

## Quality Matters: Plans and Process Descriptions

*Questions for July 14, 2021 Round Table Discussion*

*Moderator: Michael Coleman*

1. **Existence.** Does your project or organization have plans, process descriptions, procedures, or work instructions? Or do you rely on oral tradition and people's unwritten skills?
2. **Definitions.** Are plans, process descriptions, procedures, and work instructions the same thing? If different, do they differ by title (plan, process, procedure, instruction, guide, manual) or format?
3. **Motivation.** Why do you write plans and process descriptions on your project or in your organization? Is it because the teams need them? Or because the Client or Organization requires them? Or because of CMMI, ISO, or audit compliance?
4. **Structure, Number, and Size.** How do you structure the hierarchy of your plan and process documentation? by teams? by functions? by technologies? (For example, do you have separate Project Management Plan, Configuration Management Plan, Reliability Plan, and other?) How many such documents do you end up having, and what is their size?
5. **Source and Content.** What do you use as the basis for your plans and process descriptions? Do you write them from scratch? Or tailor from an organizational template? From ISO 9001, CMMI, or PMP processes? What do you include in them? Goals and Objectives? Step-by-step instructions? Illustrations and charts? Checklists?
6. **Authors.** Who should write plans and process descriptions? And who actually ends up writing them on your project or in your organization? Do your teams have skills to write them? Do you have a Technical Writer?
7. **Reviews and Approvals.** Do you perform reviews and approvals for your plans and process descriptions? Do you distinguish reviews from approvals? Who reviews and who approves? Is it a peer review or a quality group review?
8. **Use in Training.** Are your plans and procedures included as materials in your Training Program? Are they the required reading in your Training Program? How often do team members have to re-read them?
9. **Use in Work.** Do your teams use the plans and process descriptions in their day-to-day work? And for what?
10. **Audits and Appraisals.** Do you use your plans and process descriptions in Audits and Appraisals?
11. **Change Control.** How do you document and control changes to your plans and process descriptions? Do you have different levels of changes defined? Do you have a change review board?
12. **Updates.** Do you require periodic updates, reviews, and approvals for your plans and process descriptions? How often?