

MORE FOR LESS

Lowering the cost of compliance – Part 1 of 2

Implementing a structured management system enables all-round improvements to your business, but how concerned should you be with the initial costs? asks **Jodie Read**



Structured management systems such as ISO9001, ISO14001 and OHSAS18001 can bring genuine business improvements, increase business opportunities and cost savings once implemented effectively. However, business owners often voice concerns about the initial costs associated with doing so.

For companies wanting to demonstrate they have effective controls in place, without the normal costs associated with consultancy, there are ways to save money if you:

- take a different approach.
- are realistic about the internal skills and resources at your disposal.
- recognise that some expenditure can help save money in the long term.

Hints, tips and links to free resources to help companies save even more money will be provided in Pro Landscaper's September issue.

TRAINING

Some parts of management systems (such as internally auditing) require specialist skills. By identifying where the skills gaps lie, it's possible to attend relevant training course(s) to up-skill the person(s) tasked with implementing or

maintaining management systems. By investing once, the companies benefit from gaining the skills in-house for continued use.

MANAGEMENT SYSTEM WORKSHOPS

For companies wishing to have access to consultancy expertise, it is possible to attend a series of structured workshops over several months. In this way, companies benefit from the input, guidance and support of professional consultants while paying less to develop the system alongside other companies striving for the

same goal. These sessions will require a higher investment of time for the designated management representatives to attend, but can be very rewarding for the participants.

KNOWING WHICH BITS CATCH PEOPLE OUT

Some companies can successfully implement basic systems without any consultancy support.

Things get more complicated where environmental, health and safety systems are concerned. If you do want to develop a system yourselves, it may pay to have some support with complex topics such as legal compliance (developing the register and evaluating compliance) or identifying and documenting the Environmental Aspects. Failure to gain support with such topics can prove costly if your Certification Body is not satisfied with the system and ends up coming back to carry out additional day(s) before awarding certificates.

MOCK ASSESSMENT

If you've decided to go ahead and put in the entire system using internal resources, you don't want to fall at the last hurdle. It can therefore be extremely worthwhile making use of consultants with relevant landscaping sector experience to check your status before you go for certification. This will help to identify any issues that are likely to require remedial action, without the demotivating prospect of 'failing' the assessment. Although there will be a cost to this, it could well save you money if it means that the Certification Body doesn't have to come back, and will be far better for morale after staff have invested time and effort in developing the system to the best of their ability.

ABOUT JODIE READ



Jodie Read is the Managing Director of Penarth Management Limited; a company which specialises in the provision of compliance consultancy and training for quality, environmental, health and safety management.

Jodie and her colleagues assist companies in implementing and maintaining management systems, such as ISO9001 (Quality), ISO14001 (Environmental) or

OHSAS18001 (Health and Safety). The company is an affiliate member of the British Association of Landscape Industries (BALI) and Jodie is one of only a few approved ROLO health and safety trainers in the country.

If readers have any queries regarding health and safety in landscaping, they are welcome to contact Jodie via e-mail: jodie@penarth.co.uk or by telephone on 029 2070 3328.