

Graham Oakes Limited



Graham Oakes of Graham Oakes Ltd has been working as a business and technology consultant since 2003, helping a mix of public, private and not-for-profit clients untangle complex issues in technology, processes, relationships and governance.

As part of a move to compete for work in the public sector, and to compete on a level footing with larger players, Graham achieved ISO 9001 certification through PCG's innovative scheme. "Certification doesn't open doors in itself, but it often helps people persuade their senior managers and procurement departments that it's worthwhile going with a small company rather than one of the big names – it gives them some confidence of stability and commitment to quality. It reduces their risk."

"Records maintained in the QMS helped me win a medal in the BCS IT Consultancy awards in 2007."

**Graham Oakes, Managing Director
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Graham has used his ISO 9001 certification as the basis for a number of press releases and talks, and records maintained in the scheme's quality management system helped him win a medal in the British Computer Society's IT Consultancy awards for 2007.

He also uses his certification to help prompt clients to give him feedback, creating testimonials on his website which he finds really useful for selling. "It's generally hard to get people to take time to fill in feedback forms, but 'needing it for my ISO 9001 records' is enough to prompt some people to do it."

According to Graham, the scheme has become an integral part of how he runs his business as he moves forward; "Once you get the hang of it – the file structure, the record keeping – you can operate within the quality management system fairly easily. There's no great overhead to it and it's flexible enough to accommodate most of what I do. Whenever I come across something that seems like overhead, it comes back to: 'shouldn't I be doing this as part of running my business anyway'. The answer is generally yes."

Graham finds the real value of the scheme is in helping him maintain the discipline of regularly reviewing his business and getting client feedback.

"The discipline of gathering customer feedback and regular internal reviews forces me to constantly think about where I want to take the company and how I can improve."

**Graham Oakes, Managing Director
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Formed: 2003

Sector: Business and Technology consulting

Clients: Mix of public, private and not-for-profit clients including The Open University, Oxfam and Cisco Systems

Certified: 16 September 2005

PCG ISO 9001 was developed in partnership with BVQI and BQI Consulting. It is the first scheme of its kind and incorporates a fully-hosted EQMS with technical support, a full-day training course and instructional materials, templates and checklists, remote online internal quality auditing and an ethical code of conduct.

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