

Establishing Organizational Context with Regards to ISO 26000 Standard: An ISO Self-Assessment Tool

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Abstract

Today we face immense challenges in the form of climate change, poverty, hunger, inequality etc. Businesses provide a possible solution but they must shoulder their social responsibility. More and more businesses are now eager and ready to embrace their social responsibility but do not know how.

This paper introduces the ISO 26000 standard: Guidance on social responsibility, possibly the gold standard on social responsibility today. The paper explicates a methodology for firms to quickly and pragmatically identify and prioritize areas of social responsibility by answering seven questions. Each of these questions are evaluated against the six core areas of ISO 26000 and all the issues underpinning each of these core areas. Four questions are focused on assessing the relevance of a core area to the firm and three questions are focused on assessing the urgency/priority of a given core area to the firm. The final outcome of the exercise is a clear identification and understanding of social issues relevant and important to the firm based on their current practices (value chain), vision, mission and values. Finally, a fictitious case study of a small paper manufacturing business is presented as an example to showcase the implementation of the methodology.

Keywords

ISO 26000 self assessment, ISO 26000 materiality, ISO 26000 getting started, ISO 26000 self evaluation.