

The Certification Angle — how to use it

INTERNAL · sales guidance, not for client circulation

1. Why this angle is different from the fine and the insurance angle

Angle	Fear	Timescale
HSE fine	A large uninsurable penalty	Might never happen
Insurance clawback	Your own insurer coming after you	Only after a serious incident
Certification and supply chain	Losing the contract that keeps the lights on	AT THE NEXT AUDIT, which has a date in the diary

That last row is why this angle converts. The fine is hypothetical. The audit is scheduled. There is a date, and the buyer knows it.

2. The accurate position — do not overstate this

Do not say	The truth	Say instead
You are in breach of your ISO	If they hold only 9001 for a production scope, a yard gap is probably NOT a certificate nonconformity.	Check what your scope actually says. If it is 45001, the yard is squarely in scope and clause 9.1.2 will find you out.
ISO 9001 requires health and safety management	It does not. It is a quality standard.	9001 will not catch this. Your customer's own audit will, and so will the law.
You will lose your certificate	Only a major nonconformity, uncorrected, gets there.	A major nonconformity can lead to suspension. For a supplier that means coming off the approved list.

Getting this right matters more here than anywhere else, because these clients often have a quality manager who knows the standards. Overstate it once and you are finished with them.

3. The qualifying questions

- Which standards do you hold, and can I see the scope statement on the certificate?
- When is your next surveillance audit?
- Does your biggest customer audit you directly as well?
- Are you in any SSIP scheme — CHAS, SafeContractor, Constructionline?
- If they walked in tomorrow and asked for your training matrix and your LOLER reports, how long would it take you to find them?

That last question is the one that sells. Almost nobody can answer it well, and they know it as they say it out loud.

4. The three angles stacked

Used together, in this order, they cover every reason a business owner might act:

Order	Angle	What it appeals to
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1	The certificate and the customer audit	Fear of losing revenue — the most immediate and the most real
2	The insurance position	Fear of personal financial loss the policy will not cover
3	The fine and the prosecution	Fear of the regulator, and the moral weight of somebody being hurt

Lead with whichever is most live for that buyer. A supplier to a large manufacturer cares most about the audit. An owner-operator with no big customers cares most about the fine and the insurance.

5. The channel this opens

- ISO consultants and certification bodies see these gaps constantly and have no product to fix them. They are a referral channel.
- Quality managers in SMEs are often given health and safety as an extra duty with no training and no time. They are the buyer, and they are grateful for a system rather than advice.
- Large customers who audit their supply chain have a direct interest in their suppliers closing these gaps — and one relationship there reaches every supplier on the list.