

Creating Meaningful Audit Checklists

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What We Will Cover Today



- 1 About QMII
- 2 Why Are We Here?
- How to Create Checklists that Add Value
- 4 Q & A

About QMII



- QMII has provided best in industry process improvement consulting, auditing, and training since 1986
- Headquartered in Ashburn, Virginia
- ■ISO 9001:2015-certified
- ■SBA 8(a) and DBE-certified
- Minority-owned business
- ■GSA MAS holder



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About QMII



US Coast Guard

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Why Are We Here?





Understand how the audit objective drives the checklist



Understand the building blocks of creating a value-add audit checklist



How to train your auditors to stay impartial and objective

What is an Audit?

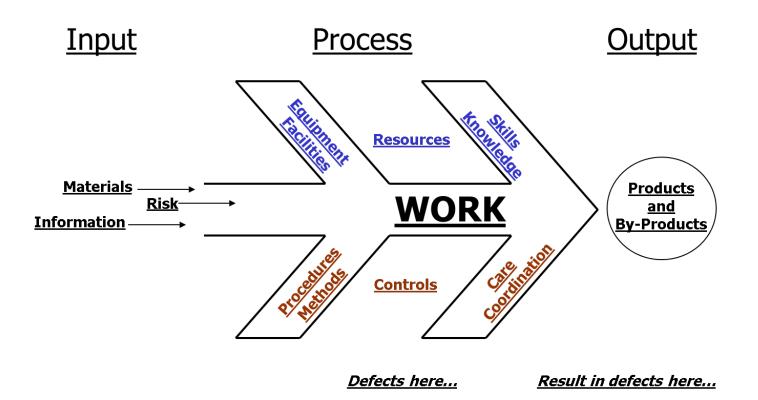


"Systematic, independent and documented process for obtaining audit evidence and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which audit criteria are fulfilled"

(ISO 19011:2018)

Audits vs. Inspections





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Auditor Behaviors



- 1. Ethical, i.e. fair, truthful, sincere, honest and discreet;
- 2. **Open-minded,** i.e. willing to consider alternative ideas or points of view;
- 3. Diplomatic, i.e. tactful in dealing with individuals;
- 4. **Observant**, i.e. actively observing physical surroundings and activities;
- 5. **Perceptive**, i.e. aware of and able to understand situations;
- 6. Versatile, i.e. able to readily adapt to different situations;
- 7. Tenacious, i.e. persistent and focused on achieving objectives;
- 8. Decisive, i.e. able to reach timely conclusions based on logical reasoning and analysis;
- 9. Acting with fortitude, i.e. able to act responsibly and ethically, even though these actions may not always be popular and may sometimes result in disagreement or confrontation;
- 10. **Open to improvement**, i.e. willing to learn from situations, and striving for better audit results;

DON'T LET YOUR CHECKLISTS BOX YOUR AUDITORS IN

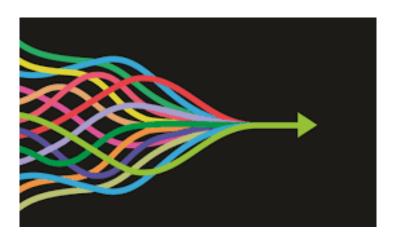


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Audit Objective – The Driving Force



- Often overlooked in internal audits
- Conformity vs. Effectiveness
- Or both?
- Helps define scope and sample size



Are Checklists required?



- Benefits of a Checklist:
 - Ensures auditor is thoroughly prepared
 - Maintains auditor objectivity
 - Ensures audit objective is met
 - Ensures auditor remains within agreed audit scope

Checklists are not a requirement.
They are an auditing asset

Checklists vs. Questionnaire



Checklist – "a list of things to be checked or done"

Questionnaire – "a structured tool used to collect data from respondents by asking them a series of questions, allowing for the gathering of information about attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or experiences."

Which one are your auditors doing?



Purpose of Checklist



- To identify sample audit's criteria
- Serves as a reminder of "memory jogger" of what to audit
- Helps to maintain the pace of the audit
- Is used to record audit information, objective evidence and other pertinent information
- May be used as a record of the depth and continuity of the audit

Checklist Preparation



- Identify audit objective and scope
- Identify requirements (audit criteria)
- Review relevant documentation
- Ensure compatibility with audit plan
- Review for adequacy

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Question Types



- Open or Naïve
 - Great for an opening question when you want the auditee to demonstrate their knowledge of their system and tell you how work gets done
- Closed
 - When you want auditee to choose from a pre-defined set of responses
- Silent
 - A question that is not explicitly spoken aloud but is conveyed through non-verbal cues, body language, or situational context
- Hypothetical
 - 'What if.." type questions when trying to determine robustness or effectiveness of system

Framing audit questions



- Start with the requirements, relative to the objective.
 - Ask yourself what are you trying to determine conformity to or effectiveness of?
- Determine who you would need to interview, samples required and sample sizes
 - The focus is on what are the risks to the system, how does the organization handle it & ensure continual improvement.
 - Seeking adequacy of resources and controls.



Example



- Seeking conformity to Clause 7.1.3 of ISO 9001:2015 that requires "organizations shall determine provide and maintain the infrastructure necessary ..."
- The auditor must determine if organization is maintaining infrastructure
- In other words Are regular inspections being done per manufacturers requirements or other determined standards to ensure that lack of maintenance does not impact product conformity

Leading Questions



- Leading questions must be avoided
 - A leading question is one that suggests the answer
 - Example ... Can we see your service logs of maintenance done
 - In the above we may also imply that service logs are to be kept when not a requirement of the standard
- An auditor must determine the auditee's knowledge of their system and thus:
 - What actions do you take to ensure the infrastructure (machinery) can enable the company to deliver conforming product?

Another Example



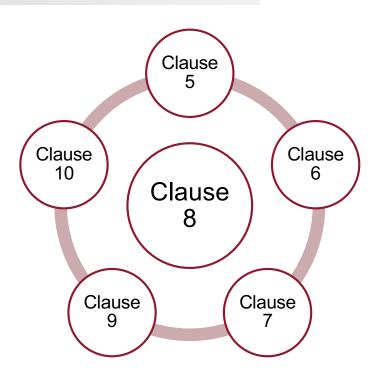
- Clause 10.2 of ISO standards following the harmonized structure requires the organization to take action to react to the non-conformity
- Should your question be:
 - A: How do you manage non-conforming process outputs?
 - B: What happens if a process does not meet requirements?

Process Audits



 When auditing any process area always remember that you are looking for conformity and effectiveness to various clauses within the standard

Auditing at any stage of the PDCA cycle involves other relevant clauses.



Use of standardized checklists



PROS

- Easy to Train and Guide new auditors
- Less time consuming as preprepared

CONS

- May cause auditors to use as a tick list – ask question – receive answer – proceed
- Auditees over time prepare system to questions that will be asked

Is contrary to the auditing philosophy as given in clause 9.2



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Alternatives



Preparing a fresh checklist each time

- PROS
 - Helps auditor stay objective and impartial
 - Helps auditor review system and prepare
 - Aligns with the clause 9.2 thought

CONS

- Time consuming
- Newer auditors may have challenges in framing questions

Striking a Balance



When developing checklists:

- Keep the questions open to allow the auditor to be an information gatherer
- Allow the opportunity for auditors to ask additional questions so long as within scope and per criteria
- Observe new auditors until competent to perform audits independently
- Reframe questions if using the same checklists over time. Example question on leadership commitment:
 - How do you demonstrate your commitment to the system?
 - How do personnel evidence your commitment to the system?

In Conclusion



- **©** Clearly define the audit objective
- Review the system
- Q Determine what you are trying to assess conformity to or effectiveness of
- Prame questions using various questioning types and avoid leading questions
- Review adequacy of checklists (read questions out aloud once drafted)
- Review auditor performance and audit results and update checklists on periodic basis

Procurement Options



GSA MAS: 47QTCA20D0050

SAM UEI: E8KYQBSFJ6V6

CAGE: 1GFC9

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Thank You!!!



