



Shatter-Resistant and Error-Proof

Shat-R-Shield Awarded ISO 9001:2008 Certification

In a facility where bread is made, warm loaves travel down a conveyor to cool. High above, a worker changing a fluorescent lamp loses his grip on the bulb and it drops to the concrete floor, shattering into a million glass splinters. Fortunately, the lamp has a protective coating that safely contains the fragments, effectively protecting employees and saving the equipment and food from contamination.

Shat-R-Shield Challenge

Reoccurring data entry and production errors were costing Shat-R-Shield time and productivity, but there was no system in place to correct the root causes of these errors; workers were putting out small fires as each arose.

IES Solution ISO 9001 certification

Benefits

Creating standardized work procedures empowered employees to immediately put corrective actions in place.

Production tripled on 40 different products, and employees now have more time to focus on customer satisfaction and sales, building the foundation for future business expansion.

Shat-R-Shield, the company that created the original safety-coated lamp 45 years ago, makes this kind of scenario possible. Its products are used not only in food processing, but also in manufacturing facilities, operating rooms, school gymnasiums and thousands of other places where broken glass or escaped mercury vapors from lamps could cause injuries, lost time or damaged products.

Don't Make the Same Error Twice

Because Shat-R-Shield delivers a safety-related product, eliminating errors is crucial; but, like every business, it was susceptible to making any number of them, from order entry to manufacturing defects.

President Karen Clouse says that the decision for the company to become ISO 9001:2008 certified arose from the desire to put a quality system in place, helping to correct errors at their root cause and prevent the same problems from occurring in the future. Quality management systems aim to reduce errors and increase efficiency by standardizing operating procedures.

"It creates discipline," says Clouse. "We have plans to grow this business and you have to have good, strong infrastructure to support that."

Gene Beneduce, the IES Regional Manager who worked with Shat-R-Shield on its certification, was impressed by leadership's commitment to adopting a formal quality system—so committed that they halted operations for an entire day to give all 56 employees the opportunity to learn about ISO from IES Improvement Specialist Sonja Hughes, who coached the company through its certification.

Kathryn Nolan, Shat-R-Shield's quality manager, led the eight-person implementation team that facilitated the company's certification. She admits that she was nervous about tackling the task, believing that ISO would have stringent requirements that would make certification difficult. To her surprise, she found ISO to be quite flexible, allowing the company to develop a quality management system that worked with their needs and played to their strengths.

"Our biggest hurdle, the thing that required the most legwork, was documentation," says Nolan. Once the team completed the task of creating the necessary work procedures, spotting nonconformances became less difficult and employees felt empowered to put corrective actions in place themselves. Though the quality system is new, implementing ISO in conjunction with Lean manufacturing has resulted in more

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—Kathryn Nolan, Quality Manager,
Shat-R-Shield

than 40 products seeing increased production—from 200 to 600 parts per hour.

"Our days are getting easier," says Nolan. "We're eliminating the underbrush that tripped us up, and focusing more on customer satisfaction and sales."

These areas have benefited from a quality management system, too. By standardizing their interactive field reports, representatives are able to follow up on quality issues in the field and report back to their customers in lightning-quick time, saving them from picking up the pieces of a damaged reputation further down the line.

"Absolutely nothing falls through the cracks," says Clouse.

The company's newly minted ISO certificate hangs in the reception area as a reassurance to old customers and a promise to new ones: Shat-R-Shield is committed to quality.

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