



News and Views

ANAB Replaces ANSI-RAB NAP

As of Jan. 1, 2005 a new accreditation body formed by the American National Standards Institute and the American Society for Quality will replace the ANSI-RAB National Accreditation Program as the U.S. National Accreditation Body.

ANSI-ASQ National Accreditation Program, or ANAB as the new accreditation body was formed in response to the adoption of ISO/IEC 17011, which requires that a national accreditation body be a legal entity. The ANSI-RAB NAP, as it's currently structured, does not meet that requirement. ANAB will also be divorced from RAB's personnel certification programs, as ISO/IEC 17011 prohibits accreditation bodies from also certifying personnel. The agreement to create ANAB was approved by ASQ's board of directors on Nov. 5. ANSI's executive committee approved the deal two weeks later.

Certification and registration bodies accredited by the ANSI-RAB NAP automatically converted to ANAB accreditation as of Jan. 1, and will receive the new ANAB accreditation mark for use with their registered clients.

No change in staffing is anticipated, although the accreditation staff has been reorganized to provide a better focus on customer service after the completion of the changeover. Operations will continue to be based in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

For more information, visit www.ansi.org.

In the last issue of "QualityInsider" we asked: "Most of us have to call a customer support number at some time. Usually, that number connects to an automated attendant that steps you through a phone tree before connecting you to an actual humanoid. How often do you find yourself either lost in the phone tree or connected to the wrong customer support department?" Here are the results:

- 0 percent of the time (I never have problems with automated attendants.) 4.4%
- 25 percent of the time 35.6%
- 50 percent of the time 33.7%
- 75 percent of the time 21.6%
- 100 percent of the time (I always have problems with automated attendants.) 4.7%

Result: Just over 4% of customers never have problems.








This is known as customer support!

How good is your customer support system?

Ideas for Improving Your Business in 2005

At this time of year it is natural to reflect on your annual performance and set personal and business goals for the upcoming year. The question is what kind of results do you want to create for yourself and your business? Do you have customers coming back for more of your product or service? Do you have a set of ideal customers you want to cultivate? Are your business processes in control and capable of producing what you and your customers require on a continuous basis?

The demands of today's business environment have caused many of us to shift our approach from thinking as a professional to acting as an entrepreneur. Avoiding past mistakes and taking the time to plan your next moves can make the difference between an exceptional year, and a mediocre year for you and your organization.

-  **Being Generic:** Do you act, look, and sound like your top competitor? Sales material, customer approach, support center processes, website content, all similar? Look for an edge that breaks you away from the rest of the herd.
-  **The Emperor with no clothes:** How deep are your relationships with your top customers? Can they identify beyond normal business practices how your value to them increased from last year? What types of evidence would they reference? Don't ever take the crown jewels for granted, your competition is lurking.
-  **Failing to turn your customers into a sales force:** Your customers can become your largest asset for customer referrals. It is much easier and cheaper to keep in contact and query your current customers, than for example cold calling.
-  **Failure to review your lost client base:** What low value customers did you hold back from pursuing last year? Have you considered contacting them in the future? Customer needs and requirements can change, and you can have the influence to make it happen.
-  **Putting a square peg in a round hole:** How much time did you spend on sales and marketing actions that didn't produce results? Is your sales force making promises you can't keep, or not fully understanding the capability of your business processes?
-  **Same S _ _ , different day:** Are you still marketing yourself the same way you did last year, five years, ten years ago? Which of your marketing decisions drove bottom line increases and what didn't? Look around your industry, and seek the difference!
-  **Become a renowned expert:** Successful business people spend their time developing their reputation. They don't just rely on their business to sell themselves. They use tools to sell themselves and their products – speaking, writing, attending seminars/tradeshows, joining and contributing to professional and community associations.

As you all know, offshore manufacturing is continuing to grow at an astounding rate. Some U.S. companies are moving forward with strategic plans to move a minimum of 60 percent of their supply bases offshore by the end of 2006. Recently a client of ours provided us some information they asked us to share.

Cost of a worker

The number of workers who can be hired for the pay of a worker in the United States

UNITED STATES

☹ 1 worker at \$7.50 an hour

MEXICO

☹☹☹☹☹½ 5.5 workers at \$1.35 an hour

HONDURAS

☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹.2 9.2 workers at 81¢ an hour

CHINA

☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹☹.7 16.7 workers at 45¢ an hour

Note: Figures do not include fringe benefits.
Source: The World Fact Book
Gannett News Service



May you all have a prosperous New Year!

Want to suggest a Newsletter Topic?

Let us know!

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