

Date: November 7, 2003

Topic: Internal Auditing and Auditors

How did you accomplish this topic during your implementation?

Juniper Networks is in the process of implementing TL 9000 with expectations of obtaining registration in early 2004. They are a relatively small company with about 1500 employees. They were not previously registered to ISO and are implementing both ISO 9000:2000 and TL 9000 simultaneously. One of the main issues with their implementation early on was that their senior leaders did not appreciate the extent of involvement, participation and messaging to the rest of the organization required of them by the TL 9000 standard. They, at first, committed their support and buy-in, but then left the details of the implementation to others. As a result, the implementation efforts at first were difficult with people in the company thinking that this was an extra effort over and beyond "real work". Thus it was difficult for people to allocate resources to the extent needed for something viewed as "extra". This also impacted their ability to obtain and train an adequate internal auditor pool. (See their notes on Senior Leader Roles and Management Review for the full story).

They started out training 10 part time auditors from the Quality Department. They trained the auditors early so that they would perform process audits to understand the gap between existing operations and TL requirements and metrics. Once the senior leaders' participation and commitment became more robust, they were able to recruit about 20 other people. They expect to have an auditor pool of about 30 ongoing. About 10 of these people will be in the central quality group with the auditing responsibilities as part of their job and annual objective. The rest of the pool will be decentralized, and voluntary. This combination of a pool made up of centralized (part of their job) and decentralized voluntary gives them a great deal of flexibility. It provides a stability and level of SME expertise with the centralized people and flexibility, reduction in travel expenses, and a network of local advocates and SMEs in the decentralized portion of the pool. They also did not want a totally centralized auditor pool made up of people from the quality group because they did not want the auditors to be viewed and as "police force" of outside people. They wanted the function integrated within the business operations and something that the managers would use to help identify improvement areas.

They have a single audit approach, strategy process and tools and aids that is maintained by the central quality department. This ensures consistency in results and focus even with the decentralized and voluntary auditors. They also use a mentorship program for new auditors to improve skills.

They share audit findings across the auditor pool and with senior leaders at management reviews. The intent is more toward identifying best practices and replicating them in other parts of the organization. They have two types of audits—both audits on individual processes for TL conformance and effectiveness, but also whole system audits. Prior to registration they are concentrating more on the process audits—and will transform to more audits on the whole system after registration.

What resources/tools/vendors were used to accomplish this task?

Only internal.

Was there any benchmarking activity?

No

What lead you to use this method?

See above

What worked and what didn't work?

What didn't work?

At first the auditors were auditing against the documentation rather than ensuring that the process was in compliance with the standard. In addition, they also had some difficulty in ensuring auditors considered the effectiveness of the process in achieving the results and linking the metric results with the process capabilities.

What worked well

Operations people are now understanding the value of the audits and appreciating someone looking at their processes and providing advice on improvement

What recommendations do you have for others attempting to use your method?

To enable higher quality audits, it is better to:

- Ensure that auditors have good skills early on
- Accelerate the skill building
- Make sure there is adequate training
- Use consultants to mentor auditors
- Get more people trained early even if not have the need right away
- Send more people on earlier audits to ramp up skill levels.

Make sure auditors look at metrics and results for the processes and how they align with process goals to understand process effectiveness.

How did you measure the effectiveness of this method?

Receipt of the registration on time