



## How standards deliver SME freedom

Regardless of size or sector, businesses run more effectively with systems and processes in place. Despite the fact that some SME owners view them as restrictive, introducing structure and best practice to your business actually increases innovation and freedom.

How? By helping you improve efficiency, increase productivity and minimize risk. From this position of strength, it's much easier to unlock creativity and innovate successfully – both vital in a post-coronavirus world.

Standards help small businesses adopt a strategic approach to innovation. They provide clear frameworks to help you implement ideas, understand what works and what doesn't, and maximize value. The focus is always on continual improvement, so it's easy to make adjustments as your SME changes and matures, too.

If you're not sure where to begin, here are four key standards that SMEs can use to cultivate freedom within a well-executed framework:

### 1. ISO 9001: quality management

Quality management and innovation go hand-in-hand, which makes ISO 9001 an essential starting point. It helps SMEs introduce a quality management system (QMS) and build a culture

of incremental innovation for sustained, measurable growth.

By raising the consistency and quality of your operations, products and services you'll boost customer satisfaction and reduce costs. Recognize and measure when, how and why your creativity has an impact.

### 2. BS 76000: human resource management

Engaged employees drive innovation; yet many SMEs lack human resource (HR) support to properly nurture, train and develop their staff. Use BS 76000 to create a workplace environment in which your employees feel happy, valued and ready to innovate because they're supported and able to reach their full potential.

### 3. ISO 14001: environmental management

From climate change to coronavirus, the environmental and social challenges we face today demand a completely different way of

doing business. What's more, they provide an opportunity for responsible growth that protects the planet and satisfies changing consumer needs.

Implementing an environmental management system (EMS) based on ISO 14001 lets your SME achieve the same results from environmental management as larger companies. Certification also demonstrates the authenticity of your brand's sustainable efforts, building customer loyalty and stakeholder trust.

#### 4. ISO 22301: business continuity

Disruption to your daily operations might not seem like an opportunity to innovate, but new ideas and extra creativity are often the product of difficult times. A business continuity plan helps you mitigate risk and build resilience, leaving your SME free to adapt in times of change.

ISO 22301 helps small businesses prepare for and cope with the unexpected, ensuring that your SME survives and can capitalize on any new opportunities which arise as a result.

#### Summary:

- Standards offer frameworks to help create the right infrastructure for implementing ideas, understanding what works and what doesn't, and maximizing value. This in turn unlocks creativity - which will be essential to prosper in a post-coronavirus world.
- ISO 9001 helps SMEs put a quality management system (QMS) in place to help build a culture of incremental innovation, providing sustained, measured growth.
- BS 76000 helps create a workplace environment in which employees feel valued and at ease so they're able to reach their full potential.
- ISO 14001 helps SMEs achieve the same results from environmental management as larger companies. Certification also demonstrates the authenticity of a brand's sustainable efforts, earning loyalty amongst consumers and the trust of external stakeholders.
- ISO 22301 helps SMEs cope during a crisis by creating a bespoke business continuity plan to help mitigate risk and build resilience.

For more information on how our standards help SMEs, visit:

[www.bsigroup.com/SME](http://www.bsigroup.com/SME)