

# The ASQ Global State of Quality 2 Research

The **ASQ Global State of Quality 2 Research** builds on the Global State of Quality initiatives of 2013, again providing a comprehensive, global, and quantitative view of the state of quality and continuous improvement worldwide.

The results and analysis provides organizations the benchmark data needed to further develop continuous improvement practices and enhance quality programs.

New to the 2016 research is the development of a World-Class profile that organizations can benchmark against to improve their continuous improvement activities. ASQ and its research partner, APQC, analyzed responses from nearly 1,700 companies worldwide (Fig. 1), identifying world-class organizations based on common and strong end-to-end quality practices.

**The ASQ Global State of Quality 2 Research: Discoveries 2016 and three Spotlight Reports can be accessed for download at [globalstateofquality.org](http://globalstateofquality.org).**

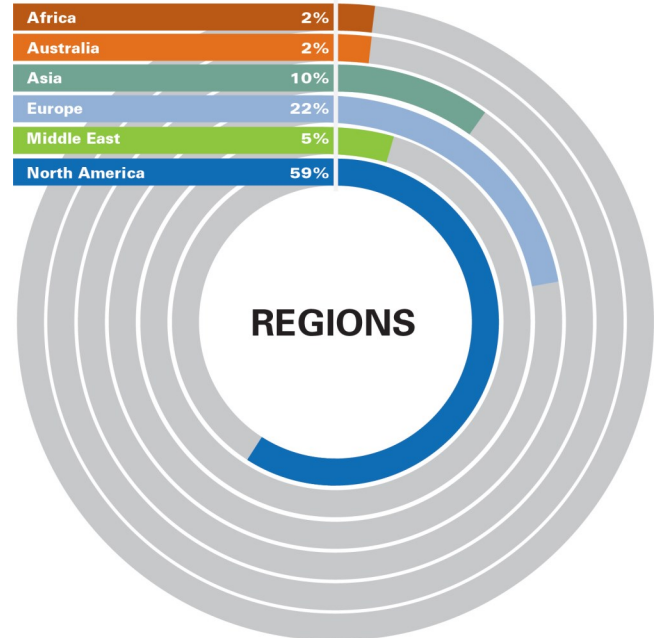
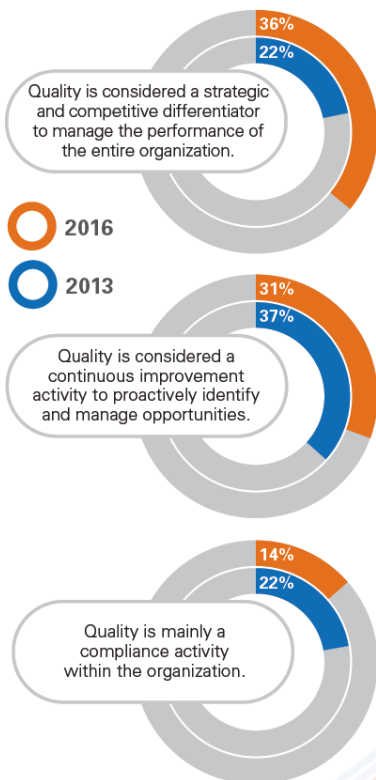


Figure 1. Percentage of respondents by region.

Figure 2. Quality is ....



## Using Quality as a Competitive Differentiator and Strategic Asset

According to the research, and compared to the 2013 data, fewer organizations in 2016 view quality as simply a compliance activity or a check-the-box opportunity. Only 14 percent of respondents in 2016 say their companies view quality mainly as a compliance activity, down from 22 percent in 2013.

More organizations now see quality as an opportunity to gain a competitive edge, and as a strategic asset. In fact, the research shows 36 percent of all respondents say their company views quality as such, up from 22 percent from 2013 (Fig. 2).

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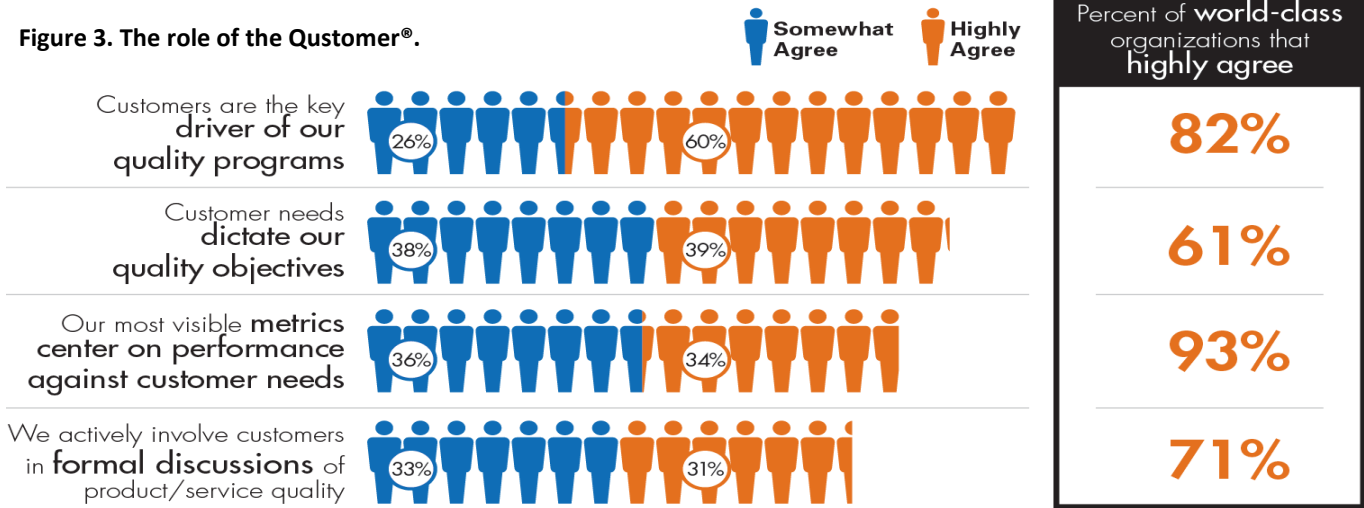
But given that organizations view quality as a strategic asset and competitive differentiator, it may come as no surprise that quality departments are now more visible within organizations, which in turn has resulted in increased measures and reporting. For example, according to the research, senior leaders and department leaders are receiving reports more frequently than in 2013.

## Accelerating Customer®

Coined by ASQ in 2013, the Customer® is derived from the close alignment in some organizations between the customer and quality. According to the 2016 research, customers and quality remain closely aligned, with 86 percent saying “customers are the key driver of our quality programs,” and 77 percent saying “customer needs dictate our quality objectives” (Fig. 3).

But, the concept that the customer is the only one who can define quality is shifting. In 2013, 56 percent replied that “the belief is that the customer is the only person qualified to define what quality means.” In 2016, the percentage fell to 46 percent.

**Figure 3. The role of the Customer®.**



This may be driven by the realization that quality of back-office activities — which may not be directly visible to customers — can significantly impact business performance and compliance. Regardless, a balance between customer and quality needs to be reached.

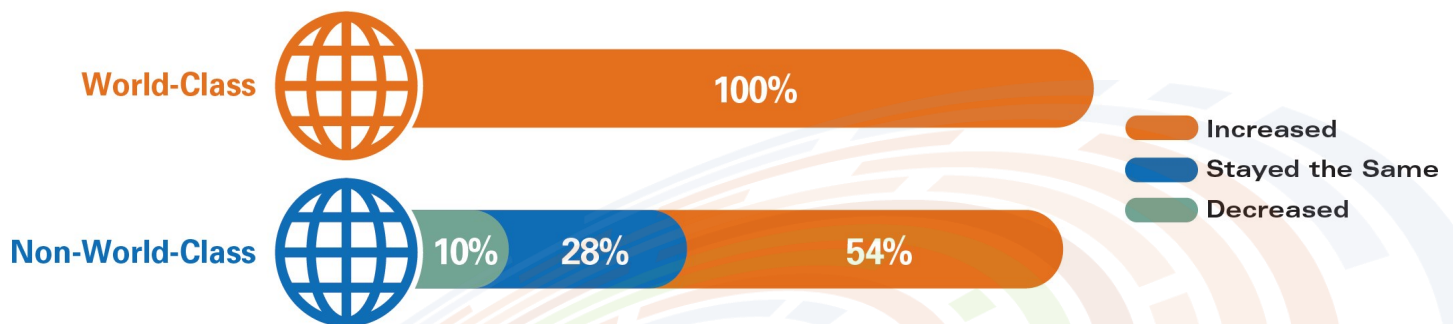
### Business Performance Impact

Along with an increased visibility comes increased resources to ensure quality throughout an organization. Among non-world-class respondents, 54 percent said their organization’s investment in quality has increased in the past three years. Only 10 percent said their investment decreased (Fig. 4).

All world-class organizations increased their investment in quality, according to the research.

While investment in quality for most organizations increased in the past three years, only 39 percent of respondents said they measure the financial impact of quality; 60 percent of organizations don’t know or don’t measure the financial impact of quality. This may be attributed to lacking a method for capturing quality’s financial impact. Of those organizations that do measure financial impact, 13 percent said quality has resulted in an increase of more than \$1 million USD annually.

**Figure 4. Investment in quality over last three years.**



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