Standard does not attempt to define the level of service on offer, leaving it up to the business and the clients to define what they need.

### **2. Service Delivery**

Internal systems, competencies and capabilities must support the reliable delivery of this Promise (Service Delivery System). The way the business operates must be consistent with, and deliver to, the Promise made.

### **3. Feedback**

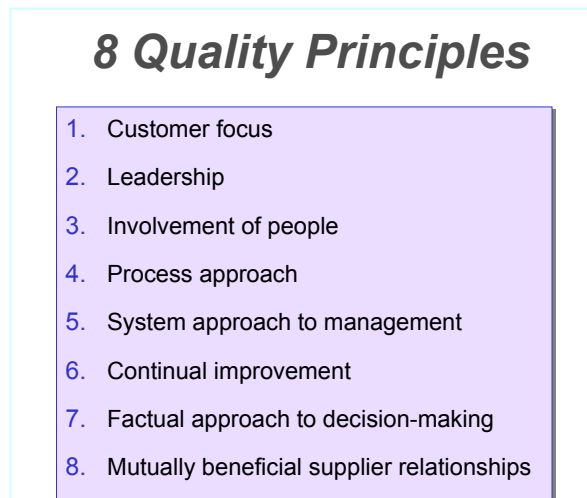
Finally, ongoing feedback must be obtained from the customer to ensure their expectations are being met – that the Promise is being delivered. Collecting feedback also requires that the business monitor the trends and development in the industry, to be aware of what competitors are doing and any changes in customer requirements.

The Standard was drafted specifically to meet the requirements of the recruitment industry, by incorporating requirements around candidate and client management, reference checking, privacy management and the RCSA Code for Professional Practice.

## **Quality Management Standard**

The first quality standard was published by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) in 1987. In 1994 it was further revised and then again in 2000 it underwent another major revision and it now includes components for definitions, system requirements, measurement and continual improvement.

The revised ISO 9000:2000 series of standards is based on eight quality management principles, which are believed to represent best management practices:



The Standard promotes the adoption of a process approach when implementing a quality system. This recognises that for an organisation to function effectively it has to manage the interaction of a series of linked activities each with their own inputs and outputs – these are collectively known as processes.

The Standard also refers to the methodology of “PDCA” when improving processes. PDCA can briefly be described as:

*Plan* - establish objectives and processes required to deliver results

*Do* - implement the processes and practices

*Check* - monitor and measure outcomes against the objectives, and

*Act* - take action to continuously improve process performance.

The Standard is well recognised in Australia. A number of businesses require their suppliers to demonstrate adherence to quality principles, including a number of government departments and very large manufacturers.

### **Combining Service and Quality**

The RCSA Service Delivery Standard and the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management Systems Standard are very complementary. They both require an effective management system of planning, control and performance monitoring; they require adequate resource availability and competency; they require documentation of procedures and policies where this is appropriate; and they both require proactive management of compliance against the stated intentions of the business.

Manpower Services (Australia) Pty Ltd has recently combined their RCSA and Quality certification. Alison Rodgers, the Service Quality Manager, said “We have had a quality system in place across Manpower globally for decades. It has given us the business controls and focus we needed, and the qualification to tender for major government contracts. When we discovered the RCSA Service Delivery Standard back in 2005 we were very excited, as it gave us a new challenge and the focus on customer satisfaction, which we knew we needed to develop. We are now certified in both Standards across Australia and are looking to extend the RCSA Service Delivery Standard in other areas as well.”

The business has now adopted the RCSA Service Delivery Standard across their Manpower and Manpower Professional operations in Australia, and is looking to extend this into other areas and locations of their business.

“We have been through a lengthy process of improving our systems. Most of the changes were not initiated through the Standard although the Standard gave us the backdrop or framework to work against. A number of changes did come directly from the Standard though such as improving our customer feedback. The whole approach of the Standard matches our own philosophy of delivering reliable, consistent and excellent recruitment services to our customers.”

The RCSA Service Delivery Standard is managed by Fathom Business Architects on behalf of the RCSA. Recognising the benefits to the RCSA Members of offering certification across both Standards, Fathom has recently incorporated the quality audit services of Craig Popplestone, and are currently seeking accreditation with JAS-ANZ, the accreditation body for certification services across Australia and New Zealand.

RCSA Members now have the choice of certification in one or the other Standard, or to seek certification in both Standards with the benefits that derive from achieving benchmarks in recruitment excellence as well as attaining certification in an internationally recognised Standard.

To find out more please go to the RCSA website at [www.rcsa.com.au](http://www.rcsa.com.au) and click “Service Delivery Standard”, where you will find a range of presentations, articles and other information on the Standard.

Dianne Gibert is a Director of Fathom Business Architects. Fathom developed the Service Excellence concept, and manages the RCSA Service Delivery Standard on behalf of the RCSA.

For more information on Fathom please view the website at [www.fathombusiness.com.au](http://www.fathombusiness.com.au) or email to [info@fathombusiness.com.au](mailto:info@fathombusiness.com.au).