



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

Developing a Management Standard to Help Curtail Bribery: ISO 37001

After the United Nations Convention against Corruption went into effect in 2005, pressure grew on private firms as well as governments to prevent their agents and employees—high officials as well as the rank and file—from offering or receiving money or other gifts as illicit inducements in the conduct of business. But leaders were hard-pressed to identify and establish ways to address those problems. Drawing on his experience in the international construction sector, British lawyer Neill Stansbury recognized the need for operational standards that would enable organizations of all types to reduce or eliminate the structures and behaviors that contributed to bribery risk.

In 2013, Stansbury and experts representing 37 countries and eight international organizations came together under the umbrella of the International Organization for Standardization to craft ISO 37001—the first international antibribery management system standard, which laid out specific policies and procedures firms and governments could use to identify and address vulnerabilities before problems occurred. Early implementation ISO 37001 experience revealed both the strong advantages and the limitations of this approach to improving integrity in procurement and contracting.

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Shaking hands with euro banknotes hidden in the hands. Photo by Kiewiev / CC0.

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