

Is the Certification Company You Use Filled with Checkbox Charlies?

“Fill out this form before we can talk to you.”

“Answer this survey.”

“We do things in a certain order.”

Do these statements sound familiar? They are the hallmarks of a company culture that encourages a personality type we like to call “Checkbox Charlie.” Checkbox Charlie can be male or female. They rely heavily on checkboxes, versus personal interaction to complete their audits, consult, and certify. Ultimately, even though the basics aren't missed with checkboxes, what is missing is service.

Certification is about process and procedure. However, service orientation shouldn't be sacrificed for thoroughness. A Checkbox Charlie is our name for someone who is systematic, yet impersonal. They don't dig deeper to solve problems. They check the basics and move on to the next box.

Now, this works if you are getting certified just to have the badge available to display. However, for companies which want to achieve true sustainability, manage their risk wisely, and be truly compliant, Checkbox Charlie may not provide the best solutions. Here are some hints you may be working with, or considering working with an organization that encourages Checkbox Charlie-style certification.

They ask the same questions every year, the same way.

It's time to speak with your auditor again. You feel like you could rewind the tape back to last year to know what they will say, how they will say it, and what they will recommend. You begin to feel like you work with them just to get the badge and move on. Working with a Checkbox Charlie turns your certification process into a checkbox for you. This can result in complacency, missed issues, and lost opportunities for cost-saving process identification. If your certifications company is asking the same questions, perhaps it's time to ask a different one. Why are you working with them?

They rarely dig deeper.

A Checkbox Charlie takes your word for it without probing deeper or asking questions which lead to a solution. Again, this is a sure way to do business the same way ever year. The role of a consultant is to dig deeper, to ask questions, to consult! If your certification company is not doing this, you are not getting the consulting part of the package. Ask yourself. Am I getting what I pay for with this company?

They don't provide customized solutions.

Compliance is a yes/no situation. However, every company is different with what they need to change internally to come into compliance. If your certifications company is speaking with you in a cookie cutter fashion, like they could be speaking with anyone in any industry, that is a red flag. Think about the customized solutions you have been provided for compliance. Did they seem tailored to your organization or read out of a training manual? Are you getting solutions that fit your business?

They focus on getting your certification done quickly – a little too quickly.

Checklist Charlies want to move fast. Getting certifications done quickly and on deadline is important. However, this company feels more like a certifications mill than a consultancy. They speak fast. They rush your conversations. They skip over education on changes in certification requirements from year to year. The focus seems to be get it done versus get it done right. Which one does your certifications company do?

Checkpoint Charlies may be able to give you a certification. However, they may not give you any other results. If you are looking for a different way to get certified, a way in which you get customized service and solutions, thorough audits, and ongoing education about the changes in certification and compliance, contact Sustainable Certification. <http://www.sustainablecertification.com.au/wp/index.php/contact-us/>