
Overview

In order to compete successfully, commercial businesses have to continuously improve their products and services; other kinds of organisations need to keep up to date with technology and best practice.

One of the ways in which organisations improve is by adopting a culture that encourages their people to take responsibility for improving their own and their organisation's performance. This often involves individuals acquiring new skills or expertise, taking on additional responsibilities and making improvements to working practices.

This standard is about regularly reviewing, planning, implementing and evaluating the success of objectives designed to improve your own performance as well as the performance of your organisation or team.

This is what the standard covers

The first stage of the planning cycle involves review. You will need to involve colleagues at work and ideally customers. You should discuss which kinds of performance improvements are likely to benefit you and your organisation. Detailed notes should be kept to help in the preparation of an action plan.

Once you have collected sufficient constructive advice and ideas, you will need to discuss them with your manager and agree on the priorities. It is important to ensure that the objectives agreed are achievable.

The objectives that you agree with your manager should enable specific targets to be identified that can be written into an action plan. There must be a way of measuring any targets that you set and you should agree how they will be measured. It is also important to set out realistic timescale.

For the purpose of this standard, the action plan should include, as a minimum, proposals for:

- 1 improvement to your own skills and knowledge
- 2 improvement to customer service delivery
- 3 improvements to quality, productivity and team working within your organisation

Once agreed, the action plan should become a 'working' document – not one which is put away and forgotten about. You should frequently check progress towards achievement of the objectives, and make a note of any changes to the timescales that were previously agreed.

If the plan soon becomes out of date because, for example,

- 1 All the targets or objectives are achieved very quickly
- 2 It proves impossible to make progress towards any of the targets

PRODPP032 - SQA Unit Code F3LB 04 Improve individual and organisational performance

- 3 There is a change of strategy within your organisation
- 4 Operational changes affect your or your team's plans

You must go back to your manager and revise the plan as soon as it becomes apparent that major changes are necessary

It is perfectly normal to achieve some things in an action plan and not others. What is important is to honestly evaluate the progress made towards the entire plan at reasonable intervals – at least every three months, but more often if you wish - and then create a revised or a new plan for the next period.

PRODPP032 - SQA Unit Code F3LB 04

Improve individual and organisational performance

Performance criteria

Evaluate and develop your own skills and expertise

You must be able to:

- P1 objectively assess your existing skills and expertise against current industry standards
- P2 identify ways in which you can improve your performance at work by improving your skills and expertise
- P3 seek constructive feedback from others on how your performance at work could be improved
- P4 identify with your manager areas for development to maintain and improve your own skills and expertise
- P5 set yourself improvement objectives which are specific and achievable
- P6 agree an action plan with your manager that includes realistic timescales and measurable targets.
- P7 evaluate your progress and update your action plan regularly with your manager

Improve customer service delivery

You must be able to:

- P8 check that the service you and your team give meets your customers' needs and expectations
- P9 where you or your team could have given better service to your customers identify how the service could have been improved
- P10 include in your personal action plan at least one target that should result in an improvement to the service you or your team give to customers
- P11 provide evidence that the service you and / or your team give to customers has improved over time.
- P12 share relevant information with others in your team to improve your organisation's customer service delivery

Improve quality, productivity and team working within your organisation

You must be able to:

- P13 periodically identify possible improvements to the quality of your organisation's products or services by improvements to
 - P13.1 your organisation's systems or procedures
 - P13.2 your own skills or expertise
 - P13.3 your organisation's resources
 - P13.4 team working within your organisation
- P14 periodically identify possible improvements to your organisation's productivity by improvements to
 - P14.1 your organisation's systems or procedures
 - P14.2 your own skills or expertise
 - P14.3 your organisation's resources

PRODPP032 - SQA Unit Code F3LB 04 Improve individual and organisational performance

- P14.4 team working within your organisation
- P15 discuss with your manager the improvements to quality, productivity and team working that you have identified.
- P16 include in your personal development plan at least one target that might contribute to improvements in your organisation's quality of product / service, productivity and team working.
- P17 provide evidence that the quality of product or service, productivity and team working within your organisation has been maintained or improved over time.

PRODPP032 - SQA Unit Code F3LB 04

Improve individual and organisational performance

Knowledge and understanding

Improve quality, productivity and team working within your organisation

You need to know and understand:

Communication

- K1 with colleagues
- K2 with customers

Workplace policy & practice

You need to know and understand:

- K3 workplace objectives, priorities, standards & procedures
- K4 the range of work carried out in the workplace
- K5 the working practices existing in the workplace
- K6 the key job roles within the printing & graphic communications industry and their main purposes

The identification & assessment of printing options

You need to know and understand:

- K7 the reasons for selecting one process over another
- K8 the choice of processes for any particular product
- K9 the stages in the printing process from pre-press to printed product

Time & Resources

You need to know and understand:

- K10 the different types of resource, including labour, materials, machinery
- K11 the relationship between resource usage and profitability
- K12 how to maximise productivity
- K13 the relationship between productivity and competitiveness

Management

You need to know and understand:

- K14 target-setting problem solving
- K15 ways of presenting & describing workplace activities business improvement techniques

Quality Assurance & Control

You need to know and understand:

- K16 the main features of quality assurance & quality control systems
- K17 techniques for controlling quality, including inspection, testing, sampling, use of input & output controls
- K18 equipment for controlling quality in printing

Personal Development

You need to know and understand:

- K19 the principles of personal development planning & training
- K20 developing people at work

PRODPP032 - SQA Unit Code F3LB 04

Improve individual and organisational performance

Additional Information

Scope/range

Improve individual and organisational performance

To achieve this standard, it is not necessary to show that all objectives or targets in action plans have been met.

However, the evidence must show that action planning and review covering all the areas specified in this standard is a continuing activity over a reasonable timescale. It is unlikely that such evidence could be produced in less than six months.

The evidence must show that action plans have been used as working documents and updated regularly. A single action plan with little evidence of the cycle of review through to evaluation is also insufficient.

PRODPP032 - SQA Unit Code F3LB 04
Improve individual and organisational performance

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