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In pursuit of ISO certification: clients' and consultants' perspectives on quality consultancy projects' process in Latvia

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Abstract

This paper aims to analyse the process of introducing the ISO standard compliant quality management system with the help of a quality consultant. The main objectives are to investigate the power dynamic of client-consultant relation, the client's motives behind the decision to pursue ISO certification, client's and consultant's ability and propensity to take each other's perspective. To this end, an empirical study's results were subjected to various statistical treatments to determine if there were statistically significant differences in client's and consultant's perspectives on the same question. The quality consultants proved to provide companies with necessary tools to implement the management system. The technical nature of the consultancy projects mostly focused on the attainment of ISO certificate to secure the short-term deliverables was identified. The paradox of the ad hoc contractual relations between client and consultants indicated weak points of quality consulting. The low level of participation of senior management and employees put main constrains on the leveraging the benefits of the system. This paper contributed a series of recommendations for consultants and companies looking to contract the services of the quality advisors.