

Defining seven core subjects of ISO 26000 and practical examples of implementation

An effective way for an organisation to identify its SR is to become familiar with the seven ISO 26000 core subjects: organisational governance; human rights; labour practices; the environment; fair operating practices; consumer issues, and community involvement and development. All these core subjects are held to be equally important in ISO 26000.

Organisational governance

Every organisation sets objectives and goals in order to make and implement decisions. The way an organisation is directed and managed is known as organisational governance. Differences in the culture, values and working environment of each organisation will affect how decisions are implemented. So there is a close link between successful organisational governance and the seven principles discussed in chapter three. Success depends on how well the organisation applies its values e.g. honesty and ethics in operating business, trust, accountability and respect for the stakeholders, including transparency e.g. consumer rights.

Of course it is possible to achieve organisational goals or objectives by an autocratic or abusive organisational culture. Employees then work under pressure and fear; top-management shout at the mid-management and the lower management replicate this behaviour with their workers. This will not provide an environment for creative thinking or problem solving. Consequently employees will not be encouraged to take responsibility themselves. This is not a good environment for SR to develop.