Quality management today and beyond

Driving future-readiness for
an era of transformation

Introduction

Quality management roles are evolving.

New technologies, continuous methodologies, and hybrid working environments have reshaped the expectations being placed on quality professionals — as well as their opportunities for impact. Today, quality management leaders are expected to work strategically and collaboratively to meet the evolving needs of customers, stakeholders, and regulators. Alongside this, leaders are continuing to advocate for quality internally to gain the buy-in needed to drive real progression.

So how do quality leaders embrace and enforce innovation for quality excellence? **This report is a good place to start.**

It's designed to help those responsible for quality to stay ahead in an era of rapid transformation. You'll get access to:

The key trends reshaping quality management

Four ways to drive future-readiness

Opportunities for quality leaders

Create an agile and proactive culture of quality

Tactics that will keep you ahead of the curve

Accelerate growth and inspire trust through certification

The key trends reshaping quality management

Understand change to prepare for success

You can use the following trends and insights to understand more clearly where new technologies and processes might be needed to strengthen your quality management system and drive future-readiness.

Consumer expectations

The trend...

Consumers expect brands to predict their needs and deliver personalized, sustainable products and services without compromising on quality, speed, safety, sustainability, or digital security.

69%

of consumers want a personalized and consistent experience across multiple channels, both physical and digital[1].

Organizations will see these expectations impact the way they reach and connect with consumers in the following areas:

Hyper-personalization

Hyper-personalized products and mass customization services will change the way customers engage with brands. Hyper-personalization will also force organizations to work reactively to expand their offerings based on new behaviours and preferences.

Regulatory landscape

Advances in technology, especially AI, have got regulators playing catch-up, which will result in a flood of new data privacy regulations impacting both consumers and organizations.

'Phygital'[2]

Physical products with a digital counterpart, or twin, will become the norm. This will provide customers with more consistent cross-channel experiences, as well as more interactive products with greater scope for customization.

Data collection

A new generation of consumer data platforms and behavioural fingerprinting approaches will make gathering and utilizing first-party and zero-party data more palatable to increasingly data-savvy consumers.

Trust with independent reassurance

Increasingly sceptical consumers will seek out independent reassurance regarding quality, sustainability, and inclusivity of products and services.

Quality leaders can drive future-readiness with...

Next-generation consumer-centricity

Nearly

69%

of business leaders are increasing their investment in personalization despite challenging economic headwinds[3].

Create personalized offerings

AI-driven predictive analytics will allow quality professionals to better anticipate customers' preferences and deliver hyper-personalized experiences or products.

Inspire trust

Organizations will also be expected to demonstrate their commitment to quality and prove their services meet high standards. Certification helps businesses reassure customers that their organizational, product, or services claim has been independently assessed.

[3]State of Personalization Report.Twilio Segment, Segment.com, 2023

Supply chains

The trend...

New strategies or processes will be adopted to mitigate against emerging or intensifying supply chain risks, from ever-evolving cybersecurity threats and rising raw material costs, to fluctuating consumer demand and inefficient processes.

By 2026

25%

of supply chain execution (SCE) vendors will have rewritten their core application to a microservices architecture[4].

[4] Gartner Predicts the Future of Supply Chain Technology. Smarter With Gartner, Gartner.com, 2024

Organizations will experience the impact of these developments in the following areas:

Supply chain management

Organizations will adopt micro supply chains and new structures, such as Supply Chain as a Service (SCaaS), to increase resilience and deliver products and services more efficiently.

Automation

Intelligent edge ecosystems, AI, and composable application architectures are beginning to be implemented across supply chains. Once established, they will deliver the scalable infrastructures needed to support the latest automated solutions, such as intralogistic robotics.

Digital and human worker partnerships

Human intervention across the supply chain will evolve towards training, implementing, and optimizing robotic process automation (RPA) applications, digital twins, and virtual reality environments.

Quality leaders can drive future-readiness with...

Continuous and agile methodologies

33%

of organizations are using Six Sigma to support operational excellence projects[5].

Leverage proactive frameworks

Frameworks like Lean Six Sigma, business process, and change management methodologies will help quality management functions reduce waste, improve productivity, and strengthen sustainability practices in the supply chain.

Make data-driven decisions

Effectively leveraging and continuously analysing data is a critical component of these frameworks and key for successful supply chain operations. The consistent, incremental improvements that analytics enables are vital to ensuring your organization is able to strengthen its competitiveness.

Technology

The trend...

State-of-the-art technologies enable organizations to extract and analyse data for insights that drive continuous improvement, strengthen digital trust capabilities, and create robust operations for better quality management.

68%

of testing professionals surveyed identified AI as the most significant trend in software testing for the future[6].

[6]AI in Quality Assurance Statistics. Zipdo,Zipdo.com, 2024

Organizations can fully capitalize on these developments with initiatives in the following areas:

Cloud-based assurance

Quality ecosystems built on secure cloud technologies (such as blockchain) will streamline and strengthen assurance processes.

Data-enriched decision intelligence

Cognitive decision centres will be established to orchestrate the use of AI, machine learning, and predictive analytics to produce reliable strategic intelligence for managers and leaders, and trusted insights and assistance for the wider workforce.

Digital trust

Organizations will need robust digital trust strategies to strengthen industry and consumer confidence as more decisions, products, experiences, and services come to depend on data.

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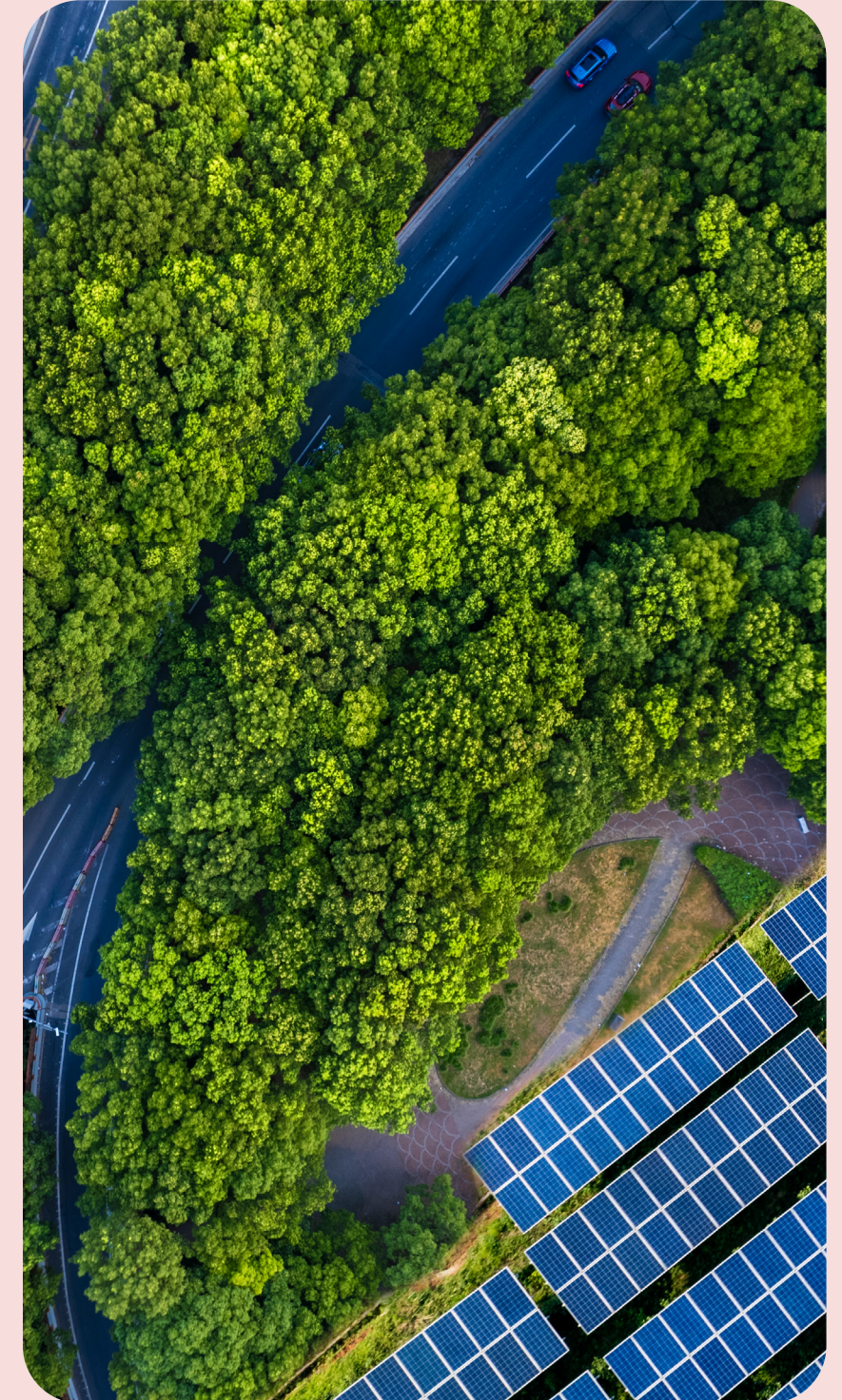
Quality leaders can drive future-readiness with...

Interoperable IT solutions

31%

of organizations are using data analytics/business intelligence to support operational excellence projects[7].

Provide holistic training

Invest in training to sharpen your quality function's digital literacy (as well as leadership and other soft skills). This is critical to the creation of a healthy culture where continuous feedback loops drive ongoing quality improvements and new problem-solving methods are leveraged.

Unify processes, systems, and data

Unification minimizes inefficiencies and makes meaningful insights more readily available. Quality teams can leverage solutions like predictive analytics, AI, and automation to accelerate product development, enhance risk management, and improve testing processes.

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Sustainability

The trend...

Organizations across the globe will face increasing pressure to show climate action leadership with substantive, transparent and measurable ESG initiatives.

By 2027

50%

of the top ten consumer goods manufacturers will have 'digital product passports' for at least one of their product categories[1].

1 https://www.forbes.com/sites/sap/2023/01/31/sustainability-trends-2023-goodbye-greenwashing-hello-business-results/

This pressure will persuade organizations to reassess and — with forward thinking — reimagine their capabilities in the following areas:

Continuous process optimization

Methodologies like Lean Six Sigma will continue to help organizations reduce waste, optimize supply chain processes, and ensure products are operating efficiently and sustainably.

Embedded quality management frameworks

Quality will play a critical role in driving sustainable objectives, leading on sustainable design principles, as well as measuring the environmental impact of products and services.

Independent verification

Organizations will be expected to prove that they are taking climate action and lowering emissions. Progress towards net zero will be expected to be verified by an independent third party.

Quality leaders can drive future-readiness with...

Sustainable operations

> # 55%
>
> of supply chain executives expect to see better management of operational risks within the next one to three years, as a result of their ESG initiatives[9].

Strengthen ESG governance

Quality management leaders can drive ESG initiatives forward by encouraging stakeholders to invest in processes and tools that track and test ESG metrics. This is key for effective reporting and identifying new opportunities.
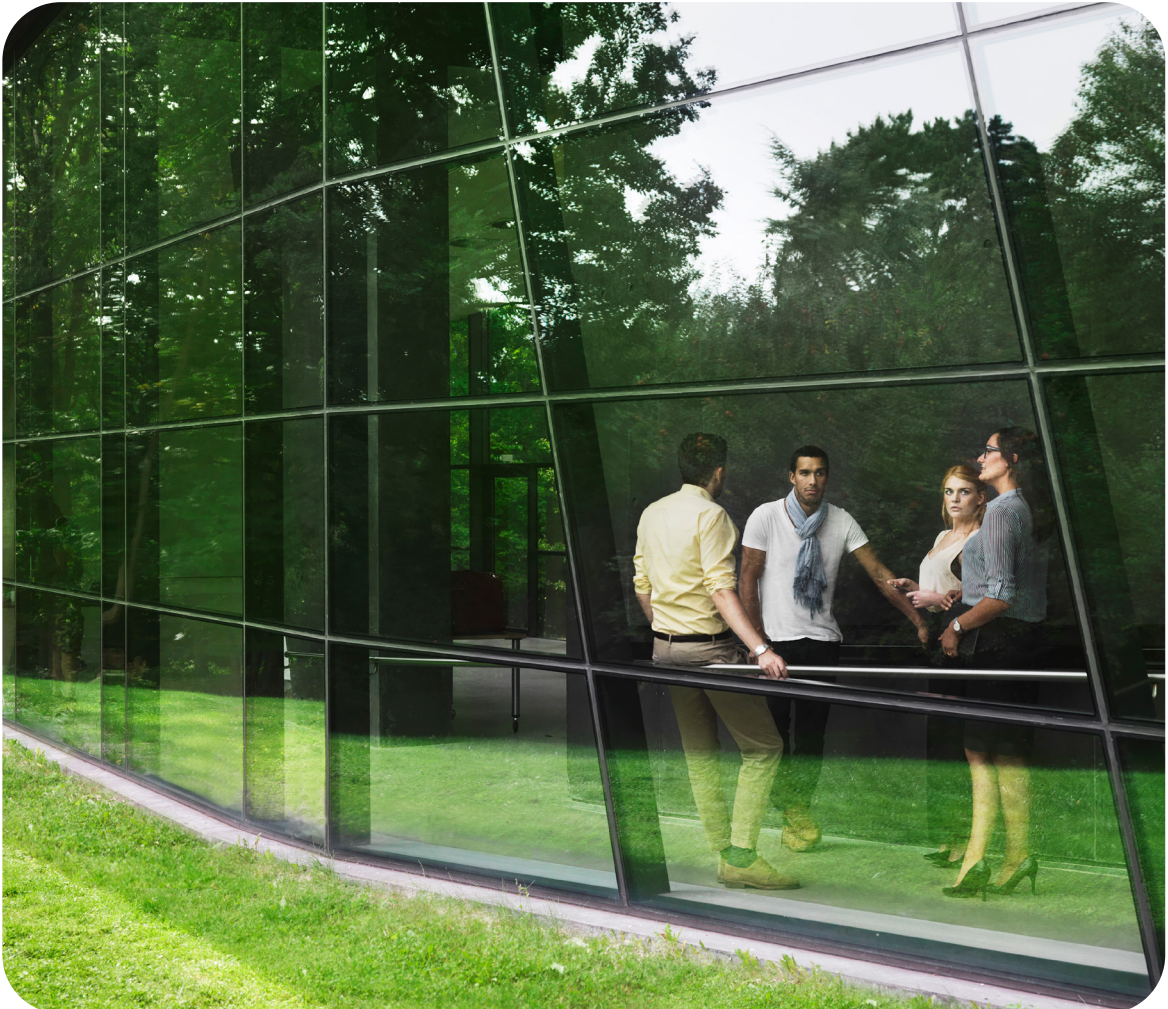
Consider hybrid roles

Leading organizations are creating hybrid quality management roles that blend responsibilities from environmental, health and safety, and quality management departments. This will help to increase the scope and reach of sustainability initiatives and their sponsors, while reducing the risk of duplication of effort.

Opportunities for quality leaders

The obstacles and opportunities facing quality management

Understanding and responding to the trends covered in this report can offer opportunities for quality managers to become future-ready.

Prioritizing cultural change can help maintain success when you're faced with resourcing roadblocks such as inflation-led budget limitations, skilled labour shortages, and supply chain interruptions.

When employees proactively work towards high levels of operational excellence, they embody what's called "quality consciousness". This sort of agile and proactive culture of quality, when supported by the right technology and skills, will help quality leaders strengthen future-readiness.

How a strong quality culture and operational excellence support your organization

Talent strategies

By retaining top talent, you can strengthen your workforce for the future and more effectively shape your next-generation quality function.

Standards & certification

Certification to internationally recognized standards like Quality Management (ISO 9001) can help guide organizations towards best practice, mitigating against risk and inspiring trust with key stakeholders across the entire supply chain.

Upskilling & reskilling

If professionals can develop both technical and soft skills to sharpen digital literacy, then they can effectively implement and scale agile frameworks and solutions.

Agile frameworks

By adopting methodologies and frameworks like Lean Six Sigma and design thinking, you can to make continuous improvements to processes, eradicate inefficiencies, and lower costs across a product's life cycle.

Holistic transformation

By investing in and effectively implementing solutions like predictive analytics, quality leaders can make more accurate decisions, accelerate innovation, and eradicate siloes.

Quality consciousness

By creating an environment where employees have the tools, training, and guidance, you can deliver operational excellence. This can only be achieved with active participation and support from business leaders, who embed quality into the fabric of their organization.

Proactively manage risk, reduce inefficiencies, & improve quality

Accelerate growth

Build trust with stakeholders & customers

Strengthen future-readiness & drive innovation

Ready to take your next steps towards quality excellence?

Tactics that will keep you ahead of the curve

The next five years will be truly transformative for quality professionals.

Sustainable IT

...is giving organizations the ability to protect the environment, accelerate ESG goals, and usher in a new era of intelligent products.

Quality consciousness

...is helping to shape a generation of leaders who proactively empower employees and embed excellence into the fabric of their organization.

Next-generation technologies

...like predictive analytics are revolutionizing the efficiency of organizations and supply chains and inspiring ground-breaking innovation.

Strengthen future-readiness, build trust, and accelerate growth

As your partner in progress, we can help you navigate this new era of quality management and establish operational excellence across your organization and its supply chain. Our team of experts work closely with professionals like you to embed strong quality management principles into the fabric of your organization through our digitally enabled training, certification, and assessment services.

Training

With BSI training and qualifications, and business improvement courses, you can embed new skills and expertise, demonstrate competence, and equip your organization to excel in its market.

Discover training

Certification

Enhance performance, increase customer satisfaction, and gain a competitive edge by getting certified to internationally recognized Quality Management System standards such as ISO 9001.

Discover certification

BSI Connect

Ensure total visibility and control over your audit, compliance, and supply chain activities through powerful, data-driven insights with BSI Connect.

Discover BSI Connect

Hybrid audits

We've optimized the best of in-person and remote audits to bring you a more agile and streamlined service. The result is seamless delivery, deeper intelligence, and actionable insights without compromising on quality.

bsi

Want to learn more?

Create a powerful competitive advantage and enhance your organization's capabilities with our range of quality management solutions.

Explore our quality management solutions