

5 Planning of Changes

Plan the change, prepare affected people and check the result

Summary

	What to look for	What to add or expand if missing
A	A plan and approval before changing QMS processes or responsibilities.	Record planned changes and identify related corrective action
B	Resources, documents and information considered before a change.	Include the information needed to carry out the change
C	Communication and staff preparation before a change.	Plan who to inform, what to communicate and when
D	Checks after the change is put into use.	Plan effectiveness checks and review the results for changes generally

The Changes and What They Mean

A - Record Planned Changes and Identify Related Corrective Action

Your current procedure may explain how to make changes after a problem occurs. Now check that it also covers **planned changes that are not corrective actions**, such as new software, a different work sequence or a transfer of responsibilities.

Before the change starts, the people responsible need to agree what it should achieve, what else it could affect, what resources are needed and who may authorize it. Keep specific design, customer and production-change controls where they also apply; one suitable plan can refer to those checks.

EXAMPLE

A company changes its order-entry software to reduce missing order details. Before switching, it checks who enters data, how dispatch receives the order and whether staff and customer contacts need different instructions. It uses one change plan, with a link to the software-testing record.

B - Include the Information Needed to Carry Out the Change

Your current change plan may cover resources, responsibilities and documents to update. Now **identify the information people need in order to carry out the change**. This can include approved specifications, test results, process data, customer requirements or operating instructions.

State what information is needed, who will provide it and when. A note to “obtain necessary information” leaves the people doing the change to discover the gaps themselves.

EXAMPLE

Before changing order-entry software, the team needs the approved data format, sample customer records and test results. The plan names who supplies each item and the date it is needed before the switch.

C - Plan Who to Inform, What to Communicate and When

Your current change instructions may ask for related documents to be revised or staff to be trained. Now **plan who needs to know about the change, what they need to know, who will tell them and when**. Include preparation or training needed before the changed work starts.

Recipients may include people at other sites, customers or suppliers where their work is affected. Tell each group what it needs to do; distributing a revised procedure alone may not explain the practical change.

EXAMPLE

Before a software switch, the change owner arranges staff practice, tells dispatch when the old system will stop and gives affected customer contacts the revised submission instructions. Each task has a responsible person and date.

D - Plan Effectiveness Checks and Review the Results for Changes Generally

Your current change procedure may finish when the change is authorized or installed. Now **plan a later check of whether it achieved its intended result and caused any unwanted effects**. Authorization to proceed and confirmation that a change worked are different decisions.

Choose a practical check and timing that fit the change. This may be checking the first few jobs, reviewing errors after a month, or testing a changed service arrangement. Do not invent a fixed review interval for every change.

EXAMPLE

The new order system is installed on Friday. The sales manager reviews the first 20 orders during the following week for missing information and checks with dispatch for new problems. Installation is recorded as complete; the results check remains open until that review is done.

Update Your Procedures

Planning QMS changes — ISO 9001:2015, 6.3

If no change-planning instruction exists, add the four wording paragraphs in A–D together, in that order, in the location selected using Follow the editing instructions in chapter 1. Follow the steps in A–D to replace the bracketed names with your own roles and records.

A - Record Planned Changes and Identify Related Corrective Action

1. **Find the procedure for planning QMS changes** (ISO 9001:2015, clause 6.3). Look for “change planning”, “change control”, “system changes” or a rule referring changes to corrective action.
2. **Expand any instruction that covers only changes made to correct problems.** Insert the paragraph below at the start of change planning, before authorization or implementation. Retain the existing checks of purpose, consequences, resources and responsibilities.
3. **Replace [change record]** with your change plan, project record or “Process Change Form”. Replace [authorizing role] with the role already authorized to approve the affected change. If authority differs by type of change, refer to the existing approval rules.

Before a planned QMS change is made, a change owner is assigned and records its purpose, intended result and possible consequences in [change record]. The owner consults people responsible for affected processes to check resources, responsibilities, information and the effect on how the QMS works as a whole. The plan includes actions needed to keep related work consistent. [Authorizing role] approves the plan before implementation. Where other change controls or corrective actions also apply, the record identifies and links those checks.

B - Include the Information Needed to Carry Out the Change

1. In your change-planning procedure (ISO 9001:2015, clause 6.3), find the list of planning considerations. Look beside resources, responsibilities, documents to update or preparation.
2. **Add the paragraph below to that list.** If the procedure already requires information to be identified, add only the missing provider or timing instruction. Keep the existing document-control checks.
3. **Use the same [change record] name as in A.** If another plan contains the information list, refer to that plan instead of requiring it to be copied.

The change owner identifies the information needed to carry out the change and records it in [change record] or a referenced plan, together with who will provide it and when it is needed. The people responsible for the affected work check that the information is suitable and available before the work that depends on it begins.