



Quality in Business Certification

An Independent Certification managed by the International Trade Council



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The International Trade Council is a 64-year-old peak body Chamber of Commerce representing government export agencies, chambers of commerce, industry associations and businesses from 176 countries.

Dear Partner,

The International Trade Council is pleased to announce the launch our new Quality in Business Certification program.

This is certification system focuses not only on quality – but (*perhaps more importantly*) also assesses participating organizations in the areas of service design and delivery, treatment of clients, ethics, innovation, corporate social responsibility, environmental controls, privacy and security.

In contrast to ISO Certification the Council's Quality in Business Certification is a voluntary, consensus-based, market-driven certification and rating system; based upon existing, proven, global best business practices. It evaluates performance on a range of issues and provides valuable feedback in areas for improvement; together with free assistance in doing so.

Certification is graded with each participating organization receiving a grade across 16 key functions and 249 compliance indicators. Details of certification, grading and improvements are accessible to the public through a central database, website and mobile phone application.

Over 10,000 organizations of all sizes (including government agencies, business associations, public and private firms and sole traders) have already participated in the certification testing phase. Feedback from these assessments will be used to update the Standard annually.

If you have any questions please let me know.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Nolasco".

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Leveraging Your Certification

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Leveraging Your Certification

What does it mean to be Quality in Business Certified?

The Quality in Business Certification is an independent, third-party evaluation program. It is the only global assessment methodology and business certification standard designed to highlight participating organizations commitment to innovation, continuous improvement and adherence to global best business practices.

The Quality in Business Standard includes 16 key functions, 96 core criteria and 249 compliance indicators. The entire Quality in Business Standard is reviewed and updated a minimum of once per calendar year.

To guarantee the quality of the program, each assessment is reviewed by an independent auditor prior to issuance of a Quality in Business Certificate.

A Quality in Business Certification from the International Trade Council attests to your organization's adoption of global best business practices and provides assurance to potential customers and suppliers of your integrity and reliability.





Leveraging Your Certification

Benefits of Certification

Because 66% of global consumers will pay more to support companies that are devoted to continuous innovation, best business practices and sustainability; receiving a Quality in Business Certification can help your organization stand out. It can be a great marketing asset to attract new clients and potential investors, and it gives you access to other certified organizations and associated networking opportunities.

Suppliers (*Manufacturers, Service Providers, Distributors, Wholesalers, Retailers etc*):

- Brand protection
- Standardized, transparent protocols
- Promotes industry “best practices”
- Product differentiation
- Provides a trading advantage and faster access international markets
- Assures consumers of quality products and services
- Part of Due Diligence
- International Trade Council in advisory role for resolving marketplace issues

Consumers:

- Confidence in product / service reliability
- Confidence in purchase decision
- Reinforces trust in retailer and vendor
- Easily verifiable

Quality in Business Certified Organizations will receive *(no extra charge)*:

1. Detailed assessment results
2. Electronic certificate
3. Logos (*for use on your marketing, sales and promotional materials etc*)
4. Press release template / draft
5. Listing on the Quality in Business Directory (www.qualitydirectory.org)
6. Listing in the Quality in Business mobile phone app



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Rewards Your Existing Efforts

Implementing (and maintaining) global best business practices is an effort that should be rewarded. But blowing your own horn can be seen as suspicious. Unfortunately, misleading and erroneous claims about organizations are all too common. This is why independent third-party certification is a must.

Provides Independent Proof

You have objective proof that your organization attaches great importance to quality, innovation, continuous improvement and the use of global best business practices; and that you have it checked regularly by an independent party. This commitment increases confidence in your organization.

Generates Consumer Recognition

Displaying your Quality in Business Certification helps consumers identify your organization as one which is sound, honest, efficient, has implemented best business practices, and cares about their community. Once you are verified, the Quality in Business logo may be used on all of your marketing materials including: Letterhead, Brochures, Website, Email Signatures, Advertising & Packaging.

Connects You to Other Certified Organizations

When your organization received a Quality in Business Certification, you join a community of executives and leaders who share common principles and standards. Connect online, meet in person, or build client and vendor relationships within a powerful community of practice.

Improves Brand Perception and Customer Retention

Being Quality in Business Certified makes it clear to your staff, your investors, your partners, the media, your clients and the outside world that your organization is reliable, innovative and constantly seeks to improve.

Helps to Reduce Cost and Save Money

Achieving Quality in Business Certification means that your organization has efficient and effective processes in place to monitor all aspects of the operation. It also opens the door for continuous improvement. In addition, it may highlight operational shortcomings in order to fix them immediately, rather than further down the line when it could affect budget and bottom line.

Improves Organizational Efficiency

Encourages you to work in a more efficient way as all your processes will be aligned and understood by everyone in the business or organization. This increases productivity and efficiency, bringing internal costs down.



Leveraging Your Certification

Improves Employee Engagement

The Quality in Business Certification Program ensures clear processes and (communication) structures, tasks and responsibilities are managed throughout the entire organization. This increases the involvement of your staff, which improves the working atmosphere and reduces the pressure of work.

Improves Customer Experience

The Quality in Business Certification process improves customer service for a variety of reasons. It identifies key areas that are most important and a priority to your customers. It then outlines the process on how you can implement it based on their expectations and needs. After all, delivering a product or service that reduces waste and cost means you can bring more value to your customer, which will reinforce their loyalty to you.

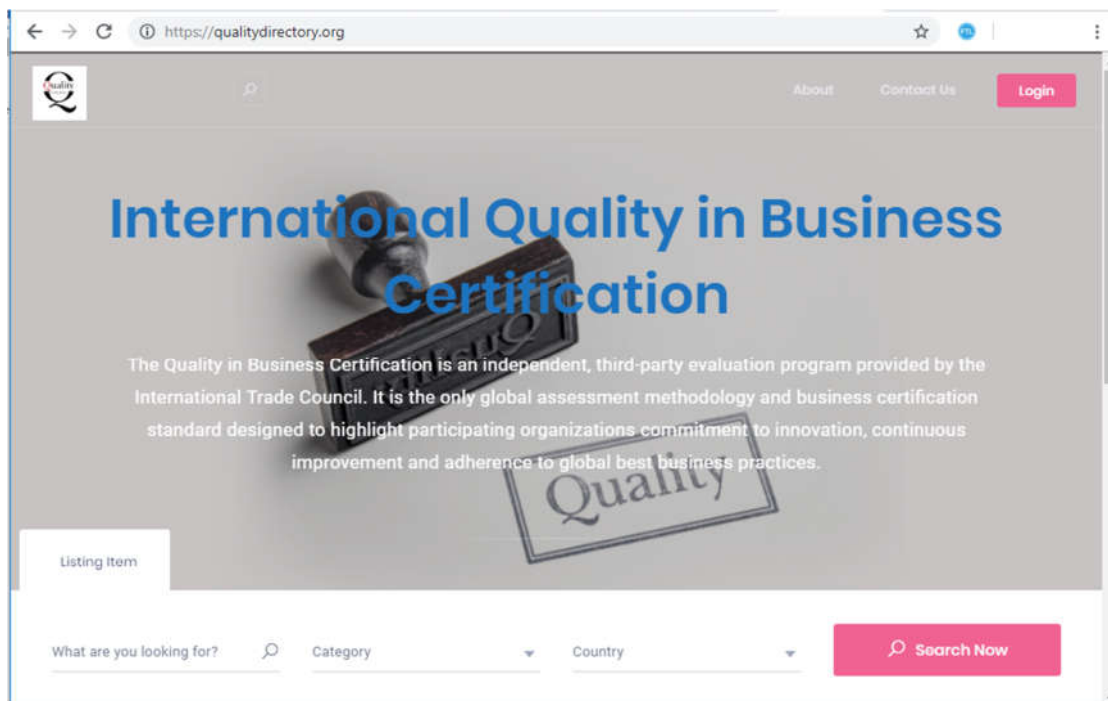
Helps Attract Talent

More and more of the workforce makes decisions about where to work based on how organized the operations are, the positive impact their work creates and how well an employer treats their team.

Get Listed & Get Found - No Extra Cost

Quality in Business Certified Organizations are eligible for free listing:

Website: www.qualitydirectory.org





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Certification Process

1. Participating organization completes an online self-assessment at www.qibcertification.org

This may take between 1-6 hours.

If you need to pause at any time you can save your certification please see the following page.

2. An independent auditor is assigned to review the self-assessment.

This usually occurs within 72 hours (weekends and public holidays excluded).

3. If required, the auditor may request additional documentation and/or a site visit.

4. The auditor will also decide whether you meet the Standard for certification.

5. On successful certification the participating organization will be sent your Quality in Business Certification via email.

If the Council decides not to issue a certification, the participating organization will be notified.

You will have up to 4 opportunities to re-do the assessment and meet any recommendations provided by the auditor. If you do not meet the standard or satisfactorily implement the recommendations within the original six-month period, you must wait another 12 months before attempting certification again.



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Areas Assessed

The 16 assessment areas serve as to clearly describe the operational standards met in various areas of the participating organization.

Areas Assessed:

- Accounting and Finance
- Business Continuity Management
- Conservation and Energy Efficiency
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Customer Service
- Document Management, Security and Control
- Facilities Management
- Health and Safety
- Human Resource Management
- Information Technology / Cyber Security
- Innovation
- Physical Security
- Product / Service Offerings
- Quality Policy and Procedures
- Recycling and Waste Reduction
- Risk Management

Certified organizations must also adhere to 8 basic principles as follows:

- Appropriate product and/or service design and delivery
- Fair and respectful treatment of clients, staff ethics, and non-discrimination
- Transparency
- Innovation
- Quality control
- Corporate social responsibility
- Privacy of employee, client and third-party data
- Security



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Quality in Business Certification vs ISO Registration

The Quality in Business Certification is an independent (voluntary) certification managed by the International Trade Council; a 64-year-old, peak-body chamber of commerce. This certification is not designed to replace ISO 9000-series standards; but to act as a complimentary standard for organizations who wish to participate in measurable quality certification at a low (*or zero*) cost.

- Many organizations state that they will only do business with vendors that are ISO 9001 compliant but many small or minority-owned businesses may not be able to afford the time and/or money involved in ISO registration.
- Quality in Business Certification may help these businesses demonstrate their achievements and their commitment to quality - without significant time and monetary outlay.
- Organizations who voluntarily seek certification are often perceived in a better light than those who have a type of certification forced upon them.
- By voluntarily seeking certification a participating organization is telling their customers and suppliers that they truly care about quality.
- The fact that the Quality in Business Certification is centrally audited (*the Council randomly assigns independent auditors from a pool – and auditors do not charge additional fees for their audit*) means that the certification may appear more robust in certain circumstances.
- *ISO auditors can sometimes be perceived to be financially incentivized not to revoke certificates ~ unless there is a huge mess.*
- ISO 9000 series certification doesn't have a 'grade' for certified organizations (participating organizations are either registered or not registered to the Standard). This sometimes leads to a lack of desire for improvement; *particularly where an organization sought ISO registration solely because it was a requirement to supply their product or service to a particular customer.*
- Quality in Business Certified organizations are graded across multiple areas of their business and they're offered suggestions for improvement.
- Annual renewals provide an opportunity to improve their grading and this, in turn, gives the participating organizations a sense of achievement – and something to tell their customers and suppliers.



Leveraging Your Certification

- As global 'best business practices' evolve so does the Quality in Business Standard.
- Certified organizations should therefore always be striving to achieve best business practices.
- It has often been argued that it may not be appropriate to apply a process such as ISO 9000 to a field requiring creativity, such as software engineering, which is more analogous to designing factories than to operating a factory.
- The Quality in Business Certification focuses on tangible 'best business practices' and has tangible requirements before an organization can be certified (i.e. Various ISO standards would still register organizations who were not adhering to even basic environmentally responsible standards, who didn't have humane employee policies in place etc. – *things which the average consumer may deem to be inappropriate*).
- ISO 9001:2000 does not give too much practical advice but instead focuses on general principles. In order to create a standard applicable to almost any kind of organization, specific requirements and tools were avoided whenever possible.
- Organizations participating in Quality in Business Certification receive practical advice on how they may improve and suggestions on what tools may be beneficial to their organization – at no cost.
- ISO 9001 is widely criticized for the documentation that's required. Each organization, regardless of industry, has unique concerns and considerations, which means that the type and extent of their documentation should be developed to suit their unique business needs. ISO 9001:2015 prescribes very little with regards to "documented information", and there are no longer a minimum of required procedures, or even the requirement for a quality manual.
- Organizations participating in Quality in Business Certification are provided with a detailed report of areas that could be improved and actionable advice and tools on how to do so.
- ISO 9001 does not prescribe a specific technical approach to product quality, only management system requirements. A company that produced poor products before being ISO 9001 certified may still continue to do so, only now they have a management system to do it more consistently.
- Requirements about Outsourced activities are not properly mentioned in the ISO 9001 standard.



Leveraging Your Certification

Pausing and Re-Starting the Self-Assessment Portion of the Certification

Saving Your Survey Part-Way Through Completion:

The left screenshot shows the survey progress at 0% and 'SECTION 1 Basic Information'. The 'Resume later' button is located in the top right corner. The right screenshot shows the 'Save your unfinished survey' dialog box with the following fields: Name, Password, Repeat password, and Your email address. A 'Save now' button is at the bottom.

1. Click **“Resume Later”**
(Top right-hand corner of the screen)
2. Create a username (*no special characters*), your passport (*twice*) and your email address.
3. Press **“Save Now”**

Resuming Your Certification:

The left screenshot shows the survey progress at 0% and 'Quality in Business Assessment'. The 'Load unfinished survey' button is located in the top right corner. The right screenshot shows the 'Load unfinished survey' dialog box with the following fields: Saved name and Password. A 'Load now' button is at the bottom.

1. Click **“Load Unfinished Survey”**
(Top right-hand corner of the screen)
2. Enter your username and password.
3. Press **“Load Now”**

NOTE: You cannot re-load the assessment if you use Internet Explorer. This only works in Chrome or Mozilla or Firefox.



Leveraging Your Certification

About the International Trade Council

The International Trade Council is a 64-year-old peak body Chamber of Commerce representing government export agencies, chambers of commerce and industry associations and businesses from 176 countries.

Website: www.tradecouncil.org

Our members:

NATIONAL CHAMBERS

There are 19 national chambers of commerce members representing the business interests of more than 8.8 million organizations.

STATE CHAMBERS

There are 59 state chambers of commerce members representing 478,000 businesses, non-profits and community organizations.

GOVERNMENT TRADE AGENCIES

There are 73 government trade agency members of the Council. This includes national, sector specific, regional and district export agencies representing more than 42 million businesses.

LOCAL CHAMBERS & SPECIALIST INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS

There are 314 local chambers of commerce and specialist industry organization Council members, working on behalf of approximately 3.6 million associations, businesses, think-tanks, non-profits and community organizations.

CORPORATE MEMBERS

The Council directly represents 28,859 businesses of all sizes, sectors, and regions with approximately 4.9 million employees. Council members range from sole traders and local businesses to international conglomerates.



Leveraging Your Certification

Promoting Your Successful Certification

Once certified - check off these items as you complete them to make sure you have fully leveraged your Quality in Business Certification.

Claim Your Online Listing:

- Visit www.qualitydirectory.org to find your listing:** Click “Claim Listing” and follow the on-screen procedures. An email will be sent to you which will enable you to edit and manage your Quality Listing.

Web Content:

- Header and/or Footer:** Added the Quality in Business logo and link to www.qibcertification.org to the header and/or footer of your website.
- About Us:** Added the Quality in Business logo and link to www.qibcertification.org to the “About Us” page of your website (with information about what it means to be Quality in Business Certified).
- Certificate:** Added a copy of your Quality in Business certificate for download on your website “Certifications” page.
- Press Release:** about your certification posted on the “Press Releases” / “News” page of your website.
- Social Media:** Announced your new certification on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.
- Blog Post:** Created a blog post celebrating your certification.
- Email Signatures:** Updated your email signature to include the Quality in Business Certification logo and link to www.qibcertification.org.



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Promotion:

- Email / Ecard:** Sent an email to customers and suppliers announcing your new certification.
- Press Release:** Sent a press release about your new Quality in Business Certification to the media.
- Email Newsletter:** Added news of your Quality in Business Certification to your email newsletter.

(Successful certification is a wonderful piece of news to share with your readers. They subscribe because they are already interested in what you offer. Your Quality in Business Certification might be all they need to see to convert them from readers into clients).

- Product Packaging:** Added the Quality in Business Certification Mark to your product labels.
- Advertisements:** Added the Quality in Business Certification Mark to new or existing print advertisement to promote your certification.
- Point of Sale Materials:** Added the Quality in Business Certification Mark to your product labels.
- Office Stationery:** Added the Quality in Business Certification Mark to all business cards, letterhead, folders, and other corporate stationery items.
- Vehicles:** Added the Quality in Business Certification Mark to all company vehicles.
- Signage:** Added the Quality in Business Certification Mark to all company signs, posters, banners and exhibition display materials.
- Company Descriptions:** Included the Certification Mark as part of your company description in materials such as tender documents, quotes and corporate profiles.



Leveraging Your Certification

Approved Website / Press Release Copy

Announcing your Quality in Business Certification on your website lets consumers, customers, prospects and regulatory bodies know what differentiates your organization.

Below is a template of approved text about your certification that can be used on your company's official website and/or press release once all individual information has been filled in.

[Company name] receives Quality in Business Certification

[Company name] is proud to announce that has been awarded the Quality in Business Certification from the International Trade Council ('ITC'). As a global peak-body Chamber of Commerce, the ITC offers independent certifications that show an organization's adherence to global best business practices as benchmarked against the ITC's Quality in Business Standard.

To receive certification, **[Company/Brand Name]** passed a stringent and comprehensive audit covering 16 key sectors, 96 core criteria and 249 compliance indicators.

To maintain the Quality in Business Certification and to ensure the public of the continued quality of our brand, **[Company/Brand Name]** has agreed to the ITC certification requirements, which include audits of our facilities and products at any stage. This certification is not mandated by any regulatory agency, but was sought out voluntarily because of **[Company/Brand Name]**'s commitment to continued quality and the satisfaction of our customers.

About **[Company Name]**

About the International Trade Council

The International Trade Council is a 64-year-old peak body Chamber of Commerce representing government export agencies, chambers of commerce, industry associations and businesses from 176 countries. To learn more about the International Trade Council please visit www.tradecouncil.org. To learn more about the Quality in Business Certification please visit www.qibcertification.org.



Leveraging Your Certification

Contact Information

For inquiries about the Quality in Business Certification program:

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