

HOW TO... BE A SUCCESSFUL QUALITY MANAGER



THE ROLE

The Quality Manager role depends on their individual remit and job description, but in general, the role will include:

- ✓ Management of the QMS, including document control systems and audit schedules
- ✓ Quality improvements
- ✓ Accreditation
- ✓ Quality indicators and objectives
- ✓ Risk management and mitigation
- ✓ Incident investigation
- ✓ Clinical governance
- ✓ QMS training.

Fiona R Denham, from Viapath Analytics, gives her top tips on how to be a successful quality manager.

It's not easy to define how to be successful as a Quality Manager, as I wouldn't necessarily refer to myself as "successful", but it's encouraging to know that others see me that way. However, here are some approaches that help me in my role.

Q Qualifications and Questions

A qualification in quality management helps with the theory to support the practical aspects of my role, and gives confidence. By asking constant questions of the team that I work with, I ensure that quality management procedures are in place in the laboratories and, most importantly, are being followed. As W Edward Deming said: "In God we trust; all others bring data."

U Understand and be Unbiased

I have experience of working in most of the disciplines that I cover and this really helps because I can better help the managers to understand how the accreditation standard applies to their service. Objectivity is vital, so I try to stand outside of laboratory operations whenever I can, so I can give an unbiased view, and better see the areas for improvement.

A Aims and Approachability

When I started in my role, I looked at where my labs stood with regards to quality management; this helped me to work out what was required to improve. I also try to

be visible, and make sure all the staff know who I am and what I do. This helps to make quality management accessible.

L Learning and Leading

Almost every event provides a learning opportunity, be it an audit, an assessment, or an incident. Sharing learning with other quality managers is also vital. The managers in my area rely on me to direct and lead them before and after assessment visits and provide them with action plans.

I Improvements and Implementation

It's a significant part of my role to keep improving the


quality management system (QMS), to keep up with new learning and changes to accreditation standards. All improvement ideas then need to be implemented by the labs and unless I can convince busy teams to do this then the improvements are not worth anything.

T Team and Teaching

Being part of the management team helps me to know what's going on in the service, to avoid the quality/change management aspects of any developments being overlooked. I've also got an excellent team of quality officers who support me in implementing changes and making sure compliance is maintained in the labs. I spend as much time as I can teaching

on aspects of the QMS; this improves understanding across the labs and helps with compliance.

Y You

Quality managers spend a lot of their time supporting others and reviewing others' work, but I've found that it's vital to make time to complete my own work and projects. This is always challenging, but achieving my own objectives helps me to stay motivated. This puts me in a better position to motivate others, and this is essential to success! 

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THE TRAITS

As a Quality Manager, you need to:

- ✓ Be part of the team, but remain unbiased
- ✓ Understand the service, but be prepared to question everything you're told
- ✓ Be a leader, but also be approachable
- ✓ Be clear on where you're going and how to get there, as well as where you've come from
- ✓ Be an authority on the accreditation standards, while remembering there is more to quality management than accreditation
- ✓ Be both a teacher and a student (always learning).