Quality trends report 2017
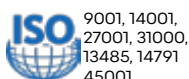
How the role of quality is changing.

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This ebook has been produced by Qualsys's quality team to understand how the role of quality is changing and how technology is helping solve those challenges.

Quality trends report 2017

Qualsys's software and solutions help you plan, manage and improve processes for making your business fitter, faster and stronger.

We're familiar with many standards and regulations, including:

FDA
21 CFR Part 11

ISO 9001, 14001, 27001, 31000, 13485, 14791 45001

GXP QUALITY SYSTEMS

MHRA
Regulating Medicines and Medical Devices

An effective management system takes more than a single software solution or achieving a certificate for the wall. It takes time, energy, commitment and investment.

Qualsys's software and solutions give businesses the tools and knowledge they need to effectively plan, monitor and improve performance.

We've worked with worldwide brands such as Sodexo, BT and Diageo, as well as hundreds of SMEs, to help them make good practice natural and invisible.

Founded in 1995, Qualsys Ltd is now one of the largest privately-owned governance, risk and compliance software providers in the UK.

Our software solutions are used every day in more than 100 countries across the globe, helping all kinds of businesses meet a wide range of standards and regulations.

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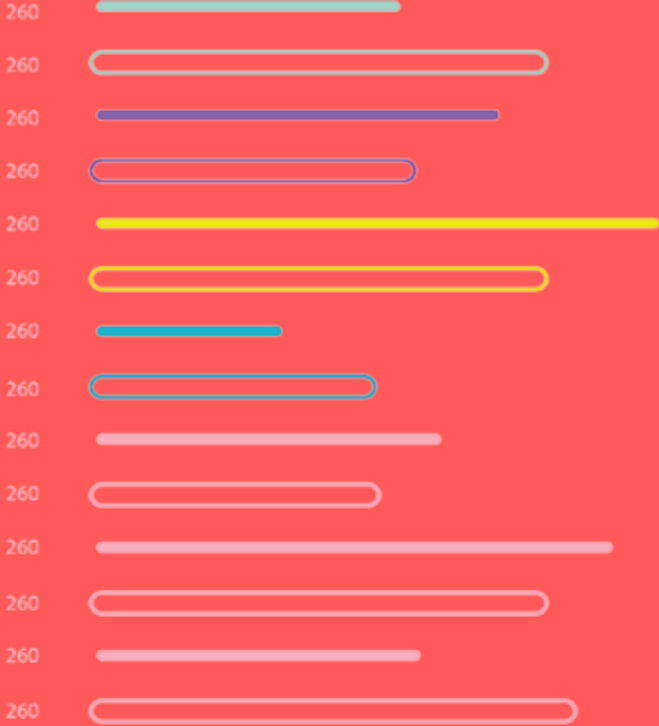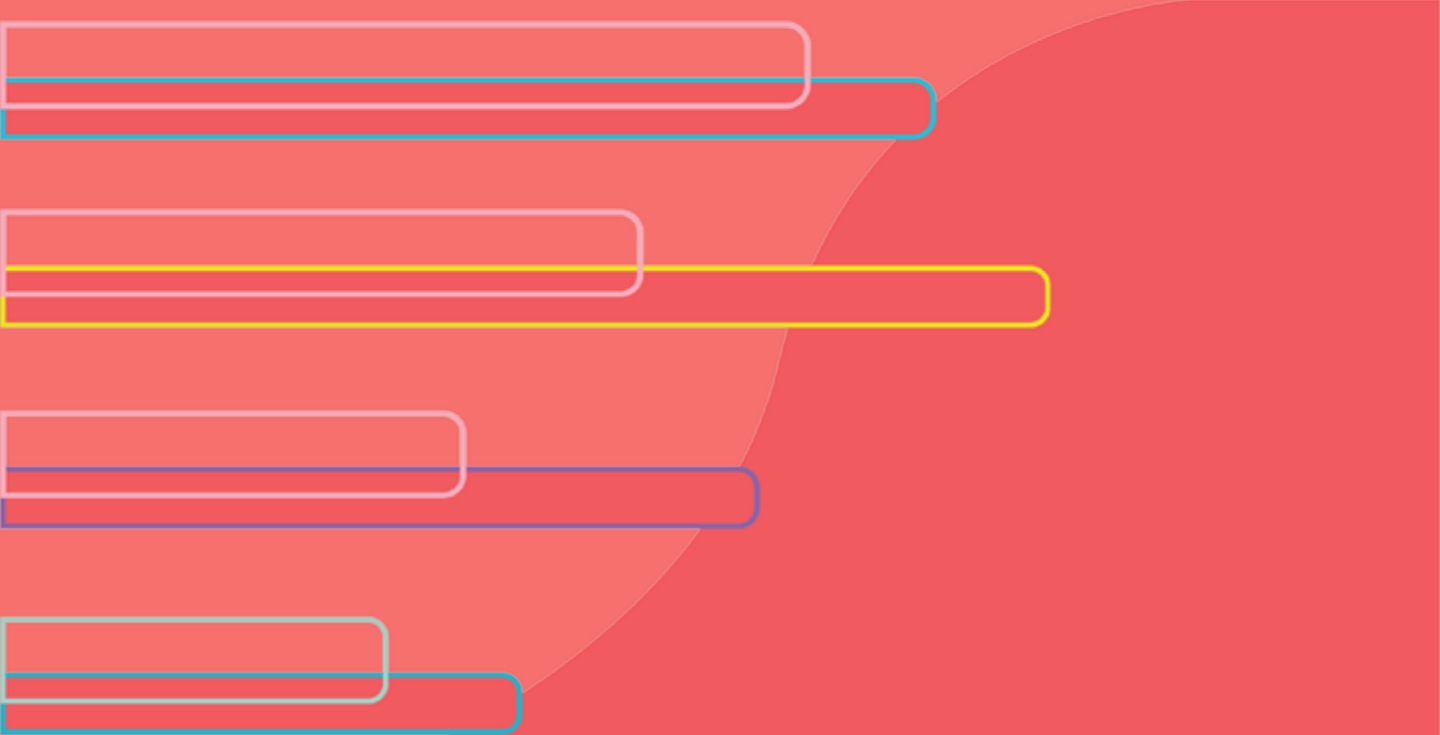**michael.ord@qualsys.co.uk**

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Introduction

Taking the temperature of the profession

Welcome to the 2017 Global Quality Survey report, collected by Qualsys Ltd, to take the temperature of the quality industry.

In March 2017, Qualsys Ltd distributed the annual benchmarking Quality survey, asking quality professionals about their challenges, key responsibilities and resources.

The 34 questions in the survey were grouped into four broad categories: the role of the quality professional; main challenges; technology and systems; and the responsibilities and activities within the quality operations.

The 151 responses we received—from around the world, across many industries, and from organisations large and small—gave important information to understand the changing role of the quality professional in more detail.

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We used the survey information to answer three questions in this report:

1. How are quality professionals coping with their new quality and compliance requirements?

2. Do quality professionals have enough resources to meet their quality and compliance goals?

3. How well are quality professionals using technology to tackle the challenges they face?

We hope you find this report useful and that it can serve as a guide for your own efforts to understand the quality strategies that might work well in your company.

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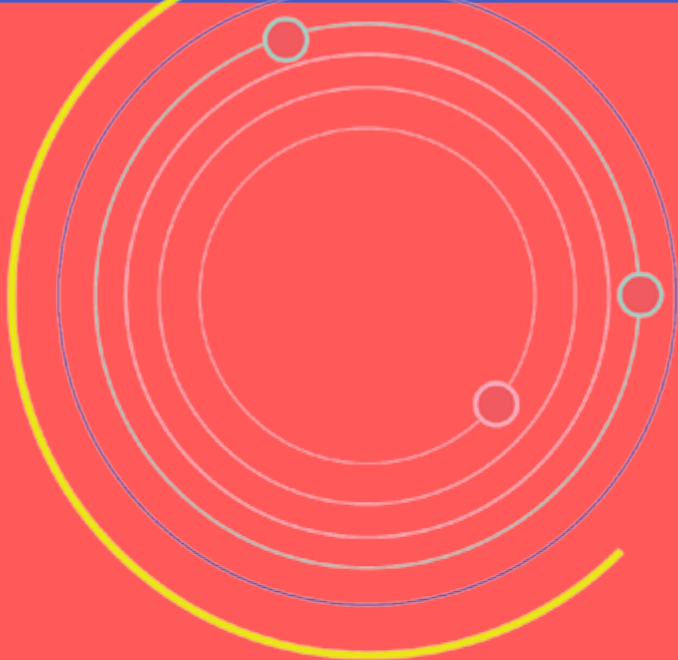
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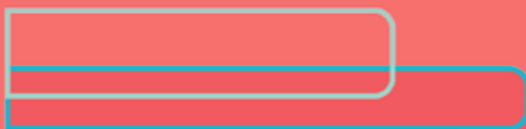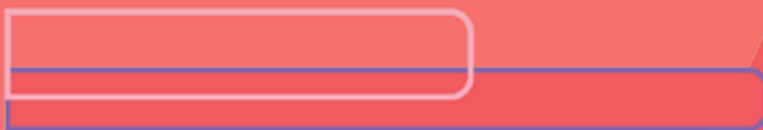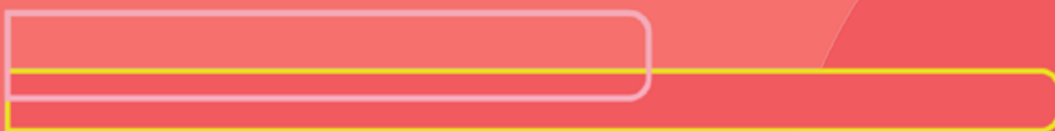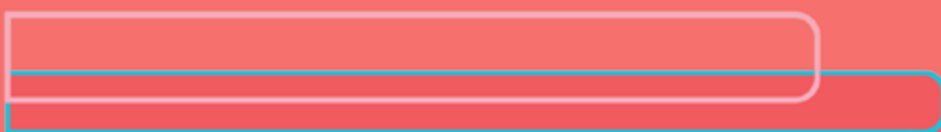
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Executive summary

Key findings from the report

The Global Quality Survey 2017 had 151 respondents from the Quality profession from across the globe. The annual survey monitors the quality industry, across all sectors of business.

The 2017 survey revealed some key points, including:

- 57% feel overworked or severely overworked in their role
- 53% spend more than 4 days a month reporting
- Only 27% feel their organisation is effective at using technology to drive quality
- 62% felt the transition to ISO 9001:2015 would be/has been beneficial to the organisation

More respondents than ever reported quality as only part of their role, with increased pressure to participate in daily tasks alongside quality. Despite 38%seeing business growth in the past 12 months, only 16% gained additional staff to their department.

41% more likely to get a promotion after implementing an electronic quality management system

The increased pressure of multi-tasking is taking its toll on the quality profession, but it's not all bad news. Those that had implemented an electronic quality management system in the last two years were 41% more likely to have had a promotion in that time.

More likely to report to the board
ISO Standards played a large part in the responses for most questions asked, as a leading cause of additional work, stress, but overall improvement in quality processes within the

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organisation.

The survey revealed an undercurrent of dissatisfaction amongst quality professionals with the ability to get top management involved in driving a quality culture. This is despite the fact that more Quality professionals sit at, or report directly to, the organisation's board than ever before (68% in comparison to 56% in 2016).

**Engagement challenges still present**

Stakeholder engagement problems are higher than ever, as individuals continue to relinquish responsibility and push quality issues back to the department. The understanding of ISO Standards, quality management, and individual responsibilities appear to be missed by the wider staff body in most organisations, causing a communications gap and big challenges for user engagement when new technological tools are implemented to assist with quality improvement.

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New compliance and quality requirements

Over 53% of survey respondents currently have ISO 9001, with a further 13% aiming to achieve the Standard in the next 3 years. For ISO 14001, 29% of respondents already have it and a further 15% aim to achieve it within the next three years. This means that a large majority of survey respondents have been, or will be, affected by the new Annex SL high level structure introducedat the end of 2015.

More top-level interaction, greater workload

Increased workload

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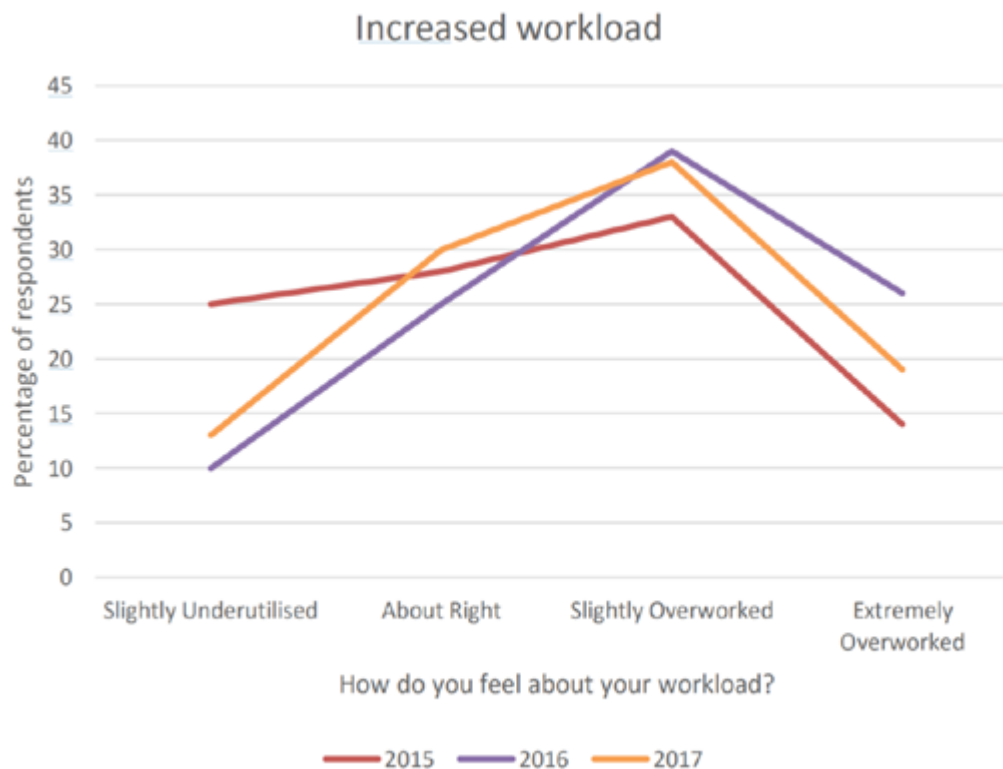
The impact of more organisations striving for ISO certification is the broader recognition of quality professionals within the business. More than ever (68%) now sit on, or report to, the executive board of their organisation, giving them a direct channel to the decision-makers and change drivers. However, the greater recognition is reflected in the feelings of stress and being overworked: 57% of Quality professionals felt slightly overworked or very overworked in their role.

Many directly attributed this to ISO certification processes, with their top level channel of communication not considered a help in gaining buy-in from leadership in driving a culture change towards quality and risk awareness at all levels.

This number is, however, less than in 2016, with more reporting their workload 'about right' – suggesting organisations are now realising the importance of quality and providing support not previously received.

Changing staff perspectives

Robert Oakley, Commercial Director of Qualsys comments "this data shows that more than ever, organisations are recognising quality management at a strategic level, but more needs to be done to engage staff at all tiers in order to achieve a culture of quality."

Leadership engagement a real challenge

A staggering 67% said their leadership were not engaged with quality. This suggests that there is still a disconnect between quality and many other departments in the organisation.

John Oakland from Oakland Consulting commented "Quality is the most important competitive weapon. Quality professionals don't come into the game with a great reputation, so they need to learn how to speak the language of the boardroom to change their reputation."

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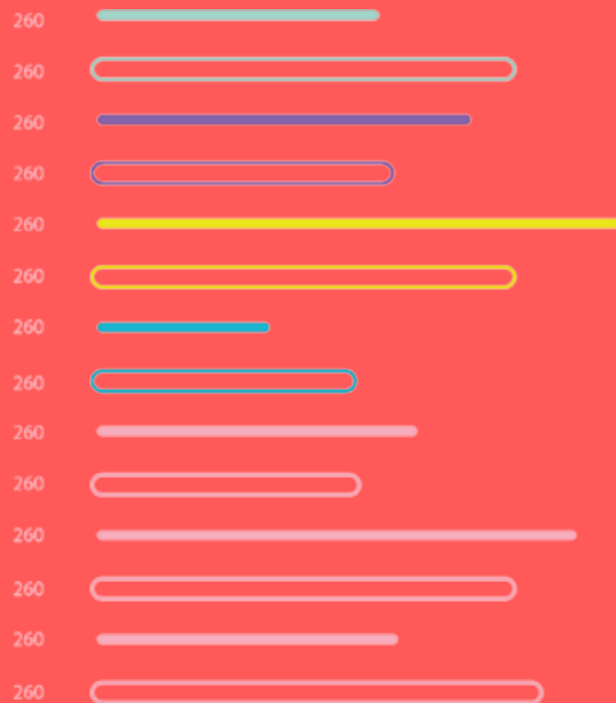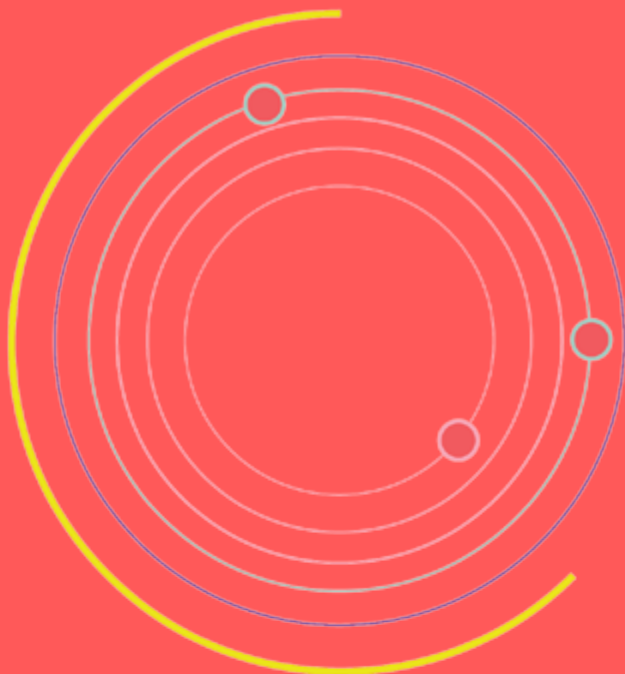
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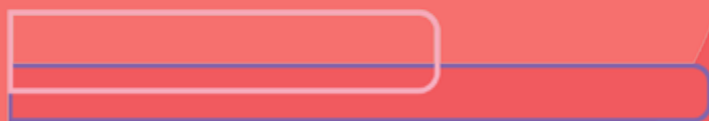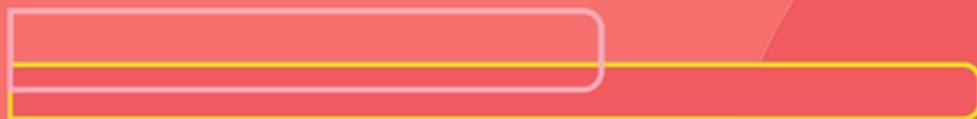
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Are there adequate resources?

How can quality professionals achieve their quality and compliance goals when their resources are limited?

It was clear in the survey responses that many quality professionals feel they still do not have access to the right tools to complete their job, with just 8% strongly agreeing they had the resources and tools they need. In fact, 20% had left a previous quality role for that very reason.

Of those who were satisfied that they had the tools, 89% of them had implemented an electronic quality management system. These same respondents also reported feeling less overworked than their non-QMS using counterparts.

% who said they had left a role due to a lack of...

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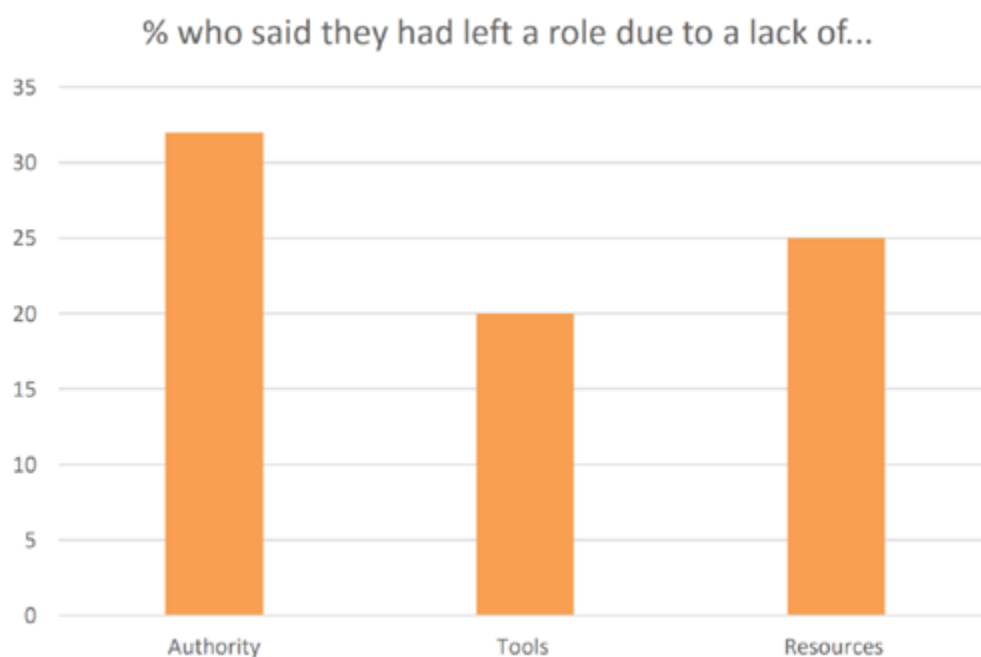
Business growth doesn't mean departmental growth
While 31% of participants reported an increase or large increase in the organisation overall, only 1% of these saw that reflected with the growth of the quality department. Some (6%) even found their department decreased in size despite significant business growth; each of these respondents reported feeling extremely overworked and without the authority to operate in their role.

It's not all bad: despite quality professionals feeling under pressure from business growth and lack of tools for the job, an encouraging 42% felt they were able to complete their job to satisfactory levels. Many felt that quality is driven in the organisation by their own motivation, and that resources and tools accessible to them came secondary to their own ability to do the job.

The future is in the culture of quality

A significant 68% agreed that implementing a culture of quality is a top priority in the coming year. This suggests that the allocation of resources is less essential than the ability to introduce, build, and maintain a commitment to quality from every member of staff. This, in turn, is logical: if everyone is committed to a culture of quality, the requirement of direct resources is disbursed across the organisation, and the role changes from implementing quality processes to managing them in a cross-organisational structure.
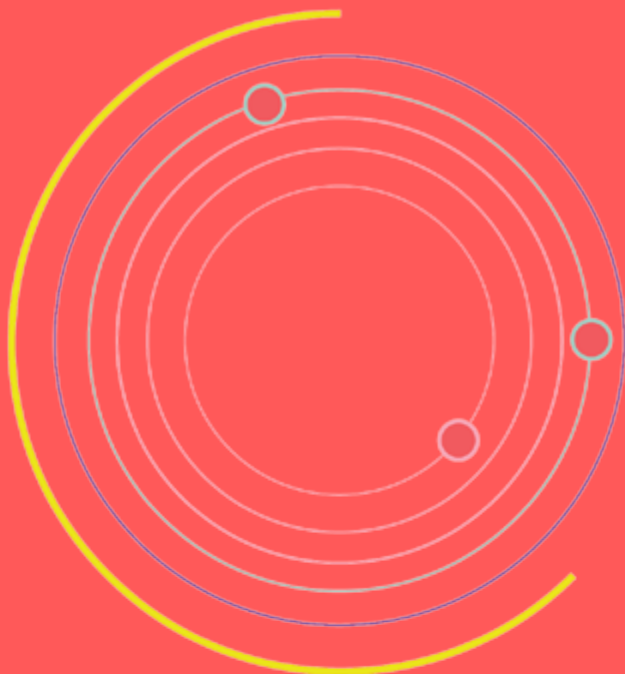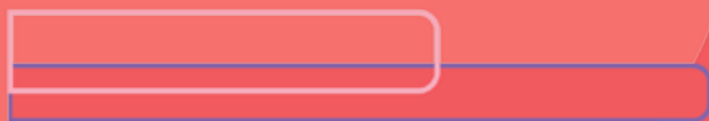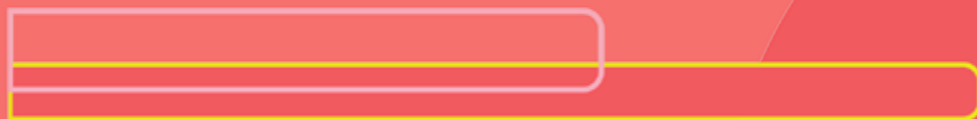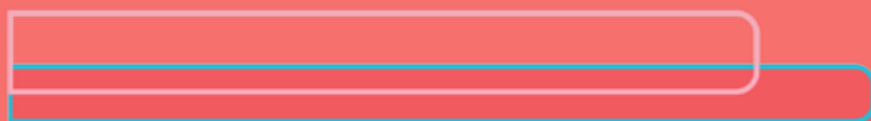
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Using technology in quality

Eighty-four per cent of respondents said that technology is important or very important in delivering quality to their organisation. This is fairly in line with previous reports from 2016 and 2015 (90% and 88% respectively), suggesting that Quality professionals recognise the need to digitise their activities to achieve continuous improvement.

However, 64% of respondents said their organisation was not effective or only slightly effective at using technology. The disconnect between theimportance of technology against the organisational attitude to investing in digital tools is related to the problems Quality professionals face in gaining buy-in from top leadership. These numbers are, however, a boost on last year's, which deemed only 16% of organisations as effective at using technology.

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Methodology

The 2017 Global Quality Survey was drafted by Qualsys in February 2017. It was then distributed to over 8,000 quality leaders worldwide in March 2017. The survey produced 151 respondents, 61 percent held the title of Quality Manager or HSE Manager; 20 percent held the title of Director or Head of department, and the rest held consultancy or project management roles.

24 per cent of respondents have held their role for over ten years; 16 per cent of respondents held their role for 6-10 years, 27 percent held their role for 2-5 years; and 31 per cent held their role for under 2 years.

The survey went out to a wide range of industries. Of the responses, the single largest industry group represented was manufacturing with 46 per cent. Next was healthcare and pharmaceuticals and oil, gas and power with 23 per cent and 12 per cent respectively; aerospace at 6 per cent; financial and legal services at 4 percent; outsourcing at 3 per cent, telecommunications at 2 per cent and central and local government at 1 per cent.

The questions remained the same as the 2015 and 2016 survey, with the addition of some new questions (including 'Have you had a promotion in the last 12 months?') for direct comparative data sets and new data reflecting anecdotal evidence regarding business growth versus personal career development.

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Ready to transform the role of quality and compliance?

Schedule a discovery call

During the call, we listen to your questions, find out what you're looking for and tell you whether our solution can meet your needs. We can also give you an overview of our pricing.

The call usually lasts 15 minutes. If we're a good fit for you, we'll arrange the next steps.

Click here to arrange a discovery call