

A word from the experts

Making the most out of a SCAR process

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The SCAR Process, as its name implies, can be a tough and disagreeable process if not implemented effectively. SCAR (Supplier Corrective Action Report) is a defined procedure established within an organization to document quality issues. Unfortunately, some companies do not use the process and others will document a process simply to meet the compliance requirements of a quality system or other regulation without ever understanding the value of the SCAR process.

Why do you think this can happen? People like to react to situations and immediately address an issue as a standalone event. Additionally, we need to work with our partners to quickly resolve the issue to their satisfaction. But, many times this behavior gets repeated for the same issue without understanding that the problem may be systematic or involving more risk than an organization can tolerate.

By documenting serious issues on a SCAR, suppliers can conduct root cause assessment and corrective actions to address the situation. This benefits the customer who reported the issue and helps mitigate future supply chain and manufacturing issues.

Reviewing SCAR's during a supplier audit is another great way to assess the strength and health of the supplier quality management system. You should expect to see some documented issues with descriptive root cause analyses and corrective actions. If you don't, you should take a deeper look into their complaints processes to see if there are opportunities to investigate.

A process will only be as strong and robust as the owner makes it. The SCAR process should be well documented and communicated within the correct stakeholder group. The SCAR process often becomes iterative as the supplier base grows. In summary, it is always important to go back to the basics and ensure you are leveraging the quality tools that are there to help.

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