

**Summary of
the AFNOR Working Document
on a Standard for
Business Support Services**

I. Objectives of the Business Support Services Standards

- To help the managing directors of small companies (20 employees or less) to:
 - identify their needs for support
 - work with support providers
 - draw up contacts
 - ensure proper implementation of service
 - evaluate the quality of the service provided
- To help service providers to:
 - assess the quality of their services
 - evaluate the relevance of their services

II. A Common Framework for the Three Phases of Service Provision

The standard will provide a common reference framework for users and providers of business support services during the three phases of service provision.

Phase 1: Selection of a service provider

Phase 2: Performance of the service

Phase 3: Evaluation of the service

Phase 1: Selection of the Service Provider

Step 1: Managing Director identifies in writing the objectives of the service he expects and the criteria for evaluating quality.

Step 2: Search for appropriate service provider begins.

- **Pre-selection stage**
 - Source service providers with appropriate skills from internet, directories, recommendations, quality certifications, etc

Phase 1: Selection of the Service Provider

- **Selection of providers from whom an offer will be requested**
 - **Managing Director will meet service providers and provide them in writing with:**
 - his objectives
 - resources to be assigned to the project
 - assessment criteria of expected results
 - criteria for evaluating offer
 - **Service provider will make an offer which includes:**
 - experience, working methods, working team
 - validation that services can meet objectives
 - financial offer

.... Phase 1: Selection of the Service Provider

- **Selection Criteria**
 - Service providers understanding of company, sector, needs, expected results, resources requested, etc
 - Cost of services
 - Confidentiality, standards of conduct
 - Work methods, timetables, CVs of working team, etc

- **Contract Elements**
 - Proposal
 - Duration & Deadlines
 - Financial Conditions
 - Termination Clauses
 - Procedure for dealing with disputes

Phase 2: Performance of the Service

- **Compilation of a list of information required for the performance of the service, where to access it, authorization of access, etc**
- **Organization of human resources allocated to the project**
- **Equipment to be made available**
- **Monitoring and inspection mechanisms, for example progress meetings**

Phase 3: Evaluation of Services

- **The company to assess effectiveness of the services provided**
- **The provider to assess the degree of the company's satisfaction and their own quality management system**

III. Standards of Conduct for the Service Provider to Be Included in Contract

- **Integrity**
- **Objectivity**
- **Responsibility**
- **Transparency**
- **Honesty**
- **Comprehension and attentiveness**
- **Confidentiality**

IV. The Six Fundamental Principles of Service Provision

- **Service provision focused on the company**
- **A clear and transparent service offer**
- **Service coherence**
- **A fair price**
- **A mutual commitment between the parties**
- **The possibility of ongoing improvement of the service**

V. Evaluation of a Service

- **First interview with service provider**
 - **Was the knowledge of your company and its concept sufficient?**
 - **Did the service provider present the service and the field of activity clearly?**
 - **Was the service provider highly attentive and were the needs of your company understood?**
 - **Did the service provider help you find an alternative solution or service, if necessary?**

V. Evaluation of a Service

- **The proposal**
 - Was the offer explicit, clear, readable?
 - Was the offer delivered on time?
 - Was the offer adapted to your needs?
 - Were the solutions proposed relevant?
 - Were the resources required from your company clearly defined?
 - Were the contractual conditions clear and transparent?
- **The performance of the service**
 - Were you able to easily assess the progress of the service?
 - Was the task performed according to the terms of the contract?