

## **Six Sigma Vs ISO 9001**

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Business is an ever-changing industry filled with new ideas, concepts, and procedures. In this, an employee must be able to keep up with their changing field as it grows and expands. In the world of business, one must show that one is up to the challenges and keep pace with whatever comes their way. One increasingly popular approach in business industries, to show an employer that you can keep up with growing demands or new roles, is by acquiring a Six Sigma certificate. A Six Sigma certification is described as: “Six Sigma certification is a verification of an individual's command of a well-regarded method of professional skills development.” (Kenton, 2019, para. 1)

This certification is broken down into categories via a system of belt classifications; a method that may be familiar to those who have taken courses in martial arts, which is used to rank one's skills and the progression of those skills. This system was developed in 1986 by an engineer at Motorola by the name of Bill Smith to better ensure quality control measures of the skillsets applied in manufacturing. “Six Sigma is a set of tools and techniques used by companies to improve production processes, eliminate defects, and guarantee quality.” (Bhargav, 2021, paras 2, 6) The process of gaining Six Sigma Certification requires proof on the part of the prospective employee to demonstrate their abilities through a stringent series of steps.

Firstly, gaining certification is not as simple as going to a class and completing the two-hour lecture. A person seeking a qualification must first decide which level of education or “Belt” that they want to seek. ; white being the lowest, easiest, and black being the highest, also referred to as the Master rank. These levels give the person the power to identify and choose which rank best fits the needs for themselves, their employer, and the role they need to play, within their respected field. Because of this choice, the burden of responsibility is laid at the feet of the individual to decide what is best for them; however, if the company or employer is not

giving input when deciding the level of certification needed, the individual may choose a certification which falls short of the company's needs or they might choose a higher certification level than is required, wasting time, energy, and money.

That is where ISO 9001 program can fill the gap. Where Six Sigma leaves the choice up to the individual, ISO 9001 is a company-wide program that affects all levels of management. The benefit of this system is that company-wide we are able to see the whole management level gain an understanding and are able to tackle problems as a group. benefits larger companies who need to unify conduct or operations across larger groups of employees. A smaller company may find that ISO 9001 is an extraneous expense or not worth the investment because of the scale that ISO 9001 was intended for.

In short, Six Sigma may be the right answer for an individual looking to certify their skillset, but it is not developed for accessibility to broad strokes across large groups of people within a department or company. ISO 9001 may be the best choice for large companies because it was designed to cover what Six Sigma fails to, but it may not be suitable for smaller industries due to the cost-to-benefit ratio on a smaller scale. To answer the question more directly I do see Six Sigma as a good baseline learning method for a person looking to advanced their career? Not only does this system show your work ethic, but the benefits you gain are great as well. For each level, your experience grows. Which can come with the added bonus of job promotion. The great thing that comes with that is a higher wage.

Now, the real question is would I strive to have someone on my team that had the Six Sigma certification? In a simple answer, yes I would. They clearly show a dedication to not only the company for seeking the qualification but also seeking to better themselves. For the downsides though, the person may be seeking to better themselves, but that means that if they

feel the job I have hired them for isn't good enough they will leave and take the experience with them. Where ISO 9001 stays with the company. Each person and company should weigh which option suits their needs best.

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