Data Sufficiency
Ensuring the Integrity of Objective Evidence

Quality Management has observed several instances in which a Lead Appraiser (LA) has been presented with documentation that was not consistent with the Organizational Unit (OU) being appraised. These were situations in which the objective evidence did not belong to the organization that the LA was appraising. As a reminder, artifacts that are not produced in the OU, let alone in the organization itself, are inadmissible in an appraisal; evidence which counters the Sponsor's depiction of the OU should prompt further investigation into the cause of the inconsistency. This could ultimately result in cancellation of the appraisal.

If Quality Management determines that fraudulent information was knowingly accepted to assist the OU in securing a favorable appraisal rating, the appraisal will be rejected. A violation of the Code of Professional Conduct (COPC) such as this could result in corrective action, up to and including decertification of the LA and termination of the Partner agreement under which the organization was appraised.

The CMMI Appraisal Method Definition Document (MDD) describes data adequacy rules in Section 1.1.5 Identify OE Adequacy and Sufficiency. In addition to these requirements, LAs and their appraisal teams have a duty to review each piece of data for integrity and sufficiency. All artifacts and affirmations must be directly traceable to the projects and support functions of the OU. In instances where the LA is not fluent in the native language of the appraised organization, the interpreter's skill level and objectivity is vital to ensuring that the documentation is authentic to the OU.

Data must be reflective of the work being performed and consistent with the Sponsor's definition of the OU. If an LA encounters an appraised organization that has provided the team with fraudulent evidence and/or information, the LA should escalate the situation to Quality Management for guidance.

Questions regarding this Quality Tip can be sent to quality@cmmiinstitute.com.