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EBOOK

7 checklists every QMS team needs for their ISO 9001:2026 compliance audit

The ISO 9001:2026 revision is the sixth edition of the international standard for quality management system (QMS) requirements. It replaces ISO 9001:2015, and certified organizations have three years to transition. The revision builds on the familiar structure but adds requirements on quality culture and ethical behavior, separates risks from opportunities and strengthens how teams plan QMS changes.

Using internal audit checklists helps your team assess your existing quality management processes, identify potential weaknesses and serve as a reference point before and during a compliance audit.

Here are seven essential checklists your QMS team should have in their toolkit to prepare for an audit.

01

Context of organization

Context of the organization starts with the internal and external issues that shape your QMS and strategic direction. ISO 9001:2026 now builds the 2024 climate change amendment into the main text and asks organizations to decide which interested-party requirements their QMS will address.

This checklist helps teams:

- Identify relevant interested parties and the requirements your QMS will address
- Record whether climate change is relevant to planning

02

Leadership

Top management sets the tone for the entire QMS. The 2026 edition adds a new requirement: top management must promote quality culture and ethical behavior through communication, expectations and decisions.

This checklist helps teams:

- Document leadership's commitment to customer satisfaction
- Show how leaders promote quality culture and ethical behavior

03

Planning

Planning covers how organizations determine risks and opportunities, set quality objectives and plan changes to the QMS. ISO 9001:2026 now addresses risks and opportunities in separate clauses. Change planning must also cover how teams communicate changes, monitor their effectiveness and review the results.

This checklist helps teams:

- Show how risks and opportunities are analyzed
- Document how QMS changes are communicated, monitored and reviewed

04

Support

People, infrastructure, competence, awareness, communication and documented information all fall under support. Knowledge must now support the intended results of the QMS, and people must know the organization’s quality culture and ethics expectations.

This checklist helps teams:

- Show that knowledge is retained, applied and shared
- Document competence and awareness of culture and ethics

05

Operation

The planning and control of the processes that produce your products and services fall under this clause. ISO 9001:2026 asks organizations to inform customers about contingency actions, including disruptions, and to keep evidence of new or changed requirements. Teams must now determine the impact of design changes.

This checklist helps teams:

- Document that production runs under controlled conditions
- Confirm customers receive contingency and disruption information

06

Performance evaluation

Monitoring, internal audit and management review show whether your QMS is working as intended. Teams must now measure customer satisfaction itself. Each internal audit needs defined objectives, and management reviews must consider changes in interested-party needs.

This checklist helps teams:

- Track customer satisfaction
- Define objectives, scope and criteria for every audit

07

Improvement

ISO 9001:2026 merges the former continual improvement clause into clause 10.1 and places it ahead of nonconformity and corrective action. Organizations must use monitoring, analysis and management review results to find improvement opportunities across all functional areas.

This checklist helps teams:

- Show how QMS data drives improvement decisions
- Document corrective actions and continual improvement activities

Next steps

If you'd like to make sure your QMS is prepared for ISO 9001:2026, or if you'd like to see how Octave Reliance can help you prepare for it, feel free to schedule some time with us.

Schedule time

About Octave

Octave is a leader in enterprise software, turning data into decisive action and intelligence into your edge. Our software solves for and simplifies complexity, from the design and build to operations and protection of people, property and assets – for any scope, at any scale. For decades, we've partnered with customers to sharpen performance, elevate efficiency and amplify results. From factory floors to entire cities, our solutions are tuned to scale up what's possible from day one onward.

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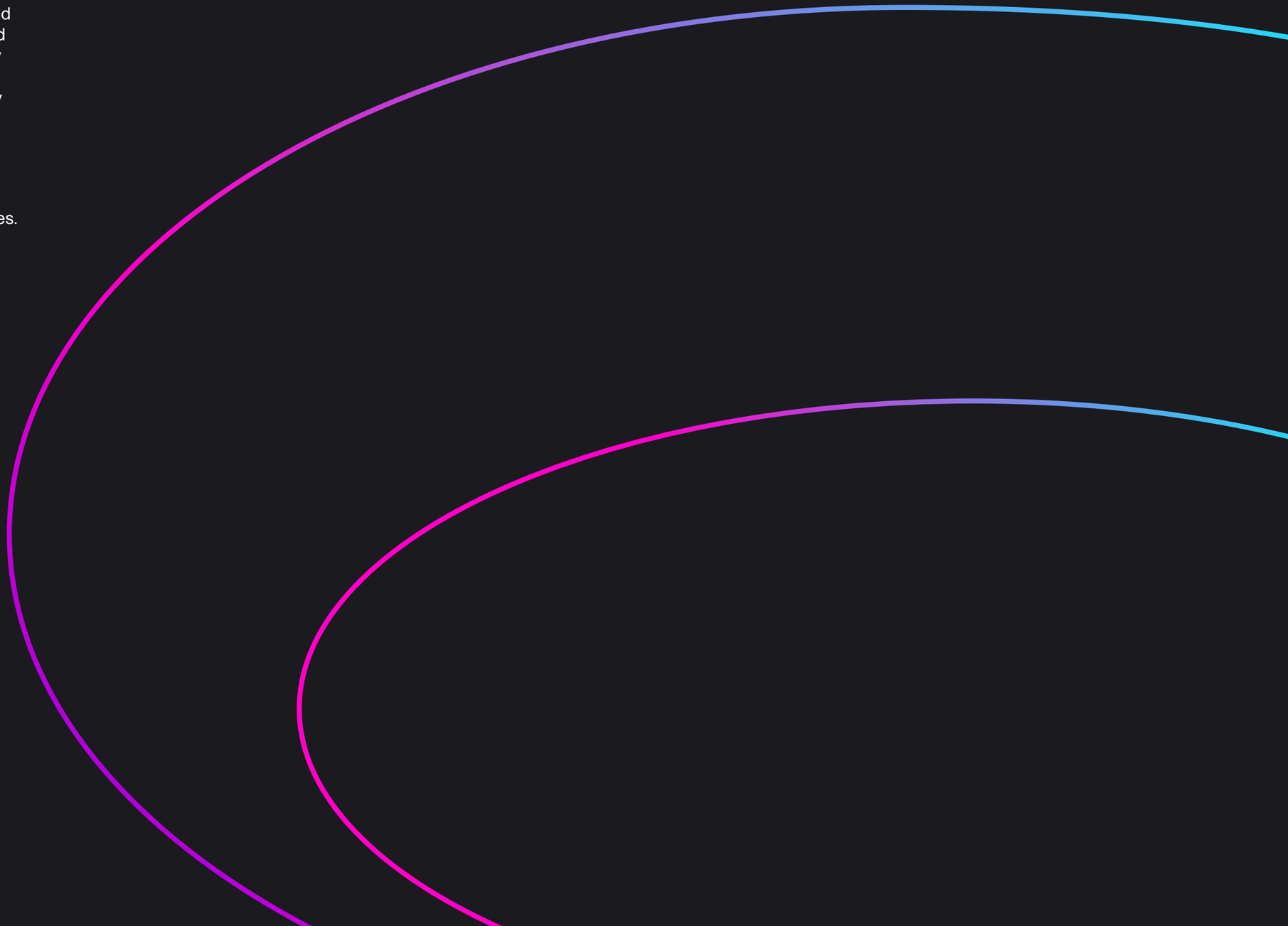

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