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# Achieving Organizational Excellence

## A Quality Management Program for Culturally Diverse Organizations

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# Achieving Organizational Excellence

A Quality Management Program
for Culturally Diverse Organizations

## Springer

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# Foreword

This book is very timely as we have gone global with Dubai Quality Awards and it includes many topics of current interest to practitioners striving for business excellence. It approaches the business excellence framework model from a very practical perspective for both local and global businesses. It covers the best practices for leadership, strategy, people, polices and processes and includes guidelines and recommendations for building organizational excellence. It provides insights to many of Dubai Quality award winners.

What makes the book useful is that it provides topical empirical evidence of the impact of excellence on sustained organizational performance as well as includes cases and scenarios that will become useful for corporate and governmental leaders. It also includes original research conducted, along with the methodology used, to understand the impact of business excellence frameworks in various business context.

The book is useful for practitioners as well to add value to their experience and to take head on the challenges that are forthcoming in quality related issues. Those who are striving for and want to implement Business Excellence, Sustainability, Self-Assessment, Performance Excellence, Organizational performance, Quality Awards, Quality certifications, and Approaches to self-assessments will find the book like a Manual to keep handy at all times and refer to it from time to time. It is useful as it focuses mainly on Malcolm Baldrige Award, EFQM model and National Quality Awards with a specific emphasis to draw a list of motives and benefits of adopting a business excellence awards.

Above all, the book provides unique practices that promote organizational excellence in a modern emerging economy like UAE.

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# Introduction to Business Excellence

**1**

Among the world's largest organizations, Tata is a well-known name—not just as India's biggest business but also acknowledged as the best in it's class. A question, therefore, is why? Excellence is continually sought after at the Tata group, and Tata companies are supported in their efforts to achieve world-class standards in all aspects of their operations. These efforts are realized through group-level processes and systems that encourage and enable business excellence through the Tata Business Excellence Model (TBEM). No less important is their commitment to quality and readiness for change, as explained by S. Padmanabhan, Executive Chairman of Tata Quality Management Services: "The TBEM infrastructure and systems have to become more modern, more relevant to the current times." The question that needs to be addressed here is therefore: **How does an organization foster and grow business excellence (BE) to sustain excellence in a changing and "time-poor" environment?**

## Introduction

Concerns for approaching the business excellence in a practical manner have believed to come to existence in the 1960s. Today, however companies worldwide are required to make sustained efforts in order to improve their products, services, and processes to produce excellent results. High-performing organizations have always provided valuable examples of how to achieve business excellence (BE) or organizational excellence by putting quality at the heart of core business processes. Business excellence does not mean a maximum profit or lower priced products, excellence in business is a complex approach from an economically, technically and socially point of view (Ghicajanu et al. 2015). BE is a strategy that makes quality a fundamental part of the way a business is designed. So the Business excellence for a

company are presented and analysed in close connection with: decisions and strategic management, customer care, quality, ethics in management and organizational culture, social responsibility and environmental actions (Ghicajanu et al. 2015). So the Business Excellence Models (BEMs), with these key elements embedded, can serve as a platform from which organizations can identify opportunities and capitalize on their learning (Zapata-Cantu et al. 2016) In fact, these excellence models enable companies to serve as a reference for other firms seeking to adopt high-performance practices. They can also serve as a model of how to generate a competitive advantage through excellence in the management and execution of strategies for differentiating, anticipating and, in some cases, surviving in a changing environment.

BEMs first arose during the Total Quality Management (TQM) movement of the late 1980s (Zapata-Cantu et al. 2016). Institutions with BEM-based programs include the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) in the USA, the European Foundation of Quality Management (EFQM) in Europe, the Standards, Productivity and Innovation Board (SPRING) in Singapore, and the Department of Economic Development (DED) in the United Arab Emirates. They encourage high performance and provide tools for identifying companies that can serve as a reference for others in how to face challenges, develop effective performance practices, and create value (Zapata-Cantu et al. 2016). In this introductory chapter, we will explore and establish the foundations of an understanding of BE frameworks, their usage, and their outcomes.

Over the last few years, TQM principles have been extensively used on a transnational scale to drive organizational performance. Quality has become a source of sustained competitive advantage for organizations seeking supremacy in global markets that are characterized by increasingly intense competition. In fact, managing quality is no longer a choice; for competing in highly globalized environments, it is a necessity. In this dynamic environment, therefore, good practices for managing quality continue to evolve, and organizations that continually adapt and learn from others gain a competitive advantage. In today's business world, with its diverse and multicultural workforce, it is important to learn from the best practices of companies in order to reap benefits in terms of organizational performance, growth, and sustainability. In particular, this holds for adopting and implementing quality practices and adopting BEMs. Implementation of a BEM is linked with better performance results for an organization.

In fact, the advent of the twenty-first century has seen the market become more global, fiercely competitive, and leveraged on technology. The twenty-first century has impacted organizations mainly through advances in technology. As a result, technology has redefined competitive advantage through changes in quality and excellence theories. There are various models that can assist companies in the search for entrepreneurial excellence (Bolboli and Reiche 2013). Aras and Crowther (2010) explains that excellence has four facets: profitability, sustainability, corporate reputation, and good governance. Each of these is important in its own right, but it is their combination that leads to excellent performance. Before we explore BEMs, it is therefore important to understand the context of business excellence.

## Foundations of Business Excellence

Business excellence (BE) is about developing and strengthening an organization's management systems and processes in order to improve performance and create value for stakeholders (Mann et al. 2012). It is not just about having a quality system in place, although that is the most effective means of ensuring the health of an organization. In fact, BEMs were originally known as TQM models (Mann et al. 2012). Today's preferred term helps to communicate the importance of "excellence" in all aspects of a business, not only in product and process quality. It guides organizations of different types—government, private, service, education, healthcare, for-profit, not-for-profit—to success. The quality approaches used by award-winning organizations are similar in many respects. The differences lie in the way decisions are deployed, something which is based on each organization's unique needs, cultures, systems, and processes. The BEF converts the core principles of TQM into a set of criteria that can be used for assessing performance and planning improvements.

Thus, organizations across the world adopt BE frameworks to guide their business strategy and to encourage continuous improvement. Some organizations seek and receive awards that recognize high levels of achievement against the criteria of these frameworks (Brown 2013). Adopting the best practices of business excellence improves a nation's competitiveness, which leads to a global sustainable success (Hasan and Hannifah 2013). Mohammad et al. (2011) identified 94 award-based excellence models currently in use in 83 countries. In fact, most of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries have their own national quality awards to encourage competitiveness in domestic companies (Mann et al. 2011). According to a study conducted by the Center for Organizational Excellence (COE), there are currently around 60 national excellence awards (BPIR 2017). Although there has been a decline in the award frameworks, the global frameworks are being regularly revised. For example, the criteria for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) are updated every 2 years.

## Business Excellence Models

BEMs provide a framework and a basis for coordination with tools and techniques that enable an organization to evaluate its strategy and to operate more effectively (Zapata-Cantu et al. 2016). BE is achieved by addressing the various categories of an excellence framework. Each category requires a thorough assessment of current processes and systems in order to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Truly, excellence has become of the essence, as businesses aim to grow, enter new markets, and set realistic and competitive long-term objectives. A BEM can be a powerful tool for an organization—both for improving its organizational performance and for enhancing its business efficiency—because it can bring together all of the people, processes, strategies, and technologies in the organization to produce

outstanding results (Lee 2002). Accordingly, organizations benefit from improved operations, management control, and quality awareness (Asif et al. 2011). Many organizations have adopted BEMs because they realize that those models promote the adoption of best practices that facilitate self-assessment and continuous improvement (Martin et al. 2011).

BEFs integrate and connect quality assurance tools and techniques to form one detailed system, integrating initiatives such as lean six sigma, customer service, and health and safety. They also suggest activities for minimizing or eliminating factors that impair an organization's performance, such as repetition, errors, or duplication of tasks.

## Does Excellence Pay?

Accordingly, implementing a BEF results in a higher value of the business (Peters and Waterman 1982). Stoer (2010) reported that, for every $1 an organization spends on an excellence model, it reaps $6 in revenue, $16 in cost reduction, and $3 in profit. There is global evidence of the benefits to be gained from implementing an excellence framework. According to the National Institute of Science and Technology (NIST 2016), there are 106 Baldrige Award winners who serve as national role models. The award applicants over the period from 2010 to 2016 represent 589,635 jobs, 2815 workplaces, more than $147 billion in revenue, and approximately 450 million customers (NIST 2016).

The benefits of implementation of a BEF have been studied by various institutions such as SIRCA, Massey University, and New Zealand. These institutions found similar benefits of such an implementation. Massey University research can be found in a report titled "*Beneath the Surface: Enhancing the development, design and deployment of the Australian Business Excellence Framework.*" In this report, 62% of the study participants noted that since BEF implementation in their organizations, a significant improvement in performance had been noted. The studied organizations had used a BEF for at least 4 years while others had used it for 12 years. More benefits were reported by organizations which used BEF for a longer time. In fact all the companies that had been utilizing BEF for at least10 years believed that the system provided very significant benefits.

In 2003, SAI Global commissioned SIRCA, a financial services research organization, to conduct a study on all the winners of the Australian Business Excellence Award listed on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX). Between 1990 and 2003, Massey University study showed that the recipients of the Business Excellence (BE) Award had a return of 169% overtaking the 113% benchmark set by the Standard and Poor's Accumulated Index. A further growth of the portfolio from A$44,113 to A$118,447 between March 10, 2003 and June 30, 2006 was reported.

Professor Hausner of the University of Wollongong, Australia, conducted a study of organizations that took part in the Australian Quality Awards. Hausner performed an assessment of 15 manufacturing organizations in which he identified performance improvements against set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Hausner recorded a

strong relation between the total BE score and KPIs. From the findings, Hausner concluded that all stakeholders should be interested in striving to improve the performance of their businesses against the Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF) because the effectiveness of their management practices, as indicated by ABEF, translates to the success of their organizations.

In the United Arab Emirates, the Dubai Quality Award has an impact on organization process and operations (Lasrado 2017). Some of these impacts on and benefits to the award-winning organizations start from the top: an independent quality assessment (feedback report) helps the organization to develop and improve its processes, which in turn fosters continuous improvement, promotes a culture of BE, and encourages teamwork and organizational learning (Lasrado 2017). In China, the China Quality Award (Wen et al. 2017) influences the reputation and business of an organization, as the results are announced publicly, giving customers and all interested businesses an opportunity to work with and invest in the winning organizations.

A similar study carried out by the National University of Singapore reported that organizations that were certified by Singapore Quality Class (SQC) recorded 50% higher sales performances over 5 years as compared to organizations that were not certified. Organizations that were recipients of the Singapore Quality Award (SQA) performed even higher by 75%.

At the departmental, programmatic, and personnel levels, BEFs offer best practices for business management by identifying the interdependencies and interrelationships between different areas of management (Pattisson 2011). Within the context of a BEF, all departments are seen as related to and dependent on each other, which guarantees complete implementation of a successful excellence program (Schaefer 2011). Leaders can then continuously ensure that employees follow the principles of the organization's BEF, which leads to improved employee performance and increased attention to employee wellbeing (Peters and Waterman 1982; Stoehr 2010). Employees will accordingly be prepared to master the mechanics of their various job duties, and will thus be empowered to compare and contrast their productivity in these tasks and improve their efficiency accordingly (Mann et al. 2011).

The types of performance noted in the literature on BEMs include quality performance, operating performance, market and financial performance, employee performance, customer satisfaction, innovation performance, project performance and aggregate firm performance (Sadikoglu and Zehir 2010).

## History of BEMs

*Deming Prize*  In July 1950, Dr. W.E. Deming (1900–1993), an American expert in quality control, was invited by the Union of Japanese Scientists and Engineers (JUSE) to give a lecture on Statistical Quality Control. The lecture had a lasting impact on JUSE members and their quality movement that, in 1951, they established

the Deming Prize in the honour of Dr. Deming. Deming Prizes has two major categories;

*The Deming Application Prize* In this category organizations which perform outstandingly through the application of TQM are awarded. The prize is awarded to all types of organizations be it in domestic or overseas, large or small, public or private that demonstrate TQM excellence. A department or division in a large organization with autonomous operations from those of the parent company can also apply for this award separately from the parent company.

*The Deming Prize for Individuals* In this category individuals who make significant and outstanding contributions to the study of TQM or statistical methods applied in TQM or those who outstandingly disseminate knowledge of TQM are awarded.

*Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence* The Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (BCPE) is the model behind the MBNQA, an award process administered by the American Society for Quality (ASQ) and managed by the NIST, an agency of the US Department of Commerce. This framework is used as the basis for over 70 other national BE/quality awards around the world.

The BCPE is administered by the NIST and is considered to be the comprehensive set of criteria for BE. The BCPE is non-prescriptive and requires organizations to assess their improvement efforts, diagnose overall performance management systems, and identify opportunities for improvement (NIST 2011). Similar to EFQM model, BCPE takes a broader scope and is targeted at the whole organization. The model has seven categories that comprises 11 core values. Six of the categories are referred to as "systematic processes" and has the following values: strategic planning, measurement, analysis and knowledge, leadership, customer focus, workforce focus, and operations focus. The amalgamation of the six categories and their values lead to the seventh category referred to as performance results. In total, the seven categories have 1000 points and therefore the performance of an organization is measured in each category using a scoring system.

*EFQM Excellence Model* This is the model behind the European Business Excellence Award, an award process run by the EFQM. This framework is used across Europe as a basis for national BE and quality awards. The model consists of five "enablers" and four types of "results." The enablers represent the processes, structures, and means required to achieve results, and they include "leadership," "people," "strategy," "partnership and resources," and "processes, products, and services." The category of results includes "people," "customer," "society" and "business."

*The Other Awards* Singapore Quality Award (SQA) is a framework used as a basis for assessing Singapore's organizations against the highest standards of quality and BE. The award aims to establish Singapore as a country committed to world-class

BE and is administered by SPRING Singapore. The Canadian Framework for Business Excellence is used by Canadian organizations as a management model for organizational excellence and also as the basis for the adjudication of the Canada Awards for Excellence. The framework is administered by the National Quality Institute. The Australian Business Excellence Awards, previously known as the Australian Quality Awards, were first established in 1988 by the Australian Quality Council. The Australian Quality Awards were acquired in February 2002 by SAI Global (at that time known as Standards Australia International Limited). The objective of the Australian Quality Awards was to increase awareness among management about quality standards, and also to recognize and appreciate accomplishments in quality and productivity improvements. The central focus was on adopting continuous and incremental improvements from day-to-day monitoring, identifying opportunities for improvement, prioritizing those opportunities carefully, and then ensuring that all parts of the organization address the improvement. In essence, the awards provided a tool to Australian organizations and businesses for benchmarking their achievements against those of their counterparts (Hasan and Hannifah 2013). This eventually led to the pursuit of, and a global interest in, increasing quality.

Each of the various excellence frameworks, with the exception of EFQM, contains seven categories (as shown in Table 1.1).

In the present day, BEMs and quality awards are not limited to western countries. Quality award models are now in use globally. Although mid 1980s many western organizations were lighted with 'quality initiatives', this reality did not remain far from rest of the world. The momentum soon caught up in rest of the world's we evidence a number of national quality awards and quality initiatives. The latest being the UAEs Dubai Quality Award becoming global initiative. The Asian Productivity Organization (APO) reports that BEMs are being used in Asian countries including China, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, China, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. The most common model across Asia is the BCPE.

Analyzing the major excellence models, Ghicajanu et al. (2015) points out that these models are similar in their objectives and criteria, however there are still some differences in: how these criteria are named, how they are grouped into criteria of influence (enables) or criteria of outcomes (results), how these basic criteria are detailed and analyzed in different subcategory and also on importance percentage of the criteria in the evaluation.

Accordingly, In today's constantly changing market, it has become necessary for organizations to implement TQM principles in order to gain competitive advantage and to compete effectively in local and global markets. National quality awards, such as those discussed above, provide organizations with the guidelines required to implement TQM, and this can facilitate an organization's journey toward excellence. Hence, organizations could constantly strive to participate and win quality awards at the national and the global level.

**Table 1.1** Comparison of excellence models

| Awards | BCPE | EFQM | Singapore | Canada | Australia |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Categories | 1. Leadership | 1. Leadership | 1. Leadership | 1. Leadership | 1. Leadership |
| | 2. Strategic planning | 2. Policy and strategy | 2. Planning | 2. Planning | 2. Planning |
| | 3. Customer & market focus | 3. People | 3. Information | 3. Information | 3. Customer focus |
| | 4. Measurement, analysis & knowledge management | 4. Partnerships and resources | 4. People | 4. People | 4. People focus |
| | 5. Workforce focus | 5. Processes | 5. Processes | 5. Processes | 5. Process management |
| | 6. Process management | 6. Customer results | 6. Customers | 6. Customers | 6. Supplier partner focus |
| | 7. Business results | 7. People results | 7. Results | 7. Results | 7. Business performance |
| | | 8. Society results | | | |
| | | 9. Key performance results | | | |
| Core principles | Visionary leadership | Results orientation | Visionary leadership | Leadership through involvement | 1. Lead by example, provide clear direction, build organizational alignment and focus on sustainable achievement of goals |
| | Customer-driven excellence | Customer focus | Customer-driven quality | Primary focus on stakeholders/customers and the market place | 2. Understand what markets and customers value, now and into the future, and use this to drive organizational design, strategy, products and services |
| | Organizational and personal learning | Leadership and constancy of purpose | Innovation focus | Cooperation and teamwork | 3. Continuously improve the system |
| | Valuing employees and partners | Management by processes and facts | Valuing people and partners | Prevention-based process management | 4. Develop and value people's capability and release their skills, resourcefulness |

| | | | | and creativity to change and improve the organization |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Agility | People development and involvement | Agility | Factual approach to decision-making | 5. Develop agility, adaptability and responsiveness based on a culture of continual improvement, innovation and learning |
| Focus on the future | Continuous learning, innovation and improvement | Knowledge driven system | Continuous learning and people involvement | 6. Improve performance through the use of data, information and knowledge to understand variability and to improve strategic and operational decision-making |
| Managing for innovation | Partnership development | Societal responsibility | Focus on continuous improvement and breakthrough thinking | 7. Behave in an ethically, socially and environmentally responsible manner |
| Management by fact | Corporate Social responsibility | Results orientation | Fulfil obligations to all stakeholders and society | 8. Focus on sustainable results, value and outcomes |
| Social responsibility | | Systems perspective | | |
| Focus on results and creating value | | Systems perspective | | |
| Systems perspective | | | | |

## Achieving Organizational Excellence

Organizational excellence requires a complete integration of the improvement activity into the organization (Porter and Tanner 2004). Hence the Organizational excellence constitutes cycle including components as that of plan, do check and act (PCDA) illustrated in Fig. 1.1. Organization have plethora of choices such as Business Process Engineering, Balanced Scorecard, Six-sigma to deploy to achieve organizational excellence. However, these initiatives have been deep routed within organizations DNA as an improvement cycle. So typically organizations *Plan* stage should integrate strategic plan and its deployment, and systems to capture the performances etc.

Within the Do stage, use of various quality approach for process design, control and improvements should be of focus of the organization. This should next connect to the 'check' stage which is typically carrying out a self-assessment using an excellence model. The output of this stage provide a solid input act upon the refinement of overall strategy and planning, thus culminating this into continuous cycle.

So achieving organizational excellence is a continuous process which is to be carried out with systematic deployment of chosen frameworks.

## Maturity for Organizational Excellence

Interestingly, achieving excellence or winning a global excellence award is not an easy goal, nor, moreover, an end point. It is not a success that can easily be achieved in a short time; rather, it is a journey that organization has to make. Harold Kerzner, in his book *Strategic Planning for Project Management Using a Project Management Maturity Model* (2002) states that "all organizations go through a maturity

**Fig. 1.1** PCDA for achieving organizational excellence

process, and that this maturity process must precede excellence." Similarly, the implementation of any excellence model indeed begins with making a sincere commitment to excellence, as manifested by deploying a chosen improvement model, progressing through the process, reviewing and making any amendments needed, learning from the excellence journey, and, finally, moving to the stage of sustaining those excellence results. At each of those stages, organizations can use a variety of tools specific to the quality principle or criteria of the chosen model. For example, an early classification of Mann and Saunders (2005) explains BE maturity in four stages relevant to the BCPE criteria: Starting, Progressing, Mature, and Excellent. The starting stage is characterized by the involvement of a few individuals in deploying the excellence practice; this is followed by a movement toward involving senior management, and eventually all managers are involved in the initiative and in moving toward benchmarking those practices.

The implementation of BE is a major effort that requires substantial change management (Vora 2013). BE itself is not, however, an independent practice but an initiative that can enable an organization to convert resources into performance. There are several strategies and prerequisites necessary for the success of BE. Organizations pursuing BE usually have a strategy and a system by means of which they improve their BE outcome year on year. This may involve initiatives such as the following: setting up a steering group and improvement teams; allocating responsibility for each BE category to an individual or a team; implementing an improvement system; deciding on which improvement tools to use and in what situation; undertaking regular BE assessments; and conducting education and training for all members of staff using a structured approach. Such a structured approach to implementing BE is more likely to increase the maturity of excellence and, indeed, the choice of tools and strategies to be used on the excellence journey will also influence that maturity.

Dale and Smith (1997) created a seven-stage maturity process:

- Stage 1: unaware—the organization is unaware of concepts and practices of BE;
- Stage 2: uncommitted—the organization has an understanding of BE but no program is implemented;
- Stage 3: initiators—the organization begins initiating basic elements of BE;
- Stage 4: drifters—the organization drifts from one BE initiative to another and achieves short-term results;
- Stage 5: improvers—an organization-wide BE initiative is driven by a small number of individuals;
- Stage 6: award winners—a BE initiative is implemented alongside the business strategy and involves all employees; and
- Stage 7: world-class—BE is fully integrated with the business strategy and becomes a way of life.

Similarly, Porter and Tanner (2004) explain that organizations should view the journey to excellence as consisting of three distinct phases:

1. Gain control. This is a phase where organizations establish the basic business and operational controls for safeguarding a reasonably consistent mode of operation. Policies, procedures, and quality management systems are therefore suitable methodologies in this phase. The performance improvement gap is, indeed, largest at this point, and it must therefore be assessed against a realistic baseline.
2. Build on best practice. Once control is established, an organization can then use various techniques to recognize and embrace best practices. Hence, benchmarking and internal self-assessment are very useful in this phase. It is easy to understand how to rectify issues raised through a self-assessment, whereas in the control phase it is very difficult to understand the gaps.
3. Deliver world-class results. Since the excellence platform based on best practices has been constructed, the results will now follow. In this phase, applying for external quality awards can offer real opportunities for further organizational learning: it can help move an organization up the performance curve to world-class performance, leading to sustained performance excellence.

A study, conducted by the author (Lasrado 2017) and based on winners of the Dubai Quality Award (DQA), revealed some important steps that organizations can take to move toward maturity (as shown in Table 1.2). These steps are based on empirical research into award-winning organizations in the context of the United Arab Emirates, and they take account of the main activities that were reported by the participants on their way to BE. Using a questionnaire with open questions, the author extracted the frequency of various activities and their importance levels. These findings were then projected into substantial and chronological sequences. The sequences form the basis for a set of steps that should provide direction and support in the process of consideration, planning, and implementation of activities for introducing a model of excellence. The steps are conceptualized as guidance to organizations that are beginning their journey along the path of excellence, and are intended to enable them to learn from the experiences of DQA winners.

*Step 1: Top Management Involvement, Commitment and Support* 72% Winning organizations pointed out that their journey towards excellence began with the commitment and support, of the leadership. Leadership determined the purpose and exhibited their willingness to embark upon the excellence journey, to this end they ensured to engage employees and took stock of current scenario to determine not only the readiness but to spread across the real awareness and purpose of adopting an excellence framework. The focus also remained to prepare an action plan, assign responsibility, reporting structures and formed a core team to action the project.

Nevertheless, many authors reported that management commitment, organisational culture, team work, values and communication had a significant influence on the successful introduction of TQM in the companies (Peters and Waterman 1982; Robinson and Schroeder 2004; Dahlgaard-Park and Dahlgaard 2007; Mann et al. 2011; Choi et al. 2012; Nasim et al. 2013; Lee and Lee 2013). Furthermore Araujo and Sampaio (2013) who studied Portugese EFQM recognised

**Table 1.2** Steps and practice on the way to business excellence

| Step no. | Step | Practices |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Top management involvement, commitment, and support | Determine and understand the purpose<br>Create awareness<br>Strategy and strategy planning<br>Form a core team and assign responsibilities and reporting structure |
| 2 | Involvement of employees and planning | Employee engagement and involvement<br>Meetings and communication<br>Defining targets<br>Prepare action plans |
| 3 | Adaption of the model | Understanding the model in depth<br>Model adaption<br>Fine tuning and/or process improvement<br>Training for employees, as needed<br>Setting measures<br>Process and procedure alignment<br>Review of the model with employees<br>Model deployment |
| 4 | Self-assessment | Self-assessment workshops at department level<br>Mentor support<br>Gather evidence<br>Gap analysis |
| 5 | Continuous improvement | Audits and checks<br>Corrective actions<br>External feedback/external help<br>Benchmarking |
| 6 | Preparing for the award | Documentation<br>Planning for site visits; mock sessions<br>Providing support to the assessment team |

organisations reported on connection between the level of management commitment and successful TQM implementation the companies.

The key activity that organizations included in this research analysed with their leadership was to determine and understand the purpose of the excellence journey. Indeed leadership is the important driving force in EFQM implementation (Doeleman et al. 2014). Specially, the top management plays a crucial role in propagating values in the organization (Savolainen 2000) (Fig. 1.2).

This observation complies with the findings of Angell and Corbett (2009), who determined that, for a successful implementation of the business excellence principles into an organization, it is necessary to consider the approach "from top to bottom" and the integration of the top management. Similarly, Dahlgaard et al. (2013) reported on integration of BEM with management tools and the organisational culture for guiding an organisation towards business excellence. Calvo-Mora et al. (2005) noted 'Leadership and Commitment' have a strong, significant positive influence on 'Policy & Strategy' and a significant positive
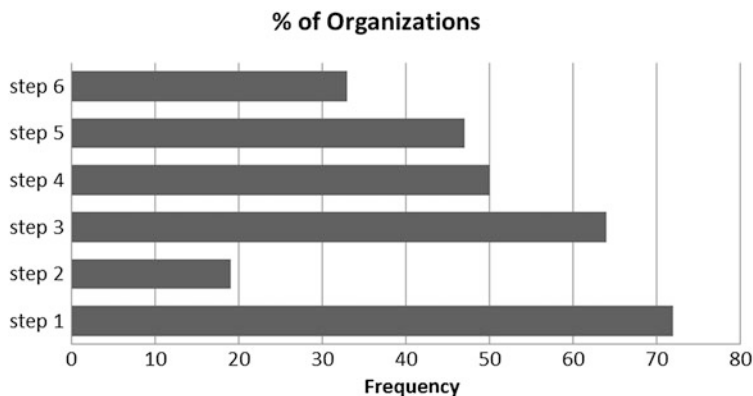
## % of Organizations



**Fig. 1.2** Presentation of observed steps, expressed in % of organizations

influence on 'People'. Moreover, adopting a business excellence framework is a task that requires commitment, communication, and co-operation and therefore a clear vision, an appropriate culture as well as willingness to change can facilitate the implementation of excellence framework (Metaxas and Koulouriotis 2014).

*Step 2: Involvement of Employees & Planning* Following the step 1, winning organizations engage employees to consult and seek feedback on the initiative. They enlist the approaches needed; prepare plan and hold gatherings and meetings as necessary. Although the results don't echo the presence strongly, but does acknowledge the presence of employee involvement in the process. However, involving employees and their satisfaction are factors that are identified as two very important drivers of continuous improvement and customer satisfaction (Eskildsen and Dalghaard 2004; Pina et al. 2008; Sit et al. 2009). According to Robinson and Schroeder (2004) stimulating employee ideas (proposals for improvements) is crucial part of TQM implementation. It is further noted that winning organizations emphasis on developing an effective people strategy (Brown 2013). According to Jimenez and Martinez (2009), Vouzas and Gotzamani (2005) and Lee and Lee (2013), human resource practices play a key role in the excellence journey.

*Step 3: Adaption of the Excellence Model and Its Alignment to the Organization* This step is the major developmental stage for the organization. It is now necessary to understand the model and begin to align the existing practices to the DQA enablers and find ways to fine tune the operations to meet the requirements. Organizations consult the DQA offices for deeper understanding of the model and hold workshops and trainings to prepare their organization in the direction of excellence requirements. A list of approaches that are needed within the units to

comply by the model criteria are needed to be identified at this stage. *Fine-tuning* and *prosing changes to the processes in line with the criteria of the national quality award or the EFQM framework* are some of the key actions that are necessary at this stage as illustrated by the participants of this study. These actions are crucial because, in light of a recent finding those organizations should avoid modifying the award model chosen (Zairi and Alsughayir 2011).

*Step 4: Self-Assessment* UAE organizations view self-assessment as an important step on their journey of excellence. These steps comprises of activities such as *gap analysis, audit and review, corrective action plan, and working on improvement of processes and procedures*. The practice of rigorous self-assessment helps organizations to work more successfully and constitutes a comprehensive, systematic and regular exercise for the evaluation of activities/results by organizations (Araújo and Sampaio 2014). Self-assessment is a great tool that helps organizations to determine the strengths and weaknesses and to build upon them. Mann and Grigg (2004) examined companies that systematically used BEMs, and found positive effects on benchmarking and self-assessment results. Organizations' motivation for the self-assessment purpose is not just about winning a prize, but adopting a methodology to assess their progress toward TQM and excellence as found in studies in other countries *(*Araújo and Sampaio 2014*)*. *UAE* organizations regard self-assessment as key for gap analysis and regard the assessment report as a valuable assessment to continuously improve their processes. The introduction and the use of EFQM model of excellence in an organization provide one major significant advantage-the introduction of self-assessment (Mønsted and Føns 2002).

*Step 5: Continuous Improvement* Improvement is the key factor for businesses to move from good to better, and then further, from better to the best (Chang and Chen 2013). Continuous improvement is needed due to changes in the business environment, the emergence of new management systems and the importance of quality management itself (Sanchez and Blanco 2014). Assessment indeed is a vital procedure that results in a series of improvements (Metaxas and Koulouriotis 2014). Improvement areas create a focus for analysis and the establishment of improvement plans and their implementation. They enable the process of learning and knowledge conception within the organization which helps stakeholders to understand the root causes of problems before formulating a resolution. Seeking external feedbacks and benchmarking the practices generally are good action oriented practices that help to identify opportunities for improvement.

*Step 6: Prepare the Documentation for Participation in the Award* The winning organizations also show their great commitment to the award process as well. Mostly the organizations ensure to gather their evidences in preparation for their application
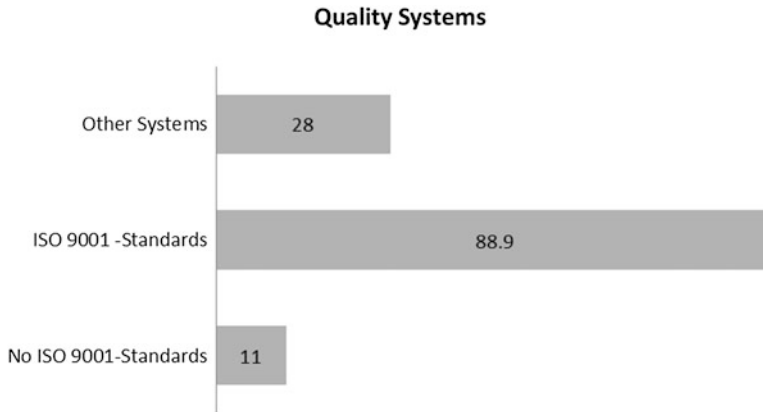
**Quality Systems**



Fig. 1.3 Implemented quality systems

take into consideration the process very seriously and prepare their documentation and prepare for the site visit. This also emphasizes that the award process is indeed rigorous and required careful consideration. Organizations prepare themselves through mock audits, take advises and consultancies from the experienced and develop on their proposal. The three stages are indeed crucial for the overall excellence journey and therefore indeed should be viewed as a cycle incorporating improvements in the various processes. A study by Angell and Corbett (2009) on the institutions which were awarded this prize found that external assessment not only promotes continuous improvement but also led to significant improvement in the non-financial aspects of organizational performance including measurement analysis, strategic planning, and knowledge management capabilities.

Winning organizations begin their journey through the adoption of the quality management systems majorly as shown in the Fig. 1.3. About 88% of the organizations had implemented ISO 9001 standards while at least 285 of the organizations also exhibited other industry specific systems such as OHSAS, HACCP or JCI.

Saunders et al. (2007) developed a maturity diagram (see Table 1.3) to identify different stages of BE maturity based on the BCPE. According to their diagram, maturity can be understood as a four-phase process that involves starting, progressing, mature and excellent state.

## UAE Landscape and Cultural Diversity

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of seven emirates, which united on December 2, 1971. They are Abu Dhabi (the capital), Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras Al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Qaiwain. The UAE population for the year 2016 is 9,121,167 according to administrative records dated until 31 December 2016 (United

**Table 1.3** Maturity according to BCPE score

| 1 Starting | <150 |
|---|---|
| 2 Progressing | 150–300 |
| 3 Mature | 300–500 |
| 4 Excellent | 500+ |

Source: Saunders et al. (2007)

Arab Emirates Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority 2016). Population growth in the United Arab Emirates is among the highest in world at a current 2.47% for the year of 2016. The linguistically and culturally diverse nature of UAE's society is demonstrated by the fact that almost 80% of the population comprises expatriates compared with the remaining 20% of Emiratis (United Arab Emirates Ministry of Economy 2006). The middle eastern region in fact displays highly unusual characteristics in terms of its population mix, and human and economic development characteristics (Epps and Demangeot 2013).

It is a known fact that world is becoming increasingly diverse and includes people of many religions, languages, economic groups, and other cultural groups. In fact, today over 200 different nationalities residing in the UAE, it is making it one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world (UAE Interact 2017). Mostly due to immigration, UAE also ranks among the highest in the world in terms of population growth. Hence, the UAE has one of the most diverse populations in the Middle East. Cultural diversity is commonplace in businesses today, and UAE is no exception. By cultural diversity we mean the variety of human societies or cultures in a specific organization. Indeed, globalization has brought apparent transformation to the UAE market (Vadakepat 2013). UAE in fact houses large multinational organizations, where each multicultural workforce performs different work related activities (Matveev and Milter 2004). However, a multinational workforce plays a significant role in increasing productivity, as variety of cultures and backgrounds is a chance for more innovation and cross cultivation. While this not only good quality to well groom, it has been observed that successful implementation of quality practises could depend on the prevailing culture of the organisation (Green 2012) too.

So leveraging quality through communication and cultural competence go hand in hand (Srivastava 2007). The journey of excellence must endorse such unique, and culturally diverse context of UAE and guide the quality implementation accordingly. Further, according to "The Theory of Culture-Specific Total Quality Management" by Carlos Noronha, business owners can modify TQM principles to express them in different cultural terms (Noronha 2002).

## The Future of Excellence Models

The challenge of being outstanding continues to grow. Today, excellence in customer focus does not end at mere loyalty or satisfaction. Organizations have to create lasting experiences and measure this impact through a customer happiness index—for example, one similar to the Employee Happiness Index. In fact, BE models such as the MBNQA, the EFQM, and Kanji's Business Excellence Model (KBEM) are also

currently used to evaluate, for example, sustainable development in the motor oil industry (Hassanpour 2014). Sustainable development is another important element for organizations to embrace. There has also been a trend toward customizing the excellence model for use in specific industries, especially given that a customized measure can give an organization a precise assessment from which a realistic improvement program can be developed. In this sense, understanding industry standards and incorporating them into excellence is another possibility in future forms of excellence.

Moreover, although global excellence frameworks and national programs have been developed based on these models—and are used in all sectors and by organizations of all sizes—there is still a need to extend the umbrella of excellence to cover all types of business. There is a need to focus on "quality maturity" no less than on excellence. In settings where the quality maturity is lower—especially in new, small-scale entrants—there is a need for adaptable and incremental programs that guide maturity over a period of time. The pursuit of future excellence must be an integral part of the main culture. Although several countries across the globe have initiated excellence programs, many have not achieved the widespread national support that is necessary for such programs to succeed. Hence, securing a future for excellence requires that attention be paid to a number of aspects, such as culture, support at a national level, business context, industry norms, economic growth, quality maturity levels, customer and employee expectations, technological advancement, the size of the organization, risk assessments, supply chain resilience, and sustainability. As the world becomes more complex due to diminishing resources and ever-changing needs, excellence will have to adapt and integrate new elements, including innovation, adaptability, sustainability, and happiness.

## Conclusion

The basic philosophy of the excellence introduced here highlights various components needed to achieve organizational excellence. Thus BEMs provide integrated framework for organizational self-assessments. Essentially, a BEM helps an organization to understand its current performance and to determine how well it is doing, as an organization, in achieving its strategic objectives. A BEM provides guidance for building sustainable performance if implemented with full commitment.

Several benefits can be obtained through successful implementation of this framework and include; (1) BEMs make it easy to address stakeholders requirements as it provides a systematic framework for doing so; (2) BEMs allow organizations to significantly save their resources including material, information, human, financial,

and infrastructural resources. These savings are made possible as BEMs streamline business processes and integrate sustainability into all processes; and (3) BEMs provide opportunities for integrating sustainable development and traditional business process and thus they provide a means for organizational improvement along critical stakeholder dimensions.

However, BEMs are not a quick fix for business problems. They can, however, be a starting point for putting an organization onto a progressive path. A great deal of evidence from across the globe confirms that the excellence approach has helped organizations to achieve superior performance. Thus it is worth to acknowledge the importance of a number of national approaches that have evolved from globally well-known BE frameworks, such as BCPE, EFQM, and the Deming Prize. Thus, the systematic deployment of such an approach can help organizations to achieve a level of excellence. Maturity of excellence, however, is attained over a period and must be viewed as a process involving various phases and stages. In 2003, SAI Global commissioned SIRCA, a financial services research organization, to conduct a study on all Australian Stock Exchange (ASX)-listed Australian Business Excellence Award winners. This study indicated that all the organizations that had been using a BEF for between 4 and 12 years saw the benefits increase with time. In fact, all the organizations that had been using a BEF for more than 10 years believed that it benefited them significantly. There are a number of practices associated with each phase and stage that can be deployed. Global frameworks provide the possibility of some initial recognition prior to attaining the highest maturity status.

However, the ever-changing and highly complex business environment requires organizations to change their approach to excellence in order to address these continual changes. Hence, being "outstanding" is an ongoing challenge. It is no less important for managers to note that benchmarks established over the years will have to be adapted so that they suit the changing realities and world context. The solution, therefore, is to incorporate changing values and perspectives into the DNA of an organization's excellence system.

In a culturally diverse context as that of UAE, for organization to foster excellence and to sustain outstanding business result, it is important to have a excellence system which is adaptable and flexible. It is necessary to make the excellence approaching these contexts more contemporary, more relevant to the current time, given the growing diverse nature of organizations. The future for excellence thus in such contexts, lies in taking into consideration culture, national support systems, business context, industry standards, national economic growth, the country's quality maturity level, changing customers' expectations, technological advancement, and the size of the organizations. So, in a changing and "time-poor" environment, making the excellence approach culture competent, current and relevant is an immediate requirement, but it is also the future for organizations aiming to make a lasting impact.

## Case Study: Tata's Business Excellence Model

**Excellence in Practice: A Case Study of Tata's Excellence Model**

Author likes to acknowledge support of Christabelle Noronha, Editor, Tata Review for granting approval to republish the case of Tata business excellence model. This case study is compiled based on article of Gayathri Kamath, Tata Review, 2014.

Tata Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, and Tata Chemicals are among the world's largest organizations in their respective businesses. Tata Power and Tata Hotels are not only India's biggest enterprises; they are also acknowledged as the best in their respective classes. Why? These two contrasting entities have two elements in common—the first is the overarching Tata brand name, and the second is their status as front-runners in the group-wide BE movement or TBEM. Launched two decades ago, this unique group initiative has forged an abiding culture of excellence, adding luster to the Tata brand. Senior leaders at Tata say that TBEM has been the glue in binding the group together and enhancing the Tata brand.

To understand the success of TBEM, it is necessary to sketch the journey from its genesis. Twenty years ago, Ratan Tata, then newly-anointed as Chairman, was faced with the challenge of making the Tata marque a uniform symbol of excellence across a group of diverse and independently run companies. His solution to the problem: TBEM, a group-wide platform that would encourage, support, and recognize companies working to implant the ideologies of BE in their operations.

The approach is fashioned on the popular U.S.-based quality initiative, the MBNQA. The recognition element is the JRD Quality Value (QV) Award, named after J. R. D. Tata, a vocal advocate of quality and excellence. The high aspiration levels for the award can be seen from the fact that there have been only 15 winners in its history. What made TBEM unique in the annals of Tata history was that it was the very first pan-Tata initiative, the first group connector that brought together Tata companies and people from across businesses and geographies. It was also the first step toward making Tata companies aware about the quality that they deliver to customers and their overall organizational quality, which is what BE is all about.

Emphasizing the seriousness with which the Tata leadership viewed business excellence, the Tata group made TBEM a mandatory module of the Brand Equity and Business Promotion (BEBP) agreement, which every Tata company has to sign. All signatories to this agreement have to adopt the Tata Code of Conduct (TCoC) and TBEM. In other words, the BEBP agreement confers

(continued)

on an operating company the right to use the Tata brand in return for a commitment to run the business ethically and excellently.

Ratan Tata mentions the immense significance of TBEM in the Tata group:

> That was a time when many of our companies had their heads in the sand. The dominant impression was that we were less nimble than others, more resistant to change, and extremely set in our ways. What we needed to do was benchmark ourselves against the brightest and the best, and get away from doing things the way we had done them in the past. The TBEM set the tone and created the foundation for what, I believe, was perhaps one of the more critical transformation initiatives the group has undertaken in recent times.

The transformation that TBEM has stimulated is a result of the deep focus that Tata companies have brought to bear on critical aspects of BE such as leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, measurement, analysis, and knowledge management, workforce focus, process management, and business results. TBEM includes a tough assessment process that gives real-world and relevant feedback to companies on the ways they can improve. Companies are scored on a scale of 1000 points, and crossing 650 points brings with it TBEM's grand prize, the JRD QV Award (which is announced in a glittering ceremony held on July 29 every year).

The real impact of TBEM on an organization can be demonstrated easily using numbers. As they say, numbers do not lie. In 1995, only 12 companies participated in the JRD QV Awards, but today this number is higher. In line with its policy of "change for the better", TBEM has seen major changes in the last two decades. It has undergone through a series of metamorphosis and evolution to become more robust and comprehensive and as of now TBEM is the force behind BE culture across the Tata group. Initially TBEM was used to examine processes within the Tata Group and nothing more. But today it has become an important change management tool. In 2003, TBEM initiative at Tata got another component when a Tata movement spanning across the entire group sought to improve the groups' corporate governance and knowledge management capability. In 2007, the efforts of Tata Group to mitigate the effects of climate change and drive innovation was incorporated into TBEM and in 2009, Tata Group safety metrics also become part of TBEM.

In the last few years, TBEM has undergone a series of changes so as to retain its relevance to the audience. This has also seen winning points for JRD QV Award lifted from 600 to 650. Companies with a score of 651–750 are considered industry leaders while those with 650+ are considered to be in a zone of true excellence. Additionally, TBEM has been expanded to include a segment in which the board of management of companies can be engaged on improvement opportunities for their organizations. TBEM also offers three

different levels of assessment. Besides the normal standard assessments companies such as the Tata Group (big companies) can now opt for advanced assessment which involves longer on-site assessments, deeper engagements, and top level scrutiny. More mature companies like Tata Steel, TCS, Titan, and Tata Motors use advanced TBEM assessment. Simpler and basic assessment can be performed by less mature companies to improve their processes. Other diagnostic processes are also offered by TQM and include dip-check and deep-dive assessments.

Excellence is therefore a continual quest at the Tata group, and Tata companies are supported in their efforts to achieve world-class standards in all aspects of operations through group-level processes and systems that encourage and enable BE.

## Key Questions

1. Why do you agree with the viewpoint of the executive chairman of Tata Quality Management Services?
2. How do you think the TBEM can be enhanced to suit today's global context?
3. Can Tata companies draw a map to assess their excellence maturity? How? Does the TBEM initiative support this?

## Summary

This chapter illustrates the concept of organizational excellence and business excellence models. It explains how the development of business excellence models and its use has been evolved. It has been observed that number of excellence models were developed over the time and there are some differences among them, but most objectives and criteria are common. The most common ones however are: Deming prize, MBNQA and EFQM. Although it is observed that achieving excellence is not simple or a quick fix, the journey towards excellence can be well planned through step by step progression and its maturity can be ensured if the organization ensures its implementation taking into consideration the organizations cultural competence. UAEs context in fact is culturally diverse and for organization to foster excellence and to sustain outstanding business result, it is important to have an excellence system which is adaptable and flexible. It is necessary to make the excellence approaching these contexts more contemporary, more relevant to the current time.

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# Organizations Achieve Excellence Through Quality Awards

**2**

About 20 years ago the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model was developed with the purpose of assisting organizations in developing and fostering competitiveness. While organizations have generally used the excellence model across Europe, interestingly, the model has also been used to assess countrywide excellence. A recent assessment of European countries revealed that Denmark and Germany are among the top countries and that leadership, people, and customers are high impact enablers (EFQM 2014). So what impacts are experienced at an organizational level? What factors of excellence models drive the excellence journey? Do organizations shine on each of the excellence enablers? What do they achieve on the excellence map?

## Introduction

As the previous chapter demonstrated, business excellence (BE) can provide an organization with a foundation for long-term commercial success. Business excellence frameworks (BEFs) synthesize best business practice and management concepts from a variety of disciplines and organizational contexts to provide tools that help a business achieve its overall goals. While BEFs outline a set of practices for improving internal performance, business excellence awards (BEAs) provide criteria for assessing how well organizations have implemented those practices (Brown 2013). Such two well-known quality awards are MBNQA and EFQM. Focusing on the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) in particular, this program has received tremendous benefits (BPEP 2017).

The cost of running the Baldrige Program to the benefits for US economy stands at 820 to 1. Moreover, Baldrige Award has 109 recipients, including seven people who have won it two times. The two-time recipients of the award have recorded a median

growth in revenue of 92% and they also have recorded a median job growth of 63% in comparison to 2.5% of similar industries and in the same period. Infact, between 2010 and 2015, applicants for the Baldrige Award represented 567,434 jobs, served over 449 million customers, and recorded a revenue/budgets of over $142 billion. In 2015, the estimated value of donated service by 349 Baldrige examiners at the national level was $5.3 million. Finally, in 2015, the estimated value of donated service by Baldrige-based examiners at the state level was $30 million.

National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST 2017) reports that award winners in the United States have demonstrated a number of achievements as a result of the implementation of BEFs. For example, the 2017 MBNQA recipient, the City of Coral Springs, Florida, maintained satisfaction in 75% of its customer relationships lasting for a period longer than 10 years, cultivated cost avoidance of $3.22 billion over the course of 5 years, experienced a 53% decrease in employee turnover over the course of 9 years, and ensured that 100% of complaints were resolved within seven business days.

The EFQM (2013) had similarly recorded the performance of organizations that have won the award through the implementation of BEFs. For example, over the course of 4 years, Ooredoo Qatar showed an increase in revenues of 30%, maintained a customer satisfaction level of approximately 80%, and held local and international network satisfaction at 85%. In this chapter, we will explore the impact of national quality awards and how organizations achieve excellence using these approaches.

In the UAE, The Dubai Quality Award winner of the year 2016, *UAE Exchange*, being in the service industry for more than three decades, it has established itself as a preferred brand by customers. Their customer satisfaction score on employee's interpersonal & customer service skills are at 95%. The organization's turnaround time (TET) for customer compliant resolution is 1.5 days.

## Background to Quality Awards

The first national quality award Deming Prize was introduced in Japan in 1951, then the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) in the USA and the Australian Business Excellence Award (ABEA) were initiated in 1988.

In October 1991, with the support of the European Union (EU) and the European Organization for Quality (EOQ), EFQM launched the European Quality Award (EQA). EQA was based on EFQM's Model for TQM. EQA is managed by the U.S. Commerce Department's National Institute of Standards and Technology while the ASQ administers it.

The Baldrige Award criteria have played a major role in promoting excellence in the USA and around the world (Porter and Tanner 2004). In fact, it is the structure and criteria for the award programmes elevated quality to a strategic level, and resulted in some of the concepts of business excellence which is widely known today (Porter and Tanner 2004). This also led to the introduction of quality

awards in many countries around the world which is accounted to have about 61 awards as of today according to centre for organization excellence (Ahmed 2015). Organizations thus adapt frameworks that are grounded on quality awards to attain and manage performance excellence (Cauchick Miguel 2015). This was the beginning of an international trend of national and global quality awards (Pipan et al. 2011).

The Baldrige Award is named after the late Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige, a proponent of quality management. The aim of the Baldrige Award was to promote awareness of quality management among companies in the United States and recognize the best implementers of the quality management systems. Every year, the President of the United States presents the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) to organizations which demonstrate outstanding quality and performance excellence. Three awards may be given annually in each of six categories:

- Manufacturing
- Service company
- Small business
- Education
- Healthcare
- Nonprofit

The education and healthcare categories were added in 1999. A government and nonprofit category was added in 2007.

Similarly, in EFQMs case, since late 2001 there have been a scheme of recognition that includes three Levels of Excellence:

1. The European Quality Award
2. Recognized for Excellence
3. Committed to Excellence

For companies that do not make it to the European Award and have a score of 350 and above at the end of the consensus meeting and at the end of the site visit respectively may apply to be considered for the '*Recognized for Excellence*' scheme. Further there are levels in the award itself such as winner's special prizes and finalist, details of which can be obtained from the EFQMs website.

Evidently, both the models of awards and many other national quality programs around the world are built on broadly similar core values, and differ mainly in the lower-level detail rather than in the higher-level construct (Porter and Tanner 2004). Both the award assessment process is rigorous, comprehensive and the award processes also share many common features.

## Benefits of Quality Award Models

These quality awards provide various tangible and intangible benefits (Pipan et al. 2014) to their recipients, regardless of which sector, industry, or country they belong to. Some of the most common benefits that have been achieved from national quality awards in the UAE context are as under. The awards have:

- Increased customer satisfaction/orientation/focus.
- Rise in loyal customers.
- Identification of stakeholder requirements.
- Improved understanding of customer expectations.
- Increased employee satisfaction/engagement/motivation/involvement.
- Improved reputation and goodwill.
- Increased in employee satisfaction/engagement/motivation/involvement.
- Trainings for employees/Career Development.
- Increase in emphasis on the wellbeing of employees.
- Increase loyalty of employees.
- Enable team work and organizational learning.
- Improve internal communication.
- Improve collaboration.
- Improve/enhance the organizational culture.
- Enable innovation and improvement.
- Workplace Excellence/Quality focus.
- Improve quality of the products, services/improved process.
- Improve well-being of the organization and the community.
- Improve reputation and goodwill.
- Help get a comprehensive inside of the business Comprehensive structure inside of the business.

## The Key Success Factors of Organizations

While organizations compete with each other, for the quality awards they excel in one or two key areas. For example, MBNQA, a worldwide quality award, is providing the framework for various companies, no matter the size, to work toward developing their resources, people, services, and operations. They work toward new innovations and performance excellence in order to achieve competitive advantages that will be the key successful factor for any company willing to take a part in the international market. In analyzing some of the recent winners of the MBNQA, organizations excel for one or two of their core values as illustrated in Table 2.1.

Moreover, BCPE criteria have also been extended to the education and health sectors. For example, even health care facilities, particularly non-profits, benefit through the criteria. Examples of various impacts and benefits can be understood from the case of *Arroyo Fresco a* recent winner.

**Table 2.1** Analysis of recent MBNQA award

| Company name | Year | Key success factor | New achievement/innovations |
|---|---|---|---|
| FitHabit | 2016 | Customer satisfaction | Grouping their customers and servicing them according to their loyalty and frequency |
| Momentum Group | 2016 | Workforce | Employee engagement process: involve, develop, and engage |
| Memorial Hermann Sugar Land | 2016 | Leadership | Team guidelines communication, and internal integration |
| Mid-America Transplant Services | 2015 | Strategy | Strategic discussion; define, deploy, and monitor |
| The Charter School of San Diego | 2015 | Measurement and analysis | Student information, fund accounting, traceability made easy, and surveys |
| PricewaterhouseCoopers (PWCs) | 2014 | Operation | Main successful operational process; establish, identify, monitor, pilot, and coordinate |
| North Mississippi Health Service (NMHS) | 2012 | Results | Three main elements—people, service, and quality—that will result in financial benefits that will lead to sufficient growth |

*Business Excellence in Arroyo Fresco: Case Study*  The Arroyo Fresco (AF), a community health centre (CHC) featured in 2017 Baldrige award winners (NIST 2017). AF provides its services in Western Arizona using four mobile vans and across its 11 clinics. CHC's in the US were first started 50 years ago in all the 50 states. CHCs are owned by the community and therefore they are non-profit and provide community members with preventive services and high quality primary care without considering their paying ability. CHCs also provide enabling services that includes transportation, home visitation, translation, and health education—an initiative that increasing access to health care. More than 24 million Americans are served by more than 1200 CHCs every year in a program administered by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). AF provides its service in three counties: Yuma, Mohave, and La Paz. These counties have an approximate area of 23,000 square miles with diverse population of less than 430,000 people which is about 6% of the total population of the state. The county of Yuma is located adjacent to the Mexican border. Two Yuma activists, Martin Rosales and Joe Garcia founded AF in 1968. The two were committed to providing health care to the underserved in their community. The first AF clinic was opened in a converted clinic in Yuma using funding from the Migrant Worker Project. This is where the name "Arroyo Fresco," meaning a "cool, flowing stream" came from and symbolized a refreshed place in a harsh desert. Under the leadership of the two founders, AF grew tremendously and started operating full time within a very short period. As a result, the founders opened of three more facilities and launched the first van in 1988 with the support of the Bureau of Primary Health Care (BPHC). A 1990 merger with Mohave CHC saw AF expand the reach of its services to the western Arizona corridor.

**Table 2.2**  Key success factors of EFQM Award winners

|   | Company name | Year | Key success factor | New achievements/innovations |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Objectivity Bespoke Software Specialists Sp. Z.O.O. | 2015 | Succeeding through employee talent | What matters to people also matters to us…welcome pack |
| 2 | City of Glasgow College—United Kingdom | 2016 | Adding value to customers | City learning, industry academy, and student support |
| 3 | Aeroports De Lyon—France | 2015 | Managing with agility | Strategy deployment process |
| 4 | Siemens Congleton | 2015 | Leading with vision, inspiration, and integrity | Culture of leadership |
| 5 | BMW Plant Germany | 2013 | Process and results | The inspirational approaches of the plant director and his team |
| 6 | BMW Plant Germany | 2014 | Leadership | BMW leadership web |
| 7 | Robert Bosch, Rodez Plant | 2015 | Sustaining outstanding results | Policy deployment |

*The Case of EFQM*  An analysis of EFQM winners also illustrates a key area of excellence, as shown in Table 2.2.

For most companies, a national approach to quality through quality awards gave them a window through which they could see where they were lagging behind so they could focus on those areas. The biggest hurdle companies face is the initial implementation of the excellence model. Due to cultural mindsets, diverse cultures, and not wanting to disturb the company's core business during implementation, it may seem like a far off target. However, by planning and creating procedures, determined companies can get past these hurdles. A company's greatest asset is its people. From all the above examples, we can see that when the employees are satisfied, the company flourishes.

We should also note that the excellence model is generally difficult to execute, particularly for smaller companies that have issues with the constant pressure of the economy and the absence of satisfactory labour. Moreover, the upsides of the model are unmistakable just in the long term. Practice demonstrates that the road to accomplishing perfection is long; business excellence can be accomplished only by companies that are focused on nonstop improvement that lasts, best case scenario, for a period of 3 years.

## Conclusion

It is clear that after an organization wins a quality award, it often experiences improved organizational processes and business performance (Mann et al. 2011). Corredor and Goñi (2010) found that BEA-winning organizations in Spain

experienced improvements in performance in all areas. Eriksson (2004) interviewed 29 companies that had participated in the Swedish Quality Award process, and reported that most of them considered process orientation, customer orientation, and improvement work to have been enhanced.

When overall quality is improved, a company also increases its market share (Fonseca 2015). Accordingly, many researchers have focused on the financial results of MBNQA winners (York and Miree 2004). In a longitudinal study, Hendricks and Singhal (1997) explored the performance of firms over the course of 10 years and found that after winning a BEA, firms presented better operational performance, a higher increase in sales, and better cost control. Similarly, Lin and Su (2013) reported that winning a BEA resulted in long-term market value returns for organizations.

This chapter has shown several examples of successful organizations and their key performance indicators based either on the EFQM or MBNQA. BE is a phenomenon which does not guarantee success but does enable an organization to grow. The successful implication of a BEF results in stakeholders experiencing greater satisfaction with and having a more positive image of an organization.

Although organizations may incur additional costs to establish new infrastructure through the implementation of a BEF, these costs are reimbursed via higher employee productivity, more satisfied customers, more efficient organizational operations, and higher overall profits. In addition to overall improved customer and employee results, a common benefit accrued through the implementation of a BEF has a positive social impact as well as other intangible benefits.

While different organizations have different motives for adopting BEFs, the overarching motive is the need to guide an organization towards developing a systematic improvement program that will yield sustained results. If implemented well, organizations can reap the benefits of excellence and find strategies for continuous improvement that will make them stand out in highly competitive environments.

To conclude, in today's constantly changing market, it has become a necessity for organizations to implement TQM principles and to gain a competitive advantage to compete effectively in the local and global market. National quality award criteria provide organizations with the guidelines required to implement TQM that can facilitate the journey to excellence for the organization. Hence, organizations should constantly strive to participate and win quality awards at a national and global level.

## Case study: A DQA Winner

**Excellence in Practice: Good Practices of *a DQA Winner!***
This illustration is about a Technology Park, offering the advantages of a free trading incentivization zone established to endorse and facilitate industries

based on advanced new technology to support region's interest in business expansions. It is the sole technology part that holds a provision for both living and working integrated community. The park also holds one of a kind composite fire, water, and irrigation supply system of the region. The organization is one of the applicants of Dubai Quality Award model and criteria ensuring execution of best business practices and has been recognized for the same in 2017 by Dubai Quality Award. The technology park used a combination of practices and initiatives to drive excellence within the organizational culture. One of their best practice to achieve their aspiration was through harnessing innovation and creative thinking. They introduced their Happiness Eco-system initiative in 2016, as one of the key influencers of Happiest People Strategy of the People Happiness Department in alignment with Dubai 2021 Plan. The concept behind Happiness Eco-system was assiduously studied along with benchmarking with some pioneering organizations both locally and globally and was supported by pillars of Happiness strategy that included conceptual framework, council, big data collection, educational awareness through diplomas, forums and labs. The Happiness Eco-system initiative was publicly shared through press releases and the launch of each pillar of the initiative included targeted email campaigns to all the stakeholders of the technology park. The initiative was introduced in phases by hosting awareness sessions for the employees encouraging them to help improve it and to help it to achieve its intended goal successfully. The effectiveness of the initiative was assessed through various methods like surveys and feedback sessions, creative labs and brainstorming that emphasized on the importance of inputs coming from end users having a hand on experience about the whole process. Areas of improvements identified are discussed in creative lab sessions and the intended changes implemented for improvement in the processes are further reviewed in bi-annually through surveys. Apart from Happiness strategy, the organization also deployed a Smart City strategy and focused their efforts in digitalizing the environment through several Proof of Concepts (POC) like the use of smart waste management technique where they used digital waste bins that send alerts to the management whenever they are about to fill. Other than that, they used other green methods for creating a smart environments like the use of green roofs and smart irrigation system. They also consider human element in their smart environment strategy wherein they focused on creating a safe and sustainable atmosphere for both the technology park residents as well as the public. They collaborated with a government body to introduce free electric vehicle charging stations to promote the use of electric vehicles reducing the burden on the environment caused due to vehicle emission.

The initiative saw exceptionally good response through its results. The benefits of the process implemented under Happiness Eco-system initiative were obtainable through employee satisfaction results from the post and

pre-implementation results. The target set for employee satisfaction was 75% from 2014 to 2016 and the results of actual rate of satisfaction before this initiative were 73% in 2015. However, post-implementation the employee satisfaction rate achieved its target of 75% in 2016 in its first year of implementation. Feedbacks from first educational awareness programs like happiness diploma conducted for 26 graduates in its first year, achieved a result of 94% as against the set target of 95% in 2016 presenting its effectiveness. The overall corporate happiness was measured against a target of four stars and the implementation of this initiative resulted in achieving the target of four stars in its first year itself. Their Smart city initiative also saw greater media coverage and resulted in the application of new Proof of Concept activities to digitalize and create a green environment. The impact of adopting this best practice resulted in enhanced business performance and return on investment as the employees' productivity was positively affected by this initiative.

## Key Questions

1. DQA winner established various approaches on their journey to excellence. Discuss which of the enablers are represented in the approaches discussed in the case above.
2. Identify those enablers of an EFQM Excellence model that are not discussed in this case. Discuss how important are these for achieving excellence.
3. Which of the approaches mentioned here can be adapted in your organization? Why?

## Summary

This chapter has provided some insights to impacts of the national quality awards. Particularly, winners of National quality awards such as MBNQA, EFQM and Dubai Quality Award winners exhibit a number of benefits received through this national quality award program. While in the past, many studies have proven the impact of these awards, these benefits still hold good for winner of recent years, while the similar benefits are also experienced in other regions such as UAE.

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# Legacy of Excellence: The Case of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

**3**

As His Highness Shaikh Mohammed, Leader of Dubai, stated, "There is no finish line in the journey of Excellence." This accurately characterizes the legacy of UAE's excellence. The UAE has constantly risen in the global rankings for competitiveness, innovation, happiness, and many other indexes. Thus, the following questions are addressed in the chapter: What are the key milestones in a young legacy of excellence? What do winning organizations aspire to experience? What future does excellence hold for the UAE?

## Introduction

The competitiveness of UAE organizations got a significant boost when UAE leaders launched quality and excellence initiatives. Following the launch, the UAE was ranked position 16 globally in the 2016–2017 global quality rankings. In the past few years, the UAE has seen a significant growth in its efforts to improve quality, productivity, customer experience, and competitiveness of its organizations by all stakeholders including the government. For the last 22 years, many quests for quality improvement have been witnessed in the UAE and due to this effort, international quality organizations such as the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and American Society of Quality (ASQ) have set up their offices in the UAE. The UAE also continues to record impressive commitments to quality by various organizations in different sectors. In 2017, the Dubai Quality Award (DQA) was taken to a global level and signifies another landmark achievement for the UAE.

This chapter provides an exploration of approaches that have been put in place to drive excellence in the UAE. The chapter also examines the motivations behind these approaches, their benefits, and provides recommendations for quality-

conscious organizations. A look into best practices in quality management that have been adopted by DQA winners is also provided. The chapter ends by providing a discussion of what the future holds for the excellence in the region.

## The Excellence Legacy

By the mid-1990s when UAE organizations were adopting knowledge and service based economic model, UAE leaders came to the realization that their organizations needed to improve their quality and customer service strategies so as to increase their competitive edge. With this realization, leaders set up various initiatives to improve the quality and productivity of organizations in the UAE. Such initiatives included e-government initiatives, standards, recognition programs, research, key partnerships with quality-focused associations, and organized international excellence frameworks. With constant changes in excellence throughout the world, the UAE has initiated positive measures and is passionate in maintaining excellence in its organizations. This passion for excellence has also seen UAE leaders take measures aimed at reducing the country dependence on oil and old products. This has led to setting up of a policy framework for enhancement of tourism, travel, trade, services, real estate, and construction sectors (Thawani 2014). Additionally, UAE leaders introduced excellence and strategic initiatives for all organizations in both public and private sector. In mid-1990s, the Dubai's Quest for Quality was initiated and the government took a leading role in promoting quality excellence a move that led to widespread adoption of international quality standards and business excellence frameworks. Such efforts have seen the UAE feature on several global rankings on quality. UAE's Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority (FCSA 2017) reports the most popular indexes in which UAE is featured. In 2017, the UAE was ranked position 16, 21, and 35 in the Global Competitiveness Report, World Happiness Report, and Global Innovation Index respectively. In 2016, it was ranked position 42 in the Human Development Index.

## The Dubai Quality Award (DQA)

The DQA was among the first excellence awards to be established in the UAE. DQA was established by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashed Al Maktoum, Ruler of Dubai who is currently UAE Vice president and Prime Minister. DQA makes use of EFQM model and is aimed at promoting excellence in business. The business excellence division of Department of Economic Development administers DQA. The award is typically given to organizations which demonstrate consistent commitment to organizational excellence by implementing business best practices. The award is given to organizations drawn from 11 key sectors that include construction, manufacturing, service, and tourism.

**Table 3.1** DQA sectors

| • Construction | • Finance | • Manufacturing | • Retail |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Education | • Services | • Professional | • Free zones |
| • Health | • Logistics | • Trading | • Transportation |
| • Tourism | • Government | | |

**Table 3.2** DQA statistics in 2016

| Organisations trained for DQA since 1994 | 1000+ |
|---|---|
| Organisations applied for DQA since 1994 | 500+ |
| Organisations reapplied for DQA since 1994 | 100+ |
| Winning organisations for DQA since 1994 | 250+ |
| DQA trained professional Assessors on EFQM | |
| Methodology since 1994 | 2000+ |

Source: Dubai Quality Award office

DQA has three levels of recognition:

- The Appreciation Prize—this award is given to organizations as an appreciation of their journey to excellence and to recognize their quality journey
- The DQA quality award—this award is given to organizations as a recognition of their excellence
- DQA Gold—this is the highest quality award given to any organization and serves as a recognition of an organization highest quality standards

Before adopting the EFQM model, DQA employed a framework similar to that used by Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award. EFQM framework was widely applied as from 1999 and as of today, DQA applies the latest EFQM standards. Companies from sectors listed in Table 3.1 are usually considered for DQA award

As from 1994, DQA has been very instrumental in facilitating the efforts of organizations and individuals that sought to promote competence and capacity building in quality management. Table 3.2 shows the latest numbers as pertaining the DQA award.

As discussed above, the DQA award has three levels of recognition. The maturity of the organization in its journey to attaining excellence is illustrated by these levels. The levels also provide an important measure of the progress or journey of the organization towards attaining the award. The cut-off scores for winning the award in any of the three categories is decided by the award office and members of the jury. An organization that wants to participate in the awards first makes an application. The award office then sends a team of qualified assessors to assess the organizational performance, systems, and other criteria and gives the organization a score based on the criteria developed by the awarding office.

As shown in in Fig. 3.1 Organizations with $700 \pm 25$ points are given DQA Gold award, those with $550 \pm 25$ points are given DQA award while those with $350 \pm 25$
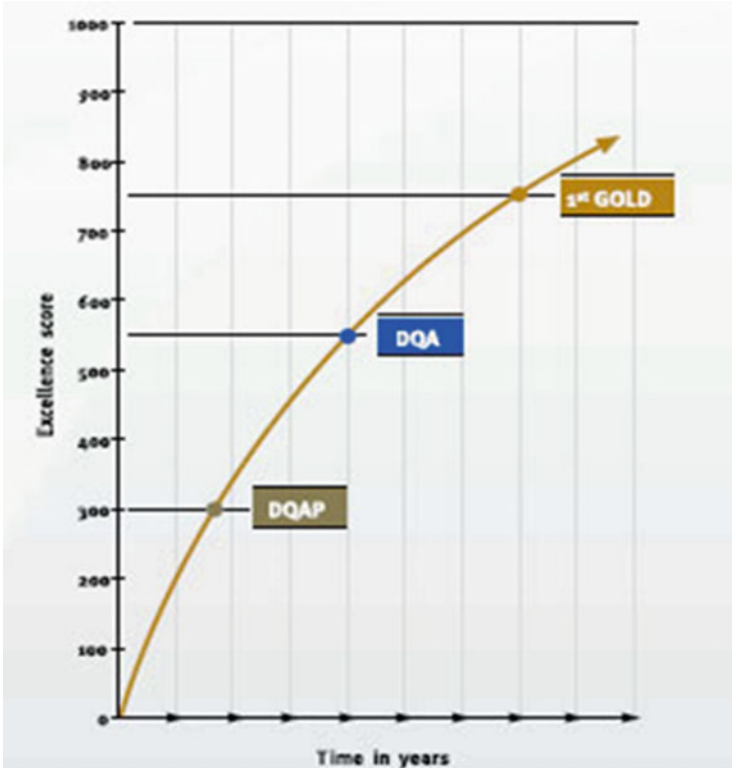
**Fig. 3.1**   Excellence score. Source: Dubai Quality Award Office

points are given DQAA award. For past winners of the DQA award who have made tangible improvements in quality areas as compared to last quality assessment, the Dubai Quality Golden Award (DQG) is awarded to them. Winners of the DQA can also apply for DQG awards. The Dubai Quality Appreciation Award is given to organizations which have put significant effort and hard work to become excellent organizations as a token of appreciation. The appreciation award is used as a DQA initiative and all organizations in the sectors listed above are eligible for the award.

DQA award office has more than 2500 professional assessors and so far it has trained 1500 organizations. Organizations conducting self-assessments can also use the services of DQA and scoring system for purposes of benchmarking. The criteria for qualification to use the services is that the organization must be based in the UAE and employ more than 50 people. The company must also be licensed to trade in UAE and operated for at least 3 years. Besides, the majority of the assets and/or employees of the organization must be based in the UAE.

*Excellence in Public Sector: The Dubai Government Excellence Program (DGEP)*
Due the need to improve service delivery to citizens and visitors of Dubai, the government of Dubai established The Dubai Government Excellence Program (DGEP) in 1998. DGEP sought to improve the performance of the government of Dubai by simplifying government procedures and improving service delivery. Exceptional government employees, departments, projects, and organizations are recognized and awarded DGEP. The efforts and good performance of DGEP in steering service delivery in Dubai was recognized by United Nations Public Services Award in 2007 for improving the delivery of services in West Asia region.

## Public Sector Excellence: The Fourth Cycle of Government Excellence System (4GE)

4GE was launched in 2015 by His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Ruler of Dubai, and the Vice-President and Prime Minister of the UAE. 4GE is a first of its kind in the entire world and focusses primarily on the government performance and delivery of results. It is aimed at examining government systems and provide necessary upgrades to ensure excellence performance. Additionally, 4GE is tasked with innovation of government services based on the existing results and drive excellence in government services. 4GE provides advancement in three main areas; *vision, innovation,* and *empowerment* aimed at ensuring the highest satisfaction rates and happiness of Dubai and UAE citizens with government services. 4GE has the welfare of citizens at heart and aspires to meet communal needs and highest rates of efficiency and effectiveness in the provision of government services. Furthermore, 4GE supports sustainable innovation of government services to ensure the government is always ahead in service provision. Three main pillars that constitute 4GE include *vision achievement*, *enablers*, and *innovation*. Below each pillar, there are several subcategories.

Several initiatives have been launched by 4GE to enhance service delivery by government entities and include the following:

- The Customer Service Charter
- Service Quality Manual
- Service Development Manual
- Star Rating Initiative for Customer Service Centres
- Smart Government Initiative
- Best M-Government Service Award
- "My Services" integrated database
- Customer satisfaction studies on major government priority services
- Anonymous shopper studies
- UAE Federal Feedback Gateway "My Gov."

These initiatives are aimed at improving service delivery to people served by government entities by involving them in development of government services. The

UAE has also made significant progress in its journey to excellence through other awards that include the following:

- The Sharjah Economic Excellence Award: was launched in 2000 and targets organizations registered with Sharjah Chamber of Commerce and Industry such as SKEA. Makes use of EFQM standards;
- The Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award (SKEA): set up in 2001 by Abu Dhabi Chamber of Commerce and Industry for both private and public sector organizations. Borrows heavily from EFQM model;
- Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (MRM) Business Awards: established in 2005 by the Dubai Chamber with the aim of recognizing and rewarding firms that make a significant contribution to UAE's economic development;
- Sheikh Saqr Award for Government: This was established by the Emirates of Ras Al Khaimah;
- Ajman Excellence Award: established and launched by the Emirates of Ajman;
- Abu Dhabi Award for Excellence in Government Performance: Launched in 2008 and targeted Abu Dhabi Government Entities;
- Emirates Government Excellence Award (EGEA): Established in 2009 and targeted federal government departments as part of the Sheikh Khalifa GEP;
- The Emirates Quality Mark (EQM): Developed by Emirates Authority for Standardization and Metrology to ensure that products fulfil the approved standards for both local and export markets; and
- The m-Government Service Award: Launched by His Highness Sheikh Mohammed in May 2013. The purpose of this award is to stimulate government services delivery to the public through smartphones technology around the clock (Dubai Government).

## Motivations of UAE Organizations for Quality and Competitiveness

In its 22 year history the DQA has awarded about 16 organizations the Dubai Quality Gold Award, the highest quality award in the UAE. Additionally, it has awarded over 250 organizations with the DQA. With this history, the DQA recently opened its doors to internal applications. Organizations which have received these awards acknowledge to have received various types of benefits ranging from the improved customer service to increased organizational performance. An example is a trading company which had an improved of the employee satisfaction from 74 to 90% in 2014 and improvement in customer satisfaction from 73 to 83% from 2012 to 2014 after using DQA service and winning the awards. The customer base of this organization also increased, thus its market share and profitability.

The motivations or benefits for organizations to apply for the awards are as follows:

- The opportunity to improve the processes with a well-established and tested model;
- The opportunity to benchmark; and
- The opportunity to share best practices and learn.

The DQA winner further provide following guiding principles for aspiring organizations:

- Effective communication across the organization;
- Having a clear understanding of the award program with respect to its system and process; fostering the internal core team members' understanding of the program with equal levels of clarity and comprehensiveness;
- Commitment from senior management; and
- A strong and qualified group of managers who are willing to drive the organization to achieve the required level of success.
- A commitment of the Senior Management
- A strong and qualified group of managers who are willing to drive the organization to achieve the required level of success
- Open minded Departmental Managers
- a clearly defined organizational Vision/Plan
- Creating a culture of quality in the organization
- Leadership drive and support throughout the organization
- Strategy development and communication to the employees
- training on the framework
- involvement of all employees
- resources at right time and right place

The key quality tools used by the winning organizations are the ISO 9000 standards, integrated quality management systems, Six-sigma, benchmarking, and a balanced scorecard.

## The ISO Journey in UAE

In their effort to be recognized internationally, organizations in the UAE are also pursuing certifications in international quality management systems (QMS) and indeed some of them have started implementation of internationally recognized QMS. The 2016 survey report by ISO, indicated that only 4682 organizations are certified by the body. Organizations implementing ISO standards have significantly benefited in that they are setting up a foundation for institutionalizing the achievements that they have already accomplished. The adoption of QMS has also seen the numbers of firms offering consultation, training, and certification on ISO standards increase leading to the increase in the number of the professionals certified in ISO standards. Since 2015, ASQ regional office in the UAE has been hosting

regional conferences on quality. Furthermore, the ASQ Middle East North Africa (MENA) office was opened by ASQ in Dubai in November 2013.

The adoption of international standards in safety, health, and environment such as ISO 14000 and OHSAS 18000 in the UAE gained momentum in the early 2000. The 2016 ISO report noted that a total of 1767 organizations in UAE as of the date of the release of the report had been issued with ISO 14001:2004 certification and another 153 organizations had ISO 14001:2015 certifications.

## Good Practices of Dubai Quality Award Winners

In the financial sector, a winning bank introduced an integrated management system to achieve business excellence. To accomplish this, the leaders stressed quality management, since they were aware of its importance for business performance. The leaders tried to encourage a culture of excellence to realize continuous improvement and provide the best service to customers. They only used internal resources to implement the integrated management system, which helped the team to learn more. Once they received information from the senior management to continue with the plan, they created a cross-functional team in the bank to identify the opportunities for improvements. To achieve this, the team conducted a gap analysis and two-stage certification audit over 9 months. The idea behind the integrated management system was to provide a safe environment for both the employees and visitors. This system also helped the bank to increase customer trust. Moreover, it served to improve employees' confidence by involving them in various matters.

Another winner, an automobile company, used two best practices—a balanced scorecard and video mystery shopping program—to help the organization in achieving its vision. These measured facilitated the collection of feedback and making necessary improvements. Today in the company, process management is carried out with the help of the balanced scorecard, which helps the organization in focusing on its future strategies. Implementation of a balanced scorecard helps individual employees greatly, as when a strategy is finalized by the chief executive officer (CEO), the information about the strategy is communicated to the organization's lower departments via meetings and discussions. This system helps all members of the organization in understanding the organizational vision, and it facilitates making the strategy achievable in various departments and among other employees working in the organization. Here, the implementation of a balanced scorecard helped the organization in improving its sales and gaining a greater market share. A well-arranged balanced scorecard system assists organizations in increasing customer satisfaction, allowing the organization to continue to expand.

The second best practice used by this automobile company was a video mystery shopping program, which exclusively targeted customer satisfaction. The video mystery program was executed to improve quality and customer satisfaction, thereby allowing the organization to attain business excellence and further growth. Before the program was officially introduced, it was first introduced to employees. They were trained to use the program and made aware of all its features.

Strategies for success represent the best practices of the Dubai Airport Freezone. The main aim of the Dubai Airport Freezone is to bring in more regional and international investors to improve Dubai's GDP. This can only be achieved by establishing a well-managed strategy. In 2008, the Dubai Airport Freezone had a strategic planning and excellence department that developed strategies and controlled its execution. The strategic department developed a new system to customize the strategy. Every 3 years, the Dubai Airport Freezone executes a planning process and makes improvements in planning. With the help of strategic process remapping, the Dubai Airport Freezone has generated 42% rise in the income. Moreover, the Dubai Airport Freezone recognizes the importance of employees; employees are provided with awards and other incentives. Above all, the Dubai Airport Freezone provides employee training, which has helped in its achievement of 84% employee satisfaction.

## Conclusion

The UAE's 22-year excellency legacy has indeed helped businesses to flourish in the region. The UAE is a land of multinational organizations, and the latest initiative of DQA, whereby it has been opened to international applicants, gives ample opportunity for organizations to benefit and grow from the excellence initiatives. This creates an opportunity to conduct leading-edge research on key performance indicators of various industries, including retail, oil and gas, and hospitality, as there is a shortage of credible research data in the field of quality and excellence in the region (Thawani 2014). It is important for business environments to share good practices within peer industries. This will help to create a strong quality culture in the region that will facilitate success, especially in terms of the culturally diverse organizations present in the UAE. Moreover, there is considerable lack of information on the effectiveness of the award and its relationship with business results.

Business leaders make quality a top priority. However, as industry constantly changes, quality should be seen as a journey and a moving target. In this context, learning from good practices and benchmarking performance will not only be crucial aspects of achieving success, but also a key for ongoing improvement in an organization. Quality frameworks like the DQA and others can be used for organizations' self-assessment, which will assist them in understanding "performance maturity" and setting targets accordingly. Many cross-cutting elements of a performance excellence culture, as characterized in this chapter, are vital for driving rapid and successful change in organizations and achieving high levels of performance excellence. The chapter suggested that performance excellence culture is a significant driver in the UAE performance excellence journey, and it is ultimately receiving world recognition. It is perhaps the most well-driven initiative in the world.

## Case Study: UAE Exchange

**Excellence in Practice: UAE Exchange Customer Happiness in Focus**

Nitha Damodaran, Associate Manager—Business Excellence at UAE Exchange Centre L.L.C, has made significant contribution in preparing this case to show the excellence in practice. Author acknowledges and thanks her enormous support for valuable inputs and being a role model to support the 'learning' initiatives.

UAE Exchange is a leading global remittance, foreign exchange and payment solutions brand, headquartered in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. Established in 1980, today, it is one of the widest globally networked remittance brands and a pioneer in digital adoption. Currently, UAE Exchange operates in 28 countries with close to 800 direct offices, and offers digital services like prepaid cards, online money transfers facilities, mobile-based applications and kiosks in many major markets. Over 9000 professionals, representing 40+ nationalities, collaborate every day to ensure consistent and enriched customer experience is delivered across multiple channels, bringing delight to more than 15 million customers worldwide.

This customer-centric mindset combined with a quality-driven approach, constant innovation in products and processes, and the deployment of latest technological advancements across all retail operations and digital channels is what differentiates UAE Exchange.

UAE Exchange is ISO-certified and has been honored internationally for its commitment to Quality Management, winning the European Society for Quality Research (ESQR) Quality Achievement Award and the Dubai Quality Gold Award. It is a member of prestigious associations, like the World Economic Forum and the United Nations Global Compact. The brand has been globally recognized and awarded for its corporate citizenship, customer service initiatives and business excellence.

**Organization Profile and Background**

UAE Exchange has become a household name for over 15 million customers and is their preferred brand when they think of money transfer, foreign exchange and payment solutions services. Established in 1980 with a single branch in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, the brand now has presence across most of the GCC countries and a total of 31 countries in five continents with close to 800 branches. Every day, more than 9000 employees representing over 40 nationalities, across the globe, strive towards one single aim—customer service and delight!

The remittance major offers a wide range of services, which includes Remittance, Foreign Exchange, Payroll Management, Bill Payments, Wealth Management, Travel and Tours and more. Various pro-active processes like dynamic customer enquiry system, self-operated kiosks, customer suggestions

programmes, and the trained multi-cultural service staff members, make customers' every visit, a memorable experience.

**Products and Services**

UAE Exchange has a legacy of going the extra mile for its customers and providing them with opportunities through which they can achieve their aspirations. A true financial supermarket, the brand offers a bouquet of financial services, customised to suit varied requirements of the customers. Some of them include:

- **FLASHremit**: With an aim to make money transfer a seamless experience for its customers, UAE Exchange has partnered with over 140 banks across the globe for FLASHremit, a real-time account credit facility. With this facility, customers can instantly and conveniently transfer money directly to their beneficiary account in a secured manner. Another advantage of this service is that the moment the account is credited, both the sender and the beneficiary receive SMS text notification.
- **gocash**: A MasterCard-powered multi-currency prepaid card, gocash is another innovative product from the brand. It offers the facility to carry six different foreign currencies from a pool of sixteen in a single card and can be used at any of the MasterCard ATMs or merchant locations world-wide. The exchange rate lock facility ensures the customer's money is protected against any currency rate fluctuation while the Chip and PIN technology in the card provides enhanced protection to the customer against counterfeiting and card fraud.
- **Smart Pay**: A product in compliance with the Wages Protection System (WPS) initiative of Ministry Of Human Resources & Emiratisation and UAE Central Bank to streamline the salary disbursal process. This product was created with the intention of empowering corporate entities and their employees. With this service, the employees could visit any MasterCard-enabled ATM or UAE Exchange proprietary Cash Deposit Machine (CDM) to withdraw their salary. As for the employer, it provides them with the convenience of loading the salary to payroll cards through WPS.
- Money2anywhere.com

  Money2anywhere.com is the brand's online money transfer facility that allows customer to send money directly from bank account/debit card/ credit card, to the beneficiary. Money2anywhere.com allows to transfer money to beneficiary's bank accounts and also avail cash payout services. With our strong correspondent banking network and more than 100,000 payout locations, online money transfer couldn't get more convenient.
- Foreign Currency Exchange, utility bill and credit card payments, mobile top-ups and secure savings option are the other services offered. Customers

can also use the services of Xpress Money & Western Union for instant money transfer as cash payout to any location.

**Infrastructure and Technology**

UAE Exchange has always believed that technology is a great enabler. It understands that the world is pacing towards a new kind of financial services experience—the kind that is swift and convenient. In response to this new demand, the brand draws on deep technological knowledge and foresight to constantly fulfil customers' needs and deliver solutions that work to their benefit. Employing state-of-the-art technology with a human touch, the brand's highly experienced technology teams thoroughly understand complex financial services architectures and look to create solutions that can positively address various financial needs.

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**

UAE Exchange has always been a socially conscious organisation. The organization has a structured approach in designing, implementing and measuring the impact of its CSR initiatives. The concept of Corporate Social Responsibility is developed from the company's vision to be the most admired brand by customers, employees and their families, partners and society at large. A well-defined Social Sustainability Charter and CSR policy act as a guideline for stakeholders at various levels in their interactions with Society and Partners. The Social Sustainability Charter has elements that develop employee relationship with the society, create financial awareness among the unbanked population in the region, cognisant of environmental impact among stakeholders and culturally connection. UAE Exchange develops and implements CSR initiatives (independent or collaborative) after understanding community/social needs, with support of with local/federal authorities/universities. The budgets are allocated and tracked for effective utilization under the Annual Corporate Planning Program. This integrated approach in CSR earned UAE Exchange the CSR Label (2012–2016) from Dubai Chamber, which recognises entities, which go that extra mile for the welfare of the society, they serve. An integral part of CSR team, provides aid in all forms and work with several NGOs for various environmental and humanitarian causes, across the world. Recently, UAE Exchange has been conferred with the Arabia CSR Special Recognition Award for its efforts and contribution towards sustainable business practices under the financial services category.

**Awards and Accolades**

Quality-driven approach with a customer-centric perspective has been the benchmark of UAE Exchange operations. It is this penchant for excellence that has won the brand various global business excellence and quality awards.

Since the beginning of 2017, the brand has been presented with the Service Olympian Award for Best Customer Experience Measurement, CIO Awards

2017 for Technology Infrastructure—Future Proofing Initiative and by the Dubai Department of Economic Development (DED) for the use of Arabic language through its dedicated "Hayakum" counters.

UAE Exchange was also conferred with the prestigious Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum (MRM) Business Excellence Award recently by His Highness Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Deputy Ruler of Dubai. The MRM Business Award, now in its 9th cycle, recognises businesses that are creating new benchmarks for businesses across the GCC and is dedicated to cultivating a world-class business culture in the region.

The brand has been officially recognised with the coveted Dubai Quality Gold Award as well as ranked among the top 20 best employers in the UAE by Great Place to Work Institute® in 2016. The brand has also been honoured with the Emiratisation Award by UAE Minister of Economy and International Business Excellence Award last year.

Another milestone the brand achieved was when it earned the naming rights from Dubai Roads & Transport Authority (RTA) to rebrand Jebel Ali Metro Station as UAE Exchange Metro Station. Today, it is the first remittance brand to establish itself in the Dubai Metro network with 17 branches covering the entire route.

Other awards include Dubai Human Development Appreciation (DHDA) Award, Dubai Service Excellence Scheme (DSES) Award, Sheikh Khalifa Excellence Award, Dubai Chamber CSR Label, Happiness in the Workplace Award by Dubai Chamber of Commerce, Global HR Excellence & Best Employer Award, Deutsche STP Excellence Award, Superbrands, Banker Middle East Product Award, Best Partner by Emirates National Development Programme, UAE Emiratisation Award, Service Olympian Award, Pan Arab Excellence Award, BIZZ Award in Oman, Best Exchange House in Bahrain, two FiRE Awards in Uganda, Social Media Brand and Social Media Financial Institution in Rwanda and Best Banking and Financial Services by the Seychelles Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Seychelles.

A member of prestigious global associations like SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication), it is also the first financial institution to receive TISSE 2012 certification in the Middle East and Africa region. Awarded by The International Customer Service Institute (TICSI), United Kingdom, the certification is in recognition and sharing of global best practices in customer service excellence. Another testament on the brand's excellence is the ISO 27001:2013 certification. Operating in a global environment makes it imperative for the brand to manage and secure the company and customer information from various security threats. Being the latest version of the International Standard for Information Security Management, the ISO certification provides a framework and a systematic approach to

implement effective controls that help in maintaining the confidentiality, integrity and availability of customer data.

**Way Forward**

Given the upward trends in cashless transactions, UAE Exchange is scaling up its offerings in the digital world, adding more value to the overall customer experience.

The brand continues to strengthen its technology capabilities keeping the customer at the heart of its business. Strategic partnerships with technology specialists like SAP for Customer Relationship Management (CRM), NICE Actimize for Compliance and SunGard for Automation of Treasury operations are some of the initiatives taken in this regard.

UAE Exchange leverages its 36-year legacy to enhance customer experience and exclusivity in the realm of money transfer, foreign exchange and payment solutions services.

Things you must know about UAE Exchange

- Established in 1980, with over 36 years of global operations.
- First Exchange House to reach one million Facebook fans.
- First remittance brand to win the Dubai Quality Gold Award (DQGA)
- First remittance brand in the UAE to launch and operate the first ever women-powered branch at Dubai Airport Free Zone (DAFZA).
- First remittance brand to have a key Dubai Metro station named after it.
- First and only remittance brand to have branches in 17 stations of the Dubai Metro network.
- First remittance brand in the Middle East to have TISSE (The International Standard for Service Excellence) 2012 certification.
- First non-banking financial institution in the UAE to get the coveted SWIFT membership in 1993.
- First remittance brand in the UAE to have a MasterCard Principal Membership and tie up with Visa for Visa Money Transfer initiative.
- Recognised and ranked among the top 20 best employers in the UAE by the Great Place to Work Institute©.
- Voted as a "Superbrand" in the UAE for the ninth consecutive year in 2017.
- Introduced 'Hayakoum', a dedicated customer service centre for Arab customers.
- Offers 'Taleem', an internship and training program involving real-time work experience, exclusively for Emirati students.
- World Economic Forum (WEF) member and regional partner.
- Commands 6% of the total global remittance market share.
- In 2015, globally handled USD27.50 billion in remittances and USD25.10 billion in foreign exchange.
- Strong correspondent banking relationship with 140+ global banks.

- Largest retail remittance network in the world with close to 800 branches across 31 countries.
- More than 9000 professionals, representing 40+ nationalities, serve a customer base of over 15 million.

*Best Practice Title: "Creating Happiness Through Innovating Experience"*

In today's competitive marketplace, the term customer experience has become more complex. Providing exceptional customer experience encompasses many things, customer service being one among them. But essentially it is any interaction a consumer has with an organization, and the perception of how a company treats them. Ultimately, a positive customer experience leads to customer satisfaction and loyalty, which results in customer retention as well as increasing cross-selling and up-selling opportunities.

At UAE Exchange, customer service is a culture than a practice. Innovative thoughts are being encouraged to create value moments throughout the life cycle of customer with the organization. UAE Exchange operates 148 branches across UAE and it's very important to have a uniform experience for customers at all locations. Every year, the organization conducts Customer Service Week and Customer Loyalty Month to celebrate our engagement with customers.

In the year 2016, taking inspiration from the UAE Vision 2021 and to contribute to the National Key Performance Indicator of **Happiness Index**, UAE Exchange introduced the project **"Creating happiness through innovating experience"**. The focus was on creating a happy environment at the customer interaction points through implementing activities and initiatives in an innovate, efficient and effective manner.

**About the Initiative:**

**Creating Happiness through Innovating Experience** was a yearlong project with various theme based initiatives such as Innovating Experience through Customer Feedbacks, Most Happiest Branch, Customer Loyalty Month, Customer Service Week, and Retail Employees Day.

Desired Outcomes
- Create value moments for customers
- **Understand the needs** and **exceed the expectations** of the customers
- **Bridge the gap between brand promises & customer experience** by motivating the customers to share their thoughts
- Promote **friendly interaction of employees with customers** to reinforce customer confidence on staff approachability

Individual branches were empowered to implement the project based on given themes & frameworks. The results and achievements were recorded and monitored centrally to ensure consistency. Organization's customer communication channels were extensively utilized during the project period for better customer engagement. Additionally, new customer and employee recognition programs were introduced.

**Deployment**

The Deployment Plan
- Centralized planning to ensure structured measurement
- Clearly defined themes for each initiative, which includes objectives, approach & deployment plan, performance indicators for measurement & review, and reward & recognitions for employee/branch/customer.
- Training the frontline staff to be more empathetic and go beyond providing what is asked for
- Enable the staff and other customer touchpoints (contact centre, social media channels) to create customer value moments.
- Empowering the staff with adequate information and support to enhance their service.
- Improve the quality of staff vs. customer interactions in terms of providing the right information on various products, services and troubleshooting.
- Employee driven customer engagement programs, games, and fun activities at the selling points to create a friendly atmosphere.
- Help the customers to give constructive and proactive real-time feedback on the service at the selling points
- Special reward programs for the staff to motivate customers to participate and engage.

**Activities at a Glance**

Innovating Experience through Customer Feedbacks (March 2016)—Proactively create forums for the customers to share feedback about service. Reward customers for their feedbacks and recognizing employees on positive feedbacks.

Most Happiest Branch—Customer Say (May 10–June 10)—Encourage branches to know their customers and surprise them with outstanding service skills; in return, customer rates the branch to identify the most happiest branch.

Customer Loyalty Month (June)—Engage loyal customers and recognize their patronage with the organization

Customer Service Week (October)—*Celebrating Convenience Celebrating Customer*—Create a unique experience for employees and customers through 7 days of celebrations with 7 different themes for each day.

**Table 3.3** UAE challenges and solutions

| Sl No | Challenge | Solution |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Orienting multi-cultural workforce to align with project objectives—employees of around 30 different nationalities work in UAE Exchange branches | Cross-Functional Teams involving multiple nationalities were functional in training the employees at the branches |
| 2 | Maintaining the right balance between customer expectations and consistency in service delivery | Ensured customers are recording their feedbacks after each interaction for real-time identification of gaps in service delivery |
| 3 | Adapting to customers' preferred communication channel | Gave the customer the freedom to choose the preferred communication channel |
| 4 | Keeping customer's interest alive and be the brand of choice | Continuous engagement activities at each touchpoint |
| 5 | Keeping customer happier and happier | Creating happiness through personalization—use of technological platforms such as SAP CRM to analyze customer history ie product usage or feedbacks received, to enhance customer service |

Retail Employees Day (on 12th December in coordination with Dubai Economy)—Recognize the efforts of frontline staff in making the customer happy through; leadership appreciations and various engagement activities.

**Challenges and Solutions**

See Table 3.3 Assessment and Refinement

Assessment Methodology
- Each initiative has been linked with performance indicators with qualitative and quantitative measurements
- Business results, customer feedbacks, number of customers engaged, and staff participation has been measured and results were shared with the process owners for necessary improvements
- Learnings from each initiative recorded for future improvements

**Refinements**

The project was helpful in having a better understanding on customer behavior and to capture their feedback on improving the services. Following are few subsequent changes brought into the system:

- Implementation of happiness meter at selected branches
- Introduced service enhancing measures;

   – First women powered branch in Dubai airport free zone
   – Exclusive counter, "Hayakum" for Arabic speaking customers
- Introduction of virtual assistant, **Zoey** to assist customers on common queries such as transaction status, branch location, currency exchange rate enquiry and alert, and contact points

Key Achievements of the Project
- Increase in number of customer appreciations from 51,308 in 2015 to 76,399 in 2016
- In 2016, overall customer satisfaction score improved from 93 to 95
- Customer satisfaction score on employee's interpersonal & customer service skills have increased from 94 to 95
- The organization's TAT for customer compliant resolution is 1.5 days as compared to the DSES standard of 7 days
- Improvement in number of customers engaged—more than 200,000 customers actively participated in the engagement activities
- The International Standard for Service Excellence Score—UAE Exchange has achieved a score of 91.7% as compared to 90% in 2015. With this UAE Exchange retains its highest level of recognition in TISSE, **International Excellence Level**.
- In 2016, UAE Exchange won Service Olympian Award for "Best Customer Experience Measurement"
- The project had positive impact on the employee's perception about the organization thus improving the position of UAE Exchange in the list of top companies to work for in UAE after Great Place To Work assessment.
- Internal recognition on Most Engaging Customer Celebration award for UAE operations among 31 country operations of UAE Exchange
- Continuous improvements in service standards has helped in winning DSES **Best Service Performance Outlet** award in 2017

Adaptability and Scalability
- Being in the service industry for more than three decades, UAE Exchange has established itself as a preferred brand by customers. However, a forum was required for regular engagement. An opportunity was created for healthier customer interactions through innovative experience and sharing their happiness quotient.
- Since the initiative was centrally controlled with predefined success indicators, it was easily established across all branches in the UAE. With the increasing number of customer feedbacks and appreciations received for employees during the first phase of the program, several other initiatives were launched in the subsequent quarters to keep the momentum.
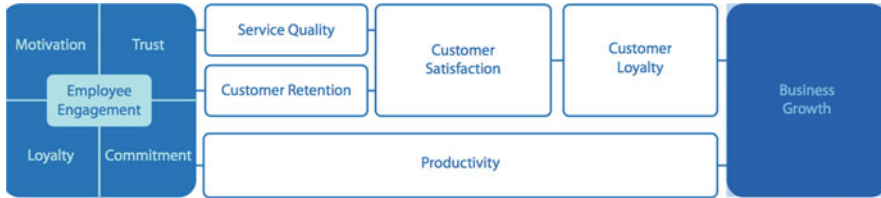
**Fig. 3.2** Employee engagement model. Source: UAE Exchange

**Excellence Through Employee Involvement**

The UAE Exchange has also adopted a unique employee engagement model called *Reflex* Amplified for Continuous Engagement (RACE) to motivate its employees. The simple model illustrated in Fig. 3.2 shows the employee engagement at the UAE Exchange. RACE has been used at the UAE Exchange to conduct assessments and build the relationships among its employees.

The RACE system has resulted in the following benefits:

1. Improved business performance: From the year RACE was implemented, staff productivity increased from 73 to 90% in 5 years;
2. Increased customer satisfaction: Surveys and questionnaires were administered to customers to examine their satisfaction with the UAE Exchange over the years, and the resulting graph showed that customer satisfaction reached 98.69%; and
3. Employee satisfaction: Teamwork and trust have made the environment more work friendly, as employees can trust their fellow team members and express their cultures without experiencing culture shock; the employee satisfaction level in the organization has risen from 83 to 88%.

## Key Questions

1. Examine the employee engagement model adopted by the UAE Exchange. Explain how it may be adapted in a culturally diverse organization to increase the employee engagement.
2. What do you think are the key quality values that the model has helped the UAE Exchange or others who use it to envisage?
3. Extend this model to integrate your organization's employee engagement philosophy.
4. Discuss the customer happiness approach of UAE exchange in relation to DQA or EFQM award criteria
5. Compare your discussions to any two other excellence frameworks

6. What lessons can be learnt from success tale of UAE exchange?
7. Prioritize a list of approaches that you might want to initiate in your own organization and justify why have you chosen them?

## Summary

Business leaders make quality a top priority. The chapter suggested that performance excellence culture is a significant driver in the UAEs performance excellence journey, and it is ultimately receiving world recognition. It is perhaps the most well-driven initiative in the world. Recently in 2017, with 22-year history of excellence, the DQA, invites to global applications. This another remarkable achievement opens a number of research opportunities to study the impacts of excellence programs in UAE, usage and effectiveness of the improvement tools in achieving higher level of organizational excellence, providing another success perspectives of a quality approach in multicultural environments.

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# Excellence in Action

## Leadership for Excellence

Nancy Nouaimeh, the Assistant Vice President of a food sector company in the United Arab Emirates, assumed that she had a reputation of being a "tough quality lady," as she was introduced to newcomers. In fact, Nancy was passionate and committed to quality, and in her tenth year with the company, newcomers had changed their opinion, saying, "Quality? It is not tough at all; it is fun!" Nancy recalled that her passion and the numerous lessons that she had learned from various quality gurus had helped her emerge as a leader in quality. It indeed was a relief for her to know the change in the employees' mindsets. In early 2016, she started a new class on the subject of quality in the workplace, called the "Gemba House of Quality," for junior chefs and food and beverage staff. She faced the challenge of making the course appealing, fun, and motivational for them. Lots of efforts were put into the course. At the end of the first session, the chief executive officer (CEO) asked a few of the attendees, "How tough was the course?" To his and Nancy's surprise, the staff answered, "Tough? Not at all! We enjoyed it, a lot of learning; we didn't know [that] quality could be fun and enjoyable."

How did she do it, and what do leaders do to achieve business excellence?

In present times, while competition is high, the long-term survival of a business depends on their commitment to quality at all levels (Conti 2012). More importantly, the need for effective leadership is increasing in today's fast changing world. Several researchers have contended that leadership is one of the most significant influential factors for achieving sustained business excellence. All most all global and national frameworks include a leadership criterion in their assessment and they place a huge emphasis on this. In fact, a more popular research observation is also that leadership

affects the innovation directly and in quality organizations, it is necessary for the top management to follow the strategic leadership to foster the innovative environment (Lin and McDonough 2011). The leadership has to build a climate of flexibility and adaptability to bring strategic change which is otherwise impossible without leader's commitment. Three quality philosophers (Crosby 1979; Deming 1986; Juran 1992) developed a common perspective regarding the role of leadership and the importance of leadership in the application of quality in an organization.

In quality management programs, a leader has several important roles to play. Crosby (1979) notes that the first role entails clearly and precisely state the objectives of the organization towards quality management. This is followed by leaders securing the commitment of his followers towards those objectives. The leaders should also define the method that will be applied in measuring the stated objectives and provide the much-needed motivation to the organization to accomplish its quality management goals. Additionally, Juran (1992) notes that involvement and commitment of the top level management to organization quality goals is important. Indeed, while slight variations exist, each of these quality theorists articulates that key leadership activities exist to establish quality improvements in the organizational system. The "core principles of total quality management suggest that leaders in any organization, regardless of their hierarchical level of functioning, focus on customers and continuous improvement by continually involving people" (Lakshman 2006, p. 42).

So what do best practice leaders do? A question that lynches needs to be answered by understating the necessities of these global excellence models 'leadership' criteria and the foundations of leadership for quality.

*Leadership in EFQM Model*  Leaders, in excellence organizations, secure their future through clear definition and communication of their core purpose that forms the basis for the overall Mission, Vision, Corporate behaviour, and ethics for their organization. Leaders are the champions of values that are dear to their organizations and act as role models of ethical behaviour, social responsibility, and integrity. By setting and communicating the direction and the strategic focus of the organization leaders develop and enhance the reputation of their organization, bring their people together and facilitate the achievement of the Mission, Vision and goals of their organizations.

Additionally, leaders develop and support a common leadership culture for their organizations and contribute to the review and improvement process of the effectiveness of personal leadership behaviours within the organization. Using a balanced set of results to review organizational processes, leaders provide their views on the short-term and long-term priorities and therefore manage the expectations of different stakeholders. There are several good practices that excellent organizations should make part of their operations (EFQM 2013).

So excellent organizations should do the following:

– Secure their future through clear communication and definition of their core purpose that forms the basis for the overall Mission, Vision, Corporate behaviour, and ethics for their organization
– Champion the values that are dear to their organizations and act as role models of ethical behaviour, social responsibility, and integrity, both within and outside the organization
– Setting and communicating the direction and the strategic focus of the organization, to develop and enhance the reputation of their organization, bring people together and facilitate the achievement of the Mission, Vision and goals of their organizations
– Develop and support a common leadership culture for their organization and contribute to the review and improvement process of the effectiveness of personal leadership behaviours within the organization
– Use a balanced set of results to review organizational processes, leaders provide their views on the short-term and long-term priorities and therefore manage the expectations of different stakeholders
– Improve future performance of the organization by evaluating results that have been achieved so far so as to provide sustainable benefits to all stakeholders
– Use factual and reliable information to make decisions and interpret current performance of the organization and predict performance of the relevant processes using the existing knowledge base.
– Adopt effective mechanisms for understanding futures scenarios to allow effective management of operational, strategic, and financial risks and thus deliver high value for all stakeholders

So, in excellent organizations, leaders understand and develop the underlying capabilities of the organisation. They evaluate the set of results achieved to improve future performance and provide sustainable benefits to all their stakeholders. They base decisions on factually reliable information and use all available knowledge to interpret current and predicted the performance of the relevant processes. Deliver high levels of stakeholder confidence by adopting effective mechanisms to understand future scenarios and effectively manage strategic, operational and financial risks.

In responding to different expectations and needs of stakeholders, various approaches and strategies are used by leaders to understand, anticipate, and respond appropriately. Leaders also establish accountability, shared values, culture of trust, ethics, and openness through the value chain of the organization. Also, leaders are responsible to both society and stakeholders and have to be transparent and accountable in their performance and make sure that all people are ethical, responsible, and display integrity in their actions. In financial and non-financial reporting, leaders have the responsibility of ensure transparency to stakeholders and appropriate regulatory bodies. Besides, leaders have a duty to encourage stakeholders to take

part in courses of action that benefit the wider society. From this discussion, excellent organizations can:

– Respond to different expectations and needs of stakeholders by using various approaches and strategies to understand, anticipate, and respond appropriately to their needs
– Establish accountability, shared values, culture of trust, ethics, and openness through value chain of the organization
– Be responsible to both the society and stakeholders and be transparent and accountable in their performance and make sure that all people are ethical, responsible, and maintain the highest level of integrity
– In financial and non-financial reporting, take responsibility of ensuring transparency to stakeholders and appropriate regulatory bodies
– Assume the duty of encouraging stakeholders to take part in courses of action that benefits the wider society

Through people working in the organization (employees), a leader reinforces the culture of excellence. For example, leaders provide inspiration to people by creating a culture of involvement, empowerment, improvement, ownership, and accountability through their experiences, actions, and behaviours. Leaders also have a role of recognition of the sustainable advantage by learning quickly and to respond rapidly as necessary. Additionally, leaders have a duty to support people throughout the whole organization to attain their targets, objective, and goals. Besides, leaders should recognize the efforts and achievements of people within the organization and respond in the right way. They should also be champions of a culture that encourages creativity and generation of new ideas, new thoughts, and brainstorming to encourage an innovative culture and therefore spur organizational development. Furthermore, leader should take the role of promoting and encouraging diversity and equal opportunities. Organizations therefore can for example:

– Provide inspiration to people by creating a culture of involvement, empowerment, improvement, ownership, and accountability through their experiences, actions, and behaviours
– Recognition of the sustainable advantage by learning quickly and the respond rapidly when required
– Assuming the role of supporting people throughout the whole organization to attain their targets, objectives, and goals
– Recognize the efforts and achievements of people within the organization and respond appropriately
– Be champions of a culture that encourages creativity and generation of new ideas, new thoughts, and brainstorming to encourage an innovativeness and therefore spur organizational development
– Actively take the role of promoting and encouraging diversity and equal opportunities for everyone

- Display flexibility in their operations; they are able to make sound decision on time based on previous experience, accumulated knowledge base, and available information, and therefore they are able take proper consideration of the impact of such decisions
- Considerate to the planet, people, and profit when faced with conflicting situations that require making difficult decisions
- Ensure all the relevant organizational stakeholders are involved in the sustainability aspects of the organization
- Use a structured and focused approach to project management and process improvement
- Ensure creativity and innovation by encouraging and prioritizing creativity
- Ensure the success of promising ideas by testing and refining them, allocating resources and making sure they are implemented within a suitable timescale

Finally leaders are also required to demonstrate their ability to make sound, timely decisions, based on available information, previous experience and knowledge, with consideration of their potential impact. They need to involve and seek support and contributions from all relevant stakeholders for changes necessary to ensure the sustainable success of the organisation.

*Leadership in Practice* Leaders have to bring together the efforts of many in an organization for quality initiatives to succeed. It is essential that senior managers act as visible leaders if the productivity and service improvements in a quality strategy are to be realized in practice. It cannot be entrusted to a group or simply delegated to subordinates. For example, an implementation of an EFQM Model at Bosch Rexroth S.P.A was fully supported by the CEO and CFO of the company (EFQM 2013). It has around 430 staff and has a turnover of 320 million euros. Before implementing EFQM model in 2014, the company had drastically affected by the economic crisis and thus went through a constant restructuring process. The organization confronted this by designating an EFQM group with the goal that each office would have an EFQM individual who might add to the administration report from his area of expertise perspective. The organization began with a strategy development process and then moved to create a 'management document'. Senior executives must be the driving force behind its implementation and contribute personally, in word and deed. Finally, for excellent delivery of strategy and policy in the organization, the strategy and policy should be reviewed and updated time to time.

Moreover, communicating policy and strategy among people through the whole organization gives clear objective to people working for the organization (Mi Dahlgaard-Park 2008). For example, at Bosch Portugal, different forms of communication are utilized for different purposes. These approaches are integrated in the several strategic deployment tools employed by the organization; e.g. face-to-

face in daily management, SystemCIP, PointCIP, LeaderCIP to tackle strategic challenges and ways of working, the *OK! Bosch magazine* and information boards for general issues. Accordingly, in TQM organizations, there is strong involvement of top management from the beginning and clear commitment from senior leadership to drive innovation and continuous performance improvement. Leaders identify if the gaps exist among the actual performance level of the organization and take various corrective actions accordingly. Leaders mainly identify the potential that exist among various employees and entitled them for various work activities as per their interest and experience to achieve better results. Leaders eliminate the burden and boredom of work from employees working activities by increasing their morale and motivate them towards the achievement of organization shared goals. A quality customer service must come from an organization's senior management team—who must lead by example. The focus should be on customer needs and satisfaction. For example, At Bosch Security Systems—Portugal, An EFQM award finalist of 2016, By leadership, by example and through a culture based approach, the Plant Manager has inspired the Management Team, the wider leadership team and all of the associates in the business to new and much higher levels of performance and behaviours.

## Strategy for Excellence

Strategy is the second enabler in the EFQM framework. "Strategy" enablers emphasis that strategy is to be deployed in a systematic manner to achieve the desired set of results, balancing short and long term objectives. Every organization has stakeholders which may include

- Customers
- People
- Partners & Suppliers
- The community

Strategy criterion of EFQM states that excellent organizations are those that put in place clear goals and objectives to spur innovation within their businesses and refine those goals and objectives with time to match the innovative achievements of the organization. In planning its future, an organization should have a strategic mission that is geared towards taking care of the interests of stakeholders. This strategy is developed best by understanding the internal performance of the organization, the capabilities of the organization, the needs and expectations of the stakeholders, and the external environment in which the business operates. Additionally, an organization has the responsibility of ensuring its operations are sustainable economically, socially, and ecologically. Once the needs of stakeholders are understood, the organization should make an effort and put in place mechanisms that will facilitate the identification of current and future needs of its stakeholders.

The organization can employ a variety of tools to help the identification of the needs of stakeholders. Such tools include focus groups, surveys, SWOT analysis, benchmarking, and scenario creations. In a nutshell an excellent organization does some of the following:

– Puts together the expectations and the needs of its stakeholders and considers them as important inputs during the development of organizational strategies and maintains alertness to any changes that may occur
– Performs an analysis of its operational environment so as to identify and understand its market trends, societal trends, and global and economic forces that impact the operations of the organization
– Understands how the organization may be impacted both in the short and long run by changes in the legal, political, and regulatory frameworks of the markets in which it operates
– Makes use of various strategies to identify any changes in the external environment in which its operate and appropriately translate those changes into future scenarios for the organization
– Performs an analysis of operational and performance trends for both the present and the past and develops capabilities and capacities of the organization so as to improve on the weaknesses of the organization so as to enable it achieve its goals
– Analyses core competencies of both existing and potential organizational partners and develops an understanding of how different partners can contribute to the success of the organization
– Determines how the performance of the organization could be impacted by new business models and technology
– Performs a comparison of the performance of the organization against set benchmarks and standards to understand the strengths of the organization and identify the areas that need improvement
– Has clear strategies and related policies for the achievement of organizational mission and vision
– Facilitates the integration of sustainability concept with the value chain, core strategies, and process design of the organization by allocating resources necessary for the achievement of these goals
– Understands the key results required for the achievement for the mission of the organization and the progress of the organization towards the achievement of its vision and strategic goals
– Performs scenario planning to identify mechanisms that can be used to handle the strategic risks that the organization faces
– Understand how the key competencies of the organization can create shared benefits for the wider society

To achieve the status of an excellent organization, everyone in the organization should understand the direction that the organization is taking in addition to understanding how their roles will change in the future. For this reason, communication of the future plan of the organization is important for success to be achieved. Excellent

organizations understand that communicating with their people should be in a way that it makes everyone feel they part of the organization. In excellent organizations, EFQM criterion indicates that communication is best done using bottom up, top down, and sideways strategies. Bottom up provide channels manager with the opportunity to test commitment and understanding while sideways communication ensures that the risk of assuming inappropriate responsibilities by a group or department is eliminated. Generally, excellent organizations make use of several communication tools that ensure their communication on their future plans is clear and well understood. Additionally, excellent organizations customize their communications and make them specific and meaningful to the roles. This is done by linking such communication to individual or team tasks. This alignment of people increases their contribution towards the achievement of organizational goals. In other words, excellent organizations do some of the following:

- Set organizational targets based on benchmarking, organizational competence, existing standards, and their goals
- Map and align their strategies with their structures, processes, and projects to make sure that the implementation of any change is done rapidly throughout their value chain
- Make available resources (technical, financial, and physical) to support the development of the organization
- Perform directed and systematic deployment of strategies and policies to facilitate the achievement of set organizational goals through a clearly defined cause and effect relationship
- Actively communicates its strategies and associated policies to its stakeholders
- Have clear objectives for creativity and innovation developed as a result of their understanding of the market of operation and threats and opportunities of the organization supported by appropriate resources and policy framework

*Strategy in Practice @ Bosch Group* (EFQM 2017b)  The Bosch Group is one of the top companies in the world in supplying of technology and its related services. With an estimated workforce of about 360,000 associates around the world, the company made sales worth 49 billion euros in 2014. Bosch laichach/Immenstadt plant, a company of the Bosch group, is the biggest employer in the Allgäu region. Bosch laichach manufactures various powertrain products including injection components, sensors, and brake control systems.

BhP has implemented a very systematic and robust process for strategy formation and review (EFQM 2017a). There is an annual process for collecting, consolidating, and using information on stakeholder expectations, and also on changes to the external environment. The information is analysed by a strategy working group comprising some senior plant management. In bi-annual workshops at leadership level, these strategic projects are defined in detail, and later reviewed and adjusted based on the results of stakeholder and market development reviews. In parallel, the communication and deployment of the strategy throughout the organisation is

designed. The design of the strategy commutations is done "hand in hand" with the design of the strategy itself rather than bring prepared as a follow on activity.

The design of the communication approach follows the principle of "by head, by heart and by hand". In other words the communication collateral and engagement activities are designed to interact with people on an intellectual, emotional, and tactile level. The BhP strategy is reflected by simple and easy to recognised visualisation and supplemented by slogans and pictograms. This includes a suite of visual tools. Imagery related to the strategy has been created and is made available across the plant in different ways (Paper and plastic cards, short summary documents, posters, large promotional shapes, naming of conference rooms, playing cards, drinking mugs, chocolates etc.

The strategy, strategy implementation and the related communication are well integrated and structured. The deployment is actively supported by the management team, and understood and enforced on all levels.

The realisation of the long term strategy is achieved by the strategic improvement projects and sub projects, which are each steered by a member of the leadership team. Each project is communicated proactively as part of the strategy communication. Each project has a clear structure and assigned responsibilities. Each major project is reflected by a corresponding piece of the "strategy puzzle".

In addition to the strategy communications collateral, there are a range of talks between plant leadership and employees, which provide more detailed explanation of strategic direction. As a result of the comprehensive strategy communications, employees at all levels show a good degree of understanding of the strategic challenges facing BhP, and the responses in place. They also understand how their work relates to and contributes to the overall strategy. This is reflected in 88% positive answers in a strategy survey that has been conducted amongst our employees. There are video screens in every area which also support communications—allowing the distribution of the core strategy messages, approaches, results and improvements. The comprehensive and well-resourced communication concept constitutes leading practice in terms of strategy deployment.

Finally, the approach to strategy formation and review, the communication concept and the respective outcome of the deployment are reviewed by the management on a regular base at dedicated review meetings. This has resulted in adjustments to the communications process and also to the specific improvement projects.

## Managing People for Business Excellence

'Where Dream Comes True' is an illustration of Apparel group based in UAE. Having made to be "employer of choice" Apparel group bagged 215 awards for its various retail sector. Human Capital Officer at Apparel group does not hesitate to dedicate Apparel success to its people. People are our greatest asset, believes Human Capital Officer of Apparel group, who has worked for several years at Apparel. However, this success has been built over the years by using various management approaches. In this section we will explore the exclusive people management practices for excellence.

People have always been essential to organisation, because they provide inspiration, creativity, vision and motivation that keeps an organisation alive (EFQM 2013). Many studies have shown that high levels of workforce engagement have a significant, positive impact on organizational performance (NIST 2017). Indeed, the economy is changing to a new way of working, where one of the major determinants of an organisation's success is the intelligent use of people's knowledge.

Accordingly, The People criterion, explains the importance of the People in the organization. This criterion helps an organization to identify, manage and improve an organization's people capabilities and talks about the importance of involving them and communicate with them. Finally, it also explains how to reward, recognise and take care of the people in the organization.

Specifically, the idea behind the people criteria is to encourage overall human resources strategy for enabling an organization to achieve and sustain its results. Therefore, it puts in place some of the critical elements that are crucial for achieving success in terms of human capital. It is important firstly to define nature of the employees who contribute to an organizations work. Although people are generally full-time paid employees, however people may contribute to the organisation as part-time or piece-work contracts, short-term contracts, as temporary labour to fill in for peaks in demand or sickness, as Sub-contractors or even as support staff. Truly, Organisation does not exist without such type of employees. It is difficult to know what type of employees are needed in the organization unless it is known what it is wishing to achieve. Hence it is important for organizations to:

- Clearly define performance levels of its people necessary for the achievement of organization strategic goals
- Match people plans with organizational strategy, structure, key processes, and new technologies/innovation policies and process
- Adapt the structure of the organization to the achievement of their strategic goals
- Review people strategies and related policies and plans regarding organizational involvement of employees, employees' representative, and taking an innovative and creative approach to people management when necessary
- Use appropriate policies to manage recruitment, career development, and mobility and succession planning of its employees to ensure the entire process is fair and provides equal opportunities to all people
- Improve their people strategy, policies, and plans using various forms of employee feedback such as surveys
- Have effective plans for attracting, developing, and retaining best talents necessary for meeting organization needs presently and in the future
- Help their people improve their performance and engagement by appraising them appropriately
- Develop the competencies and skills of their people to make assure them of their future employability and mobility
- Provide their people with opportunities, resources, and competencies to allow them to contribute fully to organization development

Additionally, it is important for organizations to empower and involve employees in various aspects of the organization. While encouraging employees to work in teams is important, empowerment is a different thing and involves giving employees the right training required to perform their tasks and providing them with a conducive environment to perform those tasks. EFQM (2013) defines a team as a group of people whose action is directed by a common purpose and who have a shared responsibility for the success or failure of their efforts. From this discussion, excellent organizations should perform the following in regards to their people:

– Should empower their people and align team and individual objective to those of the organization to make sure that people realize their potential in spirit of partnership
– Be aware that innovation has far reaching application and can apply to processes, organizational structures, products, and business models
– Provide a conducive environment for creation of a culture of creativity and innovation to allow people in the organization to develop an open mind-set for quickly responding to challenges that may face the organization
– Build their reputation and image by encouraging their people to be its ambassadors
– Encourage their people to participate in activities that have far reaching contribution to the wider community
– Use good strategies in communicating with their people and about the needs of its people by understanding organizational needs
– Clearly communicate the direction that the organization should take to make people understand and therefore provide their contribution for spurring organizational success
– Encourage sharing of information, knowledge and best practices among employees and thus enable the achievement of organization dialogue
– Develop a culture that facilitates constant improvement of teamwork, sharing. and collaboration throughout the value chain of the whole organization

Recognizing the performance of employees, rewarding them, and caring for them is good not only for human resources but also for the entire organization as it ensures effective working relationships. For this reason, excellent organizations recognize that their relationship with people goes beyond employment contracts and salaries. In line with this spirit, excellent organizations are those that:

– Have transparent policies and strategies for aligning benefits, remuneration, and the employment terms of its employees
– Provide motivation to its people to be actively involved in the improvement of the organization and innovation and appropriately recognize their efforts and achievements
– Provide a working environment that addresses the reality of 24/7 connectivity and globalization to ensure a healthy work-life balance

- Promotes a culture of recognition, care, mutual support not only between individuals but also between teams that exist in the organization
- Promote and encourage a diverse workplace and embrace diversity of the market and community that the organization serves

Finally, information on how well an organization is performing and its impact on the markets that it serves can be obtained from the feedback that employees provide. For this reason, the collection of such information from employees is crucial as they not only see how it happens but also have first-hand experience. Therefore, excellent organizations:

- Use various performance indicators and perception measures to guide their successful deployment of organizational strategies and accompanying policies solely based on the information about the expectations and the needs of its people
- Use the needs and expectations of its people to set clear targets for key people in line with the organization chosen strategy

*People Enabler in Practice* Analysing a people enabler of an organization, an assessment team for example identified following strengths in people enabler. These included:

- Alignment of people plans is part of annual planning process. The People & Organizational Development Strategy is directly aligned with JumboMumbo strategy and aims to develop a sustainable and high achieving workforce within an environment that is conducive to attracting and retaining the 'Best employees'
- Alignment, Involvement and Empowerment are the key drivers of employee engagement in JumboMumbo.
- Employee go through a chartered unique "My Learning Journey" programme
- Jumbo Mumbo uses Performance Based Variable Remuneration (PBVR) tied to individual and team performance, and these incentives are aligned closely with the organizational thrust.
- Jumbo Mumbo has a Recruitment and selection hiring process to employ right people with right skills for the right position for job/organizational fit whilst at the same
- Ambassadors are identified from departments to ensure top down and bottom up communication and create catalysts and link pins for organisational transformation.
- JumboMumbo also hosts social events like Gala Dinner, Star Awards ceremony, team outings to encourage communication in an informal setting, which will lead to employee trust and engagement
- Has well ness programs to build a work-life balance and stress free, healthy living for employees such as "We Care", and "Step Up Challenge"

# Partnerships and Resources for Business Excellence

This case illustrates the good practice example retrieved from knowledge base of EFQM (EFQM 2017b). Liverpool John Moors University (LJMU) received a Prize for "Building Partnerships" in the EFQM Excellence Awards in 2011. LJMU strongly depends on partners from the colleges, for student recruitment, deployed through the support and endorsement of the UK's largest and respected employers IT recognised that to maintain this growth, they must forge strong partnerships, both within the UK and overseas. Since becoming a university in 1992, the LJMU grew substantially, in line with the policy of successive governments, to extend the scope and accessibility of higher education in the UK. They currently have 2590 employees. LJMU recognises that to widen the participation in UK, with additional income streams and to increase the reputation of LJMU in international markets, they must identify principal academic partnerships with colleges and HE providers, both within the UK and overseas. So a Collaborative Partnerships Team manages the important academic partnerships. Other partnerships for recruitment, best practice sharing, housing, employers, student union and key suppliers are also identified and managed: the objectives are still to increase the recruitment of international students according to the LJMU strategy and also to secure high quality supplier partners subjected to regular tendering by revising specifications. All the Faculties in the University are fully involved with mainly long term partnership management, At the University management level as an example, the Property Service Team has retained contractors for property and plant related maintenance. These contractors have controlled access cards and are inducted into LJMU in terms of how they are expected to work and conduct themselves on LJMU sites. Moreover, as a result of deploying the excellence framework, LJMU achieved a financial surplus for 3 consecutive years, exceeding their forecast budget. LJMU graduates get better jobs. The average salary in 2010 for LJMU graduates was £21,800; £1300 higher than the UK average. The World of Work Program is recognised by the UK Government as best practice in ensuring future student employability. The number of students applying for courses at LJMU increased by 50% since 2002. So what and how do organization deploy the partnership and resources enabler for achieving success?

Partnership is a working relationship between two or more parties creating added value for the customer" and it may be formed with, amongst others, customers, society, key suppliers, educational bodies or Non-Governmental Organisations (EFQM 2013). In leading organizations, partnership relationships are created with suppliers to form value adding supply chains. The aims of the approach are to support the achievement of the organization's objectives, and increase customer satisfaction. Indeed, managing partners which leverages the unique expertise and know-how of partners, is the starting point to achieve mutual benefits. However, it is hard to build a strong supply chain partnership (SCP) with business partners, such as manufacturers, distributors, suppliers, and customers in fast-changing global markets. Although, the concept of Partnerships goes beyond the traditional customer/supplier relationships but "normal" suppliers still have their place and role to play (EFQM 2013).

Additionally, recently organizations have made efforts to reduce their supplier base. Suppliers are now forming partnerships with their customers providing organizations with added value that is difficult to achieve in any other way by using money, time or materials (EFQM 2013).

This section provides some thoughts on how organizations might improve the performance of their organisation in the area of managing Partnerships and Resources. It explains what is a partnership, where to find partners and how to manage an organisation's resources.

Excellent organisations plan and manage external partnerships, suppliers and internal resources in order to support strategy and policies and the effective operation of processes. They ensure that they effectively manage their environmental and societal impact. Under this criterion, four key aspects are necessary for organizations to embrace. In order to identify and differentiate the partners for example, excellent organisation may do some the following:

– Appropriately and in line with the strategy of the organization segment suppliers and partners so as to develop the best policies for an effective working relationship
– Develop and build a sustainable relationship with its suppliers and partners based on mutual understanding, respect, and openness. Ensures that organizational strategies and values guide the working relationship with suppliers and partners
– Have appropriate network for enabling the identification of potential partnership opportunities that allow organizations to enhance their capacity to generate additional stakeholder value
– Create mutual benefits for their stakeholders by working together with partners and mutually supporting each other with resources, expertise, and knowledge
– Have clear understanding of important financial parameters that include turnover or cash flow
– Makes use of their process, policies, and strategies to provide necessary support to the activities to ensure they their financial resilience
– Optimize the use of their resources by having an appropriately designed financial plan and processes for control, reporting and review
– Appropriately locate resources to allow them meet their long term needs as opposed to short term needs so as to maintain their competitiveness
– Have governance processes or all their financial operations and processes are well customized or suited for different levels that may be existent in the organization
– Perform evaluation, selection, and validation of investments and, if need be, divestment of the assets of the organization while maintaining the respect to various impacts that such decisions may have economically, ecologically, and on the society

Excellent organizations, overall can perform the following activities:

– Manage equipment, buildings, and materials in a sustainable manner financially and environmentally by using clearly defined policies, processes, and strategies
– Effectively manage the lifecycle of equipment, buildings, and materials by optimizing their use and ensuring their physical security
– Determine the impact of lifecycle of equipment when in operations and during service so as to understand the impact on environment, safety, and health

– Mitigate environmental impact either locally or globally by setting local and global standards based on existing legal and regulatory environment
– Advance various standards (may be social, environmental or economic) within their markets of operation

Furthermore, organizations are also required to:

– Have a technology portfolio in place that strongly supports the overall strategy of the organization
– Perform evaluation of their technology portfolio so as to improve the agility o the entire organization, its process, and projects
– Actively involves the relevant stakeholders in developing and deploying new technologies so as to maximize the resulting benefits
– Make use of technology to support creativity and innovation culture in the organization
– Perform evaluation of emerging and alternative technologies and address their impact on environment and performance of the organization
– Make sure that accurate and sufficient information is provided to leaders to support timely decision making
– Analyse existing data and generate information and knowledge to be shared and used within the organization to improve organizational performance
– Engage relevant stakeholder using proven approaches and make use of knowledge and contribution of each stakeholder to drive creativity and innovations of the organization
– Protect their intellectual property by actively monitoring the access to information by its people and other external users to ensure security
– Identify opportunities for innovation, creativity, and improvement through establishment and management of learning and collaboration networks

Like people, there are others assets in the organization which must also be utilized for maximum benefit and therefore organizations should be able to identify these assets and should know how to segment them and what percentage of the capital employed is given to fixed assets.

Excellent organisations also ensure they have processes in place that help them to manage data, information and knowledge to best effect. They know what is important, why it is important and who needs to have access to it. So an Excellent organisations uses data and information in the current performance and capabilities of processes to identify opportunities for, and generate, innovation.

## Process and Resources in Excellence

EFQM's 2012 awards prize winner in "managing by processes" category is BMW Regensburg plant—Germany (EFQM 2017a). This has been made possible by a structured and sustained approach to process management and process improvement over 9 years. This

manufacturing flexibility is understood to be at global role model level. This flexibility is achieved due to the high qualification level of the staff and the effective and efficient design of processes. All processes are described, communicated and controlled via key parameters. The EFQM Model has helped BMW Regensburg plant to achieve a competitive advantage regarding their flexible production process, helping to ensure they meet the expectations of their customers. Despite the economic crisis, BMW Plant Regensburg improved the overall satisfaction of the employees in 2012.

A process is a sequence of activities which adds value by producing required outputs from a variety of inputs (EFQM 2013). So, all organisations use processes ordering material, making products, selling services (EFQM 2013). Process management in the organization is important as the efficiency and the effectiveness of processes will affect the whole series of business decisions. Hence process management is one of the core internal capability of an organization for continuous improvement and delivery of high value to the customers. Specially, in recent times, every industry in the world is becoming more and more competitive and customers are becoming more aware and conscious of value for money. So, today's organization are required to constantly assess and evaluate their current business process for achieving higher levels of process efficiency and effectiveness while reducing any kind of inefficient process steps, poor utilization of resources or non-effective process outcomes. Currently, new challenges in the market, plus countless customers' desires of customized products force organizations to improve their designs. Moreover, resources and costs reductions tactics impose business to restructure their processes. Therefore, a rising interest in the topic of process management in organizations had been noticed for the last 20 years.

Processes are the core of any business to run, each process consists of a set of activities designed to generate particular outputs. In general, processes are divided into core, support, and management processes. Core processes are those which create value for customers, while support processes guarantee that core processes remain to function over the time, whereas management processes support in planning, monitoring, and controlling other processes. Process management enables organizations to deliver value-added outcomes through controlling its processes in a systematic manner. So the process view is built on the belief that the functional areas within an organization need to work together based on a common goal if the organization is to run more effectively and efficiently (Hyatali and Fai Pun 2016). Organizations should also be capable to redesign their processes and continuously improve them to face challenges and survive in this changing environment (Ceptureanu 2016). Not only that such moves will leads organizations to a great competition between organizations, and various preferences among customers, therefore, adjustments should be applied to business practices to develop them constantly (Brajer-Marczak 2016).

Business process is an action or set of actions that serves specific service for precise customer. The business process system endorses from various practical areas of business like human resources, production department, operational process, Information technology. Through a organized way of managing processes, Organizations can achieve benefits such as increased customers trust and lower costs.

Process improvement, on the other hand, concerned on achieving the process performance. Overall the process optimization focuses on increasing the added-value for customer and organization (Sujová et al. 2016).

In this section we will explore the process criterion of excellence framework and understand how organizations embrace this. Finally, we will also learn what are the key aspects that need to be considering in implementing or assessing this criterion particularly under the EFQM Model.

*The EFQM Criteria* The EFQM (2013) highlights that an organizations processes are meant to develop Products and Services that create optimum value for customers. So it is essential that organizations are innovative in creating their processes by undertaking needed market research, customer surveys and other forms of feedback to anticipate and identify improvements in the product and service portfolio. Besides excellent organisations define their business model in terms of core capabilities, processes, partners and value proposition in order to effectively promote and market their product and services. Any representation of a process should include the input, activities, output and the resources required.

There are several process and resources that organizations can use in their journey of becoming excellent. One needs to ask themselves the following four basic questions about these processes.

- Who are the Customers?
- Who are the Suppliers?
- What performance indicators describe well the performance of the processes?
- Are right control loops in place?

In order to identify the process, organizations can use following methods:

- **Brainstorming:** This is a technique where people discuss all possible business' activities and then decide which are the most important for their business
- **Interviewing key Stakeholders:** Holding the discussion with the key people who are to be affected by an activity
- Organizations can also use professional external experts to help identify the key processes.
- A "Porter" model can also help an organization to identify initial processes

Overall, organization need to answer the question—which processes are key to achieving the business objectives? In addition, it is also important to know what are process performance requirement and if they are able to meet the business objectives as well. In order to help this key ambition, following set of questions are necessary to be asked in relation to each process:

- Key Stakeholders' view of performance,
- The organisation's desired future state and
- What the competition is doing

The flow of activities and relationship between them must be clearly illustrated. The activities of the organization can be described and understood using a high level view. Such a diagram is known as level 0 diagram. Level 0 diagrams can be used for detailed modelling of organizational processes. Modelling of the sub processes can also be done to allow proper description of the working levels and the operation of the process so as to facilitate re-engineering and improvement of processes to increase effectiveness and efficiency. Generally, excellent organizations have two categories of their key processes that include *Business or Customer facing processes* and *Support and Management processes.*

Organisations can decompose the a key processes down to at least another two layers: sub-process level and procedure or task level (where each task or procedure represents a step in the specific sub-process level). A flowcharting techniques can be used to draw a process. Simultaneously it is also important to identify the measures for the processes.

Customer facing processes are those that add value to a product of service purchased by a customer. On the other hand, support and management processes are those that make sure that resources required for ensuring the success and alignment of business/customer facing processes in line with the organization strategy. Moreover, performance of an organization can only be done by having the right measurement tools in place that will facilitate monitoring, control, and improvement of the overall performance of the processes. The measurement of processes normally covers various dimensions that include quality, cost, and time dimensions and usually include both qualitative and quantitative measures. Good measurements also address the efficiency and effectiveness aspects of organizational processes. Lastly, the management and review of processes after a certain period in the organization is also advised. Tools for periodic management and review of processes include Statistical Process Control (SPC), ISO 9000 & ISO 14000, Failure Mode Effects Analysis (FMEA) and Six Sigma.

Accordingly, excellent organizations should consider doing some of the following:

– Implement organizational strategy using a framework of key processes
– Properly manage business end processes including those that go beyond organizational boundaries
– Make sure that there is clear understanding of process development, maintenance, and improvement and that process owners understand their roles and responsibility
– Develop indicators for process performance and measures for process outcomes to allow efficiency and effectiveness of key processes to be reviewed
– Use data, standards, and benchmarks to monitor and improve process performance and drive creativity and innovation
– Make deliberate efforts to create customer value and if possible involve customers in development and innovation of new products and services
– Improve service and product portfolio by researching their market and using customer surveys to collect information to aid product improvement process

– Constantly update the organization portfolio based on the changing needs of their customers
– Actively manage their full product life cycle through a responsible development of the product and service portfolio
– Have good knowledge of who their existing and potential customers are and therefore predict their needs and expectations
– Turn the needs and expectations of existing and potential customers into value propositions that are not only attractive but sustainable
– Implement a business model through clear definition of value proposition, targeted group of customers, distribution channels, and unique selling points
– Promoting products and services using a marketing strategy that targets customer and specific users groups
– Make goods and services in line with value proposition offered to customers and meet or exceed the needs and expectations of customers
– Develop a value chain that is not only efficient but effective to make sure the promised value proposition is delivered consistently
– Maximize customer experience by providing employees with required resources, competencies, and empowerment programs
– Manage product life cycle by considering their impact on safety, public health, and environment and taking appropriate measures such as recycling or reusing to mitigate their impact
– Segment customers in line with the strategy of the organization and appropriately managing such segments by means of appropriate policies and processes
– Determine short term and long term customer requirements and meet them
– Have an open and transparent policy for building and maintaining dialogue with customers
– Institute continuous monitoring and review of customer experiences and perceptions and make sure that there are mechanisms for providing appropriate feedback
– Making sure customers understand their responsibilities regarding the use of organization products and services

*Process Management in Practice*  Further to better understand this sub-criteria, we introduce a mini scenario of an organization *Quick Five!* which began its journey of excellence and undertook a self-assessment. The assessment indicated that Quick Five is on its progressive way towards excellence maturity.

Accordingly at Quick five demonstrates that:

• They have clearly defined processes and process owners and it is known through a Process Mapping & Ownership system
• Their Customer experience is enhanceds through a Service Improvement Initiatives Program
• Their Critical services across the company are monitored using Service KSI's and MIS reports

Quick five for example had demonstrated its process capability in its self-assessment as follows:

– Our Products are designed through 'Product Lab' where interactive brainstorming are done to ensure customer needs are addressed. Product is reviewed based on sales staff feedback and market acceptance.
– We roll out campaigns & promotions in a structured and targeted way (across media, including social media) using a Focused Marketing Calendar
– We use Competitor analysis and industry benchmark are used for product benchmarking and related improvements. These are reviewed annually.
– Products are launched through events, product trainings etc.
– Frontline employees at customer contact desks on products and services are trained on the new products and process/services are reviewed & amended for continuous improvement through a Service Improvement Program
– To ensure on-going engagement with customers, customer management is deployed using 'customer life cycle management system' (CLMs). Customer feedback survey is performed to gauge health of the CLMs.
– Customer retention team has been established and customer retention program is offered. Monthly review of the same is done. As an improvement, coupons were introduced in 2014 to enhance customer retention.
– Customer loyalty program is in place which is assessed annually during strategy session.
– The applicant has created a Customer Retention team that engage inactive customers and offers them customized retention programs
– Through a Customer Feedback Survey, the company engages continuously with customers to meet their expectations
– A Loyalty program is in place to manage the expectations of diverse group of customers by offering them services and discounts suiting their needs

## Assessing Business Excellence Enablers

As an organization, it is important to understand where *an organization stands in terms its performance against the organizational goals*. So based on the choice of the excellence model organizations can undertake a assessment to get an idea of its main strengths and weaknesses. A typical set of questions are to be answered for each of the enablers (refer to Chap. 7). Ideally, an organization would have made some start or may be progressing on these various aspects and since it is a subjective decision, the responses to question indeed cannot lie in a binary solution of 'yes' or 'no'. These judgements can be based on following scale suggested by EFQM

• No Evidence/Don't Know
• We have plans!
• On our way!
• Close to good!

- Fully done

The next step then would be to reflect upon:

1. What are the Strengths of organization in this area?
2. What are the areas for Improvement in relation to each of the enablers?

This assessment will provide an idea of what an organization does well and what is required to improve as an organization. Action plans can then be developed to improve the each of the criterions.

Please Note: Check list or assessment sheets can be obtained from the EFQM website.

## Conclusion: Enablers in Multicultural Context

In short, for managing quality in an organization, senior management must intervene (Lee and Ooi 2015). They must recognize each employee's contribution and accomplishments. Leaders must promote innovation, risk-taking, open communication, teamwork and continuous learning. This is particularly because multicultural and diverse organizations face the twin challenges of creating synergy among their culturally diverse employees and coordinating their activities to maximize the efforts for achieving excellence. As the leaders play a key role in taking forward the quality commitment, it would then be necessary to improve individual leadership coordination and management skills for a multicultural environment by acquiring skills of culture sensitiveness and building on cultural competencies. While participative, situational and transformational leaderships are quite favourable for quality to thrive, as Rothacker and Hauer (2014) suggest a situational leadership completed by the use of transformational and authentic leadership as well as ethical and emotional intelligent behaviour, can be used as a basis, to motivate employees with different national backgrounds. Transformational leadership describes a process of transforming/changing people and focuses on values, standards and long term goals. Indeed, there is no formula for the absolute right way in multi-cultural management, since the interests differ from each other in diverse teams, leaders should try to achieve a balance in the stakeholder-groups and develop ability to build one to one relationships with each other. Often the challenge of multicultural management is the awareness of the different mentalities and cultural influences. So, when the employees drawn from multi- or cross-cultural background, the task of the leader becomes even more complicated and complex (Lothar 2011). Therefore it is strongly recommended that leaders pay more attention to the harmonization of work mentalities as well as the to the stakeholder-culture management. Lothar (2011) further explains, that typically, everyone in a multicultural group expects their leader to be a visionary, trustworthy, dependable, proactive, dynamic and capable of energizing the group. Moreover, teams that make a distinctive impact by delivering superior performance

in a sustained manner are the ones nurtured well by the competent leaders (Kappagomtula 2017).

Accordingly for excellence organizations, the management of a supply chain is very important. It is important to maintain the maturity and resilience of a supply chain over time. Many organizations are now pursuing supply chain resilience and is considered an important part of sustainability.

A key reason to address supply chain resilience is that supply chain disruptions are having a negative impact on business performance and not only firms must learn to recover this quickly, but also should be immune for long-term supply chain resilience to emerge as high performing organizations. It is also a known fact that most firms are not recovering well and fast enough from supply chain disruptions (Hendricks and Singhal 2005). Moreover, a supplier or procurement strategy focused primarily on cost reduction without sufficient regard for the risks makes organization more brittle or venerable in terms of its products and services. So moving forward it is important to conceptualize a typology of supply-side resilience capabilities into an excellence framework and then validate these capabilities and their constituent bundles of practices through empirical examination of high performing organizations.

## Case Study: Leadership at Abela

**Excellence in Practice: A Case of Leadership in Practice at ABela Co**

This case is about Nancy Nouaimeh, VP for Quality at Abela Co Author acknowledges and thanks her immense support for valuable inputs and being a role model to support the 'learning' initiatives for quality.

The VP for Quality at Abela Co is in a quality leadership position for more than 10 years and she explains this position provided her with a tremendous satisfaction, both at a professional and personal levels, helped her gain new skills and shape her leadership behaviours. Profound quality leader says, "If I am to define leadership, it is the one whose work is to make a difference at all levels". So for her it is a mix of skills and competent ownership of high level performance and achievements. Nancy illustrates her quality journey as below: She points out if it is not for the quality initiatives and best practices we embed, these would have been our biggest issues and challenges:

- Lack of clear direction and focus on matters important for the progress of the organization and the business.
- Lack of alignment between functions and departments where each develops his plans according to his need rather than the need of the organization and business.
- Unachieved corporate strategic objectives.

(continued)

- Less competent and happy workforce and of course inefficient teamwork.
- Less focus on Quality & Food Safety as competitive advantages, and hence low scores at culture excellence surveys.
- Less process efficiency and higher wastage percentages and costs.
- More suppliers' performance issues.
- Unresolved customers' issues.
- Product and service quality issues.
- More internal conflicts.

Across the years and through the different performance measurements utilized, the impact of the leadership and strategy approaches deployed was very positive and led to results demonstrating the deep rooting of quality, an established positive quality culture and other improved performances.

*Culture of Excellence:* In Abela, food safety was and will always be our number one priority. One of the challenges that Nancy faced as Quality Leader in the organization, is to establish a culture of quality that is beneficial to the continuous improvement process needed to drive performance, but most importantly a culture that works towards adding value and in harmony with the food safety culture in place. The results she achieved along the years proved the success of our approach in tackling the issue. She started by identifying the common areas of action, and all our plans were articulated around what she believed to be the base for both cultures:

- Joint Quality & Food Safety team for leading ISO certification and continuous improvement
- Focus on people development and alignment
  - Accredited in-house training center and Learning and Development Academy were established to tailor trainings that respond to our needs and the needs of our multicultural workforce (three main languages, visual aids)
  - Cross-functional committees for improvement projects, which helped the alignment of different sites, business sectors and departments.
  - Balance between decentralized and centralized quality related activities
  - Quality led internal improvement projects for key areas that impact quality, such as suppliers' performance among others, with a special consideration given to the below:
  - Managing cultural sensitivity due to the multicultural workforce.
  - Well managed processes with clear process map and a set of KPIs.
  - Top-down drive, with constant involvement and bottom-up feedback.
  - Reduce waste and cost reduction.
  - Improving processes efficiency.

**Table 4.1**  Culture types

| Quality—2016 | 81.4 |
|---|---|
| Food safety—2016 | 82.6 |
| General—2016 (reflecting both combined) | 81.7 |

In 2015, Abela decided to measure the culture in-place in a structured manner, through a third-party provider. Not much of a surprise; The obtained result was remarkable, the food safety culture achieved a score of 79%. In 2016, it was time to measure both cultures- quality and food safety- and understand the impact of one on the other and the barriers, if any, considering different groups of the workforce. Once again, a remarkable total score of 82%, which represented an A$^-$ Grade, where industry average at the same period was 69%. (See Table 4.1 of breakdown of the three cultures measured). Efforts deployed to create a positive Quality Culture not only were beneficial for Quality but also for Food Safety. Furthermore, this exercise enabled them to understand the perception and definition of Quality, given by our workforce's different groups (divided into operators, supervisors and managers) and the barriers to higher levels of Quality and Food Safety Culture Excellence as perceived and ranked by the same workforce groups. Seen by the managers, one of the important barriers was multi-cultural workforce, while for operators, on the top of the list came "Time" as a barrier for implementation of safe practices and quality, which gave us a negative indication on time management skills and work load. In this context, designing actions to tackle the barriers from both points of views was needed to further enhance excellence culture score in the upcoming years.

Clients' satisfaction index: Measured internally through an in-house developed system and criteria benchmarked with industry practices, clients' satisfaction is evaluated yearly, using a survey form addressed to the senior management of our clients. Results are segmented, business sectors wise and by operations managers who are the accounts managers. Many internal trainings, documented standards, and operation-specific improvement actions were developed yearly, impacting positively the score achieved year on year and enhancing the customer experience (See Table 4.2).

Suppliers' performance: As a Quality leader, Nancy required to work with Purchasing on establishing a system to measure the performance of our suppliers, considering the challenging nature of some of our raw food material

(continued)

**Table 4.2**  Clients satisfaction

| Year | Clients' satisfaction index achieved |
|---|---|
| 2016 | 86 |
| 2015 | 85 |
| 2014 | 79 |

purchased and the fact that we deal mostly with local distributors who have little impact on the product quality but where service and food safety are very important. The project resulted in a very comprehensive system, measuring satisfaction with our current suppliers at three different levels:

1. End users' yearly evaluation
2. Production team & storekeepers o Head of departments (culinary, purchasing and food safety)
3. Non-conformities recorded during receiving
4. Incidents reported during and after production

A unique index for each of the suppliers was then calculated and used to:

– Determine their level of performance
– Evaluate the need to notify the supplier in case of breaches to the SLA through an alert system established internally following best international standards
– Grading of suppliers
– Benchmark similar suppliers

Major improvements in the performance of some key suppliers were observed across the years, with a decrease in recorded non-conformities and improved individual satisfaction indexes. Measured through a survey conducted by a third-party, the results our company achieved over the years had showed a positive trend with 94% (top two-tiers) of staff proud to be part of the company in 2013, and 97% (top two-tiers) in 2015.

Among the other best practices, some of the prominent ones illustrated by Nancy are:

*Open door policy*—being available to listen to staff is an eye-opener on the others' point of view of what is happening in the other side of the room. Giving necessary time to interact with your staff, especially when they request it, has many advantages; staff enhanced moral and engagement, bringing leader closer to his people, enhance his knowledge of his organization or department, build positive relations at a different level allowing leader to identify course of action needed to enhance internal practices, behavior and mindsets, which can help him identify what actions are needed to enhance teamwork internally and hence the overall culture. "We consider "Quality" is considered as a competitive advantage, which leaders act upon to achieve the best results. In our company, we design our internal standards and management systems by aligning them with the requirements of the local regulations and in compliance with the relevant international standards. While doing that we always look at integration opportunities. Our approach is voluntary, in which we set the bar

even higher than what is stated in the local regulations, allowing us to maintain the 100% compliance rate in all circumstances".

Leaders involvement in improvement projects—Involvement of the organization's leaders, including CEO, in improvement projects aiming at enhancing the triple bottom line has proved to be the quickest and best mean to get the buy-in of the teams in the projects to be conducted and achieve expected results. Being part of the kickoff, the leaders pass a strong message on the importance of the improvement projects, provide necessary alignment of the various efforts and give clear direction to the teams on what should the outcome be in line with the strategy established for the organization.

Use of Quality Tools and Concepts for improvement—Whether in culinary, operations, F&B service, food safety, stores, purchasing or the pure quality function, quality tools and concepts have found their place in our organization. Measuring what is done and the outcomes of our activities provided leaders with tools to identify the needed actions to enhance efficiency and productivity across the organization. Process mapping, standard procedures, lean projects, PDCA methodology, 5S projects, root cause analysis are all taught and used internally in different trainings and knowledge sharing events, through our Learning & Development Academy and various Team Challenges projects.

Emphasize on the internal customers—Often overlooked and under-emphasized is the concept of internal customer. AVP explains, "In my role as quality leader, I give a special attention during the trainings I provide to this notion, comparing the good service level provided to the external customer and the improvement it could bring if similarly given to the internal customers. One of the ways to identify areas for improvements, if not made explicit by the concerned parties, is "pain storming session" where pains of the internal customer can be identified in a structured manner and prioritized for further improvement actions". ALDA the internal learning & developing academy is an evidence of organizations success, where CEO and Senior Management conduct courses such as Marketing, Finance for non-finance, Nutrition, Storekeeping and Quality open to any employee if he/she can comprehend the course etc. Hidden talents were discovered in this process.

Finally, Nancy recollects, strategic direction to the team and establishing the appropriate culture and organizational values is of great importance. They established the organization's compelling vision, mission, and values, involving all key stakeholders in the exercise. As well as, identifying the strategic objectives and goals that are to be achieved in the short and long-term by the entire organization were set. These were indeed designed and tailor-made to suit the business scope and to enable the organization to complete its mission and vision and perform in the best manner considering its capabilities. Leadership drew the strategic roadmap for the organization, facilitating the alignment of the departments' efforts and plans. Resulting in the formation of appropriate actionable plans drawn from the departments strategic objectives, are cascaded down from the organizational objectives. The actionable plans,

were coupled with the provision of necessary resources to achieve them. By setting the strategy and direction and being held accountable for that, the leader takes the front line when things are not following planned course of actions. Same goes for the strategy for quality. In a quality department, the strategic objectives are fully aligned and cascaded down from the corporate strategy, with a clear focus on continuous improvement to be made in internal processes, quality and performance of internal and external stakeholders. The quality department strategy is established through an exercise that aligns it with the objectives of other departments as to avoid conflicts in plans and priorities. Getting involved in some high-level projects with the team, paying visits to the GEMBA and interacting with staff, partaking in major staff events and talking to staff are effective ways leadership has pursued to get knowledge and proximity to their workforce.

As I stated in the beginning, a leader makes a difference at all levels, and acting as a responsible citizen and a role model for everyone in the organization, was the key to the success of our CSR programs, recognized twice by the achievement of the CSR Label from Dubai Chamber in 2012 and 2016. Before 2012, CSR was a spontaneous approach in our organization without formal plans and objectives, but a sincere and genuine one driven by the belief of the organization leaders to give back to the less fortunate and the society in which we live, the planet that is nurturing us, our clients and suppliers without which our business wouldn't even exist.

## Key Questions

1. Describe the approaches mentioned in the case of Abela company to illustrate the leadership enabler.
2. What do you think the other organization can learn from the best practices of Abela
3. Assume that you have tasked to assess this organization under the EFQM excellence criteria. Present some of the potential strengths that you would like to present at an initial group meeting?
4. What specific aspects mentioned here are of your concern and you might consider requiring some additional information.

## Summary

This chapter emphasises the importance of various elements that include leadership, strategy, people, process, partnerships and resources. This are termed as "Enablers" in excellence models or the drivers that are needed to achieve the organizational

excellence. Each them are not only critical but are also interlinked to produce the outcomes termed as results in excellence models. These enablers need to be fostered to gain a superior performance. Excellence organizations therefore illustrate some of the good practices that are associated with each of these enablers. In short it is emphasized that leadership is essential for laying the path of excellence to direct its resources towards achieving that excellence. It is very essential for the leaders to understand that they have to set the vision for the organization and all the people contribute towards the achievement of that vision. Strong leadership is the base for laying the foundation for the successful business. As important as leadership, strategy is another essential component for organization success. There are several tools that organizations can utilize for converting plans into cascaded objectives in a linked and integrated manner. Effective leadership is required for making the objectives clear to the employees. Involvement of the employees directly with the company makes the business effective. Further, effective leadership helps in engaging the employees in the activities of the business. Involvement of the employees also helps in motivating the employees as they feel valued in the company. Involvement of the employees in the decision making makes the objective of the company clear to the employees. Further, effective leadership helps in increasing the productivity of the company. Leadership is also required to help the employees work together in a team and must ensure process, resources and needed partnerships are in place. Similar to leadership are the other enablers such as strategy, people, process and products and services. Each of them are essential to derive the outcomes. Leadership plays a key role in integrating each of these for a superior performance. There are specific guidelines to implement these enables successful. Finally the chapter helps to organizational managers to carry out an assessment of enablers discover what their strengths are and the opportunities for improvement in each of the enabler areas.

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# Understanding Sustainable Organizational Results

**5**

Kinsley Kay, is a new business excellence manager at Jumbo-Mumbo hailing from Milan, Italy. Along with Kay another prominent recruitment is that of group CFO S Muralidharan from the city of Bengaluru in India. They both are welcomed at Jumbo-Mumbo by group HR Manager Silvester Leone, who has worked with Jumbo-Mumbo in Dubai for 11 years since he relocated from south africa. Jumbo-Mumbo a Dubai based organization, has indeed taken its baby-steps towards their excellence journey and has received a first level of recognition of Dubai Quality Appreciation Program in 2014. After these recent appointments, Jumbo-Mumbo being an aspiring organization, now expects its senior business excellence manager to carry out and lead an internal self-assessment in anticipation of preparing for a Dubai Quality Award. So how should Kinsley now begin to assess Jumbo-Mumbos various achievements since its last recognition in 2011?

## Introduction

All organisations generate results from the action of transacting information and knowledge between two or more parties everyday (e.g. staff to staff, staff to customers etc. (EFQM 2017f). In fact, every stakeholder of an organization is ultimately interested in knowing the organizations business results—be it a customer, employee or a shareholder. More precisely, in excellent organisations, all actions of every employee are designed to add value to the business and therefore to influence performance and the specific results the organisation achieves (EFQM 2013). The central of TQM approach in fact is the achievement of organizational excellence expressed in terms of its 'results'. So, results indicate a milestone of the achievement and the progress of the organization. A crucial task for organization is to capture, measure and monitor these results or outcomes of the business activities.

Indeed, without the results it is difficult in an organization to create a mind set for aspiring and motivating for superior performance.

Accordingly, excellence framework requires organisations to consider results involving customer, people, society, and key business results. The purpose is to evaluate what the firm is achieving in these areas. After all, a robust, results and measures of results will help organizations to identify the right resources needed to achieve the desired performance (Tourish 2012). This chapter thus helps to understand the benefits that organizations may achieve from their investment in excellence models.

## Understanding Results Categories in Excellence Models

The two globally well-known excellence models discussed in this book are Baldrige Framework for performance excellence and the EFQM Model. In this section we will therefore understand the results criterion in relation to these models. The 'results' criteria in general is concerned with what the organisation has achieved and is achieving (Madan 2010). Most of the excellence framework classify these results as outcomes that are to be achieved as a result of 'good practices' based on excellence models. The outcomes or the result areas in an EFQM model are classified as customer results, people results, society results and business results. When an organization undertakes its assessment, results and trends of customer, people, society and business results should be addressed in terms of: (1) the organisation's actual performance, (2) the organisation's own targets (wherever possible), (3) the performance of competitors and (4) the performance of 'best in class' organisations (Madan 2010).

In the four results areas discussed above, it is clear that excellent organizations are those that (1) have a clear set of performance indicators for determining successful deployment of the strategy of the organization as defined by relevant stakeholder needs and expectations; (2) demonstrate good business results for at least 3 years; (3) perform segmentation of specific performance areas of the organization so as to understand the needs, expectations, and experience of customers; (4) make use of business stakeholders needs and expectations to set clear targets for key business results in line with organizational strategy; (5) study the impact and trends of business results and their impact on performances indicators by understanding the underlying reasons and drivers of those trends; (6) demonstrated confidence in the future performance of the company as shown by cause and effect correlation previously established; and (7) have a clear understanding of the performance of the organization as compared with that of similar organization and be able to establish targets (EFQM 2013).

Similarly, The BCPE results category provides a systems focus that encompasses all results necessary to sustaining an organization performance.

*Customer-Focused Results* Customer-focused performance results demonstrate how well an organization has been satisfying their customers and engaging them in loyalty-building relationships. Excellent organizations, therefore, make use of relevant data to predict their performance as viewed by customers and other stakeholders. Relevant data is that which covers;

- Satisfaction and dissatisfaction of customers
- The rate of retention, gain, and loss of customers or customer accounts
- Complaints from customers, management of those complaints, resolution of complaints, and warrant claims
- Perceived value of the product or service by customers based on price and quality
- Ease of use and access by customer to organization and its products
- Brand advocacy by customers
- Customer ratings, awards, and recognition of the organization and its products. Rating from independent organizations are also important data

However, there are also results that go beyond satisfaction because customer engagement and relationships are better indicators and measures of future success in the marketplace and of organizational sustainability.

*Workforce-Focused Results* Workforce-focused performance results provide a clear picture of how well an organization takes care of its workforce. It provides a picture of how productive and engaged a workforce is based on the care and learning environment that the organization provides. Workforce results may be organization-specific factors or generic. Example of generic factors includes workforce turnover, safety, satisfaction, and grievances. For purposes of comparison, local and regional data can be used for generic factors. On the other hand, organization-specific factors are those that can be assessed to determine the engagement of the workforce and climate of the working environment. Examples of organization-specific factors are training, re-training or cross-training of employees, workforce empowerment, partnership between employee unions and organizational management, and employee involvement in volunteer activities.

*Leadership and Governance Results* The key results in the areas of senior leadership and governance, that demonstrate the extent to which your organization is fiscally sound, ethical, and socially responsible. It is important for organizations to practice and demonstrate high standards of overall conduct. Governance bodies and senior leaders should track relevant performance measures regularly and emphasize this performance in stakeholder communications. So under this category, results should include environmental, legal, and regulatory compliance; results of oversight audits by government or funding agencies; noteworthy achievements in these areas, as appropriate; and organizational contributions to societal well-being and support for key communities.

*Financial and Market Results* Financial and market results are important in demonstrating the financial sustainability and achievement of an organization in the marketplace. These results are constantly tracked by top level management of an organization so as to keep pace of the financial performance and viability of the organization. Depending on an organization, financial measures and indicators may include the following; profits/losses, revenues, budgets, net assets, cash position, debt leverage, earnings per share, financial returns, and financial operations efficiency (receivable, collections, billing etc.). The performance of the market place can be measured using various indicators that include new products introduced into the market, business growth, and percentage of revenues from new products sales.

In the next section we will understand how to collect and measure these results specific to EFQM categories of results.

## Assessments of Customer Results

EFQM (2013) emphasis that excellent organisations achieve and sustain outstanding results that meet or exceed the need and expectations of their customers. Customer satisfaction is a measure that refers to what the organisation is achieving in relation to the satisfaction of its external customers, where the external customer is defined as the immediate customer of the organisation (Madan 2010). Excellent organizations thus initiate customer focused strategies within their organization to yield good results. It is indeed now fascinating to see how organizations have realized "adding value" to customer experience is ultimate requirement to remain in a long-term business relationship. For example, Aéroports de Lyon—France has a very strong customer-focus as it thinks 'customer is on driver's seat' (EFQM 2017f). Another organization namely, Wakefield and District Housing (WDH), a non-profit charitable organisation which provides affordable housing for lower income and other vulnerable district's households, exhibit the role model characteristic of focusing on customer and market knowledge and on customer relationship (EFQM 2017b). Through an on-going dialogue with customers and exploration of socio-economic trends it managed to anticipate future demands customer in focus organisation overview and its market, a new independent housing association. WDH is trying to spur growth by turning to new sources of customer and market information (EFQM 2017b). In fact their customer relationship believed to be is going far beyond performing regular surveys as their customers can access WDH services 24 hours a day, every day through OneCALL system. City of Glasgow College (CoGC) is another example which has been identified by EFQM as providing value for Customers (EFQM 2017a). CoGC identifies its main customer groups, and segment them. This ensures that learning and teaching services and students' guidance services are tailored and customer centred. Customers' perceptions are reviewed constantly to ensure that teaching and supporting student services are continuously developed in order to maximise the students' learning experience. The College's dialogue with their customers is continuous, open, transparent and embedded into management systems. Student engagement mechanisms to enable good

communication with customers such class representatives, the Student Association, Course Action Development meetings (CADM) and systematic student surveys contribute to an on-going improvement of teaching practices. Segmenting customers in another well-known approach to serve the customers effectively and efficiently.

Further for obtaining sustainable customer results customer orientation of just meeting and exceeding expectation is not enough. A strong customer orientation is to be derived through developing strategies that envisage customers future requirements. Nilüfer Municipality in Turkey recognized for such strong customer orientation by EFQM (2017d). *The Alpenresort a resort in Austria, recognized by EFQM* succeeds in continuously adding additional value to their customers not only by measuring and using the information of customer satisfaction through surveys, but also through their enthusiastic employees which try to delight guests on every possible occasion and through intensively passing through guest information within the different teams of the resort (EFQM 2013).

Truly the customer experience in this highly diverse, globalized and competitive market, has evolved from having satisfied customers to loyal customers and then onto creating delighted customers. In other words, in highly competitive context it is important to have happy "customers". The happy customers are becoming a norm and 'happiness' forms a major measurement indicator.

Excellent organizations therefore:

– Have a clear set of performance indicators for determining successful deployment of the strategy of the organization as defined by stakeholder needs and expectations
– Have demonstrated good people results for at least 3 years
– Perform segmentation of specific performance areas of the organization so as to understand the needs, expectations, and experience of customers;
– Utilize business stakeholders needs and expectations to set clear targets for key business results in line with organizational strategy;
– Study the impact and trends of business results and their impact on performances indicators by understanding underlying reasons and drivers of those trends
– Demonstrate confidence in the future performance of the company as shown by cause and effect correlation previously established; and
– Have a clear understanding of the performance of the organization and how such performance compares with that of similar organization and be able to establish targets

In monitoring, understanding, predicting, and improving the performance of an organization, an organization can make use of internal measures. Internal measures can also be used to predict the impact that customer perception can have on the performance of the organization. The internal measures and indicators used by an organization should provide a vivid understanding of deployment and impact of customer strategies and related policies and processes employed by the organization. Areas on which internal measures could focus include customer service, products and services delivery, customer support, and complaints handling.

Quality or business excellence Managers can undertake a quick assessment by asking following relevant questions:

- Does your organization survey its customers to monitor their satisfaction?
- Does your organization survey measure the loyalty of your customers? Does your organization survey measures if your customers are recommending you to others?
- Do you capture and monitor complaints and suggestions of your customers.
- Do you monitor the customer's perception of your performance?
- Do you have positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators in the customer survey.
- Do you achieve your targets of on various customer measures?
- Do you monitor and predict your performance and compare it with benchmarks.

## Assessment of People Results

EFQM (2013) emphasis that excellent organisations achieve and sustain outstanding results that meet or exceed the need and expectations of their people (EFQM 2013). EFQM (2013) standards require excellent organizations to report results that not only meet or exceed the needs and expectations of their people but also ensure that such results are sustained. Therefore, people results refer to the achievements of an organization in terms of its people satisfaction. People refer to all employees or individual employed by the organization. People satisfaction with the organization is measured in respect to various factors that include training, communication, promotion, career development, and health and safety among other factors (Madan 2010). So an organization that establishes various approaches to boost the performance must fundamentally create a mindset that without the cooperation, involvement and engagement of its diverse people, no initiative are going to result in expected results. Therefore, engaging diverse staff with the values of the organisation which will in turn lead to delivering the strategic objectives. For example, Ricoh Belgium has successfully grown through mergers and acquisitions, achieving an exemplary integration of the people, with the management team generating a "one family" atmosphere (EFQM 2017e). Infact, they say "What matters to people also matters to us" ... This is the claim of bespoke software specialists sp. Z.o.o, where values are the basis of all activities, and the "People" are most important of them (EFQM 2017f). They think about their people every time they want to implement a newidea. They take care of their employees and try to bring more than a little happiness and fulfilment to their work. They think the time that is given to people does matter and it influences their decision as to whether to work for them or not.

In this respect, excellent organization, in relation to their people, ensures the following;

- Have a clear set of performance indicators for determining successful deployment of the strategy of the organization as defined by relevant stakeholder and needs and expectations of their people

– Demonstrate good people results for at least 3 years and sustain such performance
– Perform segmentation of specific performance areas of the organization so as to understand the needs, expectations, and experience of different people within the organization
– Utilize business stakeholders needs and expectations to set clear targets for key business results for its people in line with organizational strategy
– Study the impact and trends of business results and their impact on performances indicators by understanding the underlying reasons and drivers of those trends
– Demonstrate confidence in the future performance of the company as shown by cause and effect correlation previously established based are its people
– Have a clear understanding of the performance of the organization and how such performance compares with that of similar organization and be able to establish targets

Several performance indicators and the perception of people in the organization about the organization is an important source for obtaining data relating to people results. Ways in which this data can be obtained include through the use of focus groups, surveys, structured appraisals, and interviews. People perceptions provide useful information on deployment of people strategy by the organization and the impact of such deployment.

There are several internal measures or indicators that can be used by organizations to understand the performance of its people and thereby improve or predict their performance and the impact that it could have on the organization. These indicators can also give a clear picture of the impact that the organization people strategy and related policies and procedures have on the overall performance of the organization. These indicators or measure include competency and performance management activities, involvement and management activities, internal communication, leadership performance, and training and career development.

Managers can undertake a quick assessment by asking following relevant questions:

• Do you have people survey that monitor the satisfaction of your employees.
• Do you monitor the understanding of the employees on the strategy and the quality of internal communication.
• Do you undertake exercise to map the employee competencies to the job skills needed
• Do you measure employees' productivity.
• Do you positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators concerning your people
• Do you achieve the results that you set for your people
• Do you benchmark your results with others

## Assessment of Society Results

EFQM criterion emphasis that excellent organisations achieve and sustain outstanding results that meet or exceed the need and expectations of relevant stakeholders within society (EFQM 2013). In the excellence models, the role of the organization in satisfying the needs and the expectations of the larger community is also put in question and includes organizational approach to environmental issues, quality of life, and conservation or preservation of global resources (Madan 2010). Therefore, in respect to societal or community issues, excellent organizations do several things. Question therefore are what type of society results are to be achieved by the organization. For example, As EFQM (2017b) illustrates, WDH social value adding services generates a social return on investment and therefore contributes to boost the local economy. The average return on investment across all offered services in terms of social value generated within the communities is 4; that means every invested pound by WDH in the district generates 4 pounds of social value. In addition their risk awareness against their rapidly changing environment and proactive planning for risks reduce the extreme volatility in their turnover and earning. As a result, they could go beyond the boundaries of their own organisation and create added value for their customers and make a significant and measurable contribution to their society.

Similarly, Bosch factory in France has a 20-year history of implementing CSR as a core strategy of its organisation and target for this organisation is to achieve the lowest cost per part produced and assure the lowest downtime of production tools (EFQM 2017f).

Alcan iceland ltd Recognised for excellence—5 stars—2012 for its corporate responsible behaviour. It has reached great results in health, safety and environmental impact. Environmental performance is one of the key indicators for ISAL's performance with respect to meeting the expectations of society (EFQM 2017c).

So with regard to societal outputs, excellent organizations may do some of the following:

– Based on the needs and expectations of relevant stakeholders, excellent organizations make use of perception measures and indicators to determine the successful deployment of people/community strategy and its associated polices
– In line with its chosen strategy excellent organizations set clear targets for key societal results as dictated by the needs and expectations of stakeholders
– Excellent organizations gain the understanding of various stakeholders in the society through segmentation of such stakeholders and developing knowledge of their needs and expectations
– Demonstrate good society results for at least 3 years and sustain such performance
– Excellent organizations study the impact and trends of business results and their impact on performances indicators by understanding the underlying reasons and drivers of those trends

– Demonstrate confidence in the future performance of the company on societal issues as shown by cause and effect correlation as previously established
– Excellent organizations have a clear understanding of the performance of the organization in terms of society results and compares such performance with other similar organization and establish its own targets

The assessment of these results can be done by gathering perceptions of the society about an organization and/or by using the internal measures of the organization. The views of the society about an organization can be obtained using several methods including public meetings, surveys, press articles, reports, public representatives, Non-Governmental Organizations, and governmental authorities. From these sources, the organization will be able to get the best information about the deployment of the strategy of the organization on the societal and environmental issues and their accompanying policies and processes. Here measures could include Environmental, economic and societal activities, Regulatory and governance compliance and Health and safety performance, Responsible sourcing and procurement performance.

Quality or business excellence Managers can undertake a quick assessment by asking following relevant questions:

• Do you to assess the image of the organisation as being concerned about the environment.
• Do your to assess the environmental impact of the organisation.
• Does your organisation regularly support activities that encourage employees' social commitment.
• Do you have positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators measuring your societal performance
• Have you achieved the set targets for environmental impact.
• Do you compare your performance with others for measuring your societal performance.

## Assessment of Business Results

Pankaj defines business results as the actual performance of an organization as compared to the planned performance of the organization and how such performance meets or satisfies the needs and expectation of stakeholders of the organization. Based on EFQM (2013), excellent organizations should meet or exceed the financial performance as needed or expected by the stakeholders of the organization. Sustainability of excellent financial results is also expected of excellent organizations.

An example of a company that consistently demonstrate excellent performance is Ricoh Belgium. According to EFQM report of 2017, Ricoh Belgium has enjoyed financial performance even in the face of recent financial crisis of 2009 to date and recorded impressive increases in both its turnover and profit. From 2009 to 2010,

Ricoh Belgium reported an increase in profit and turnover of 25% and 11% respectively and has managed to do this by competing on the basis of the quality of service as opposed to price.

Business performance are the key financial and non-financial business indicators that are used to measure the organisation's operational performance. They help monitor, understand, predict and improve the organisation's likely business outcomes. Financial performance indicators, Project costs Key process performance indicators, Partner and supplier performance, Technology, information and knowledge and Key process outcomes.

In practice, excellent organizations should do the following in relation to business results:

– Have or develop a clear set of key financial and non-financial results for determining the successful deployment of strategy of the organization as defined by stakeholder needs and expectations
– Demonstrate good business results for at least 3 years and sustain such performance
– Perform segmentation of financial and non-financial performance areas of the organization so as to understand the needs, expectations, and experience of business stakeholders
– Utilize the needs and expectations of business stakeholders to set clear targets for key business results in line with organizational strategy;
– Study the impact and trends of business results and their impact on financial performances indicators by understanding the underlying reasons and drivers of those trends
– Demonstrate confidence in the future performance of the company as shown by cause and effect correlation previously established based business results
– Have a clear understanding of the financial performance of the organization and compare such performance with other similar organization and establish its own targets

Quality or business excellence Managers can undertake a quick assessment by asking following relevant questions

• Do you measure our financial health with an appropriate set of indicators?
• Do you have indicators measuring your market and sales performance?
• Do you have indicators to measure your productivity and your overall operational performance?
• Do you have positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators measuring your business results.
• Do you achieve your targets set for business results?
• Do you compare your performance with indicators of others in the industry? Measuring our business results.

## Group Work: Using Assessment Pro-forma

Carry out the organizations readiness for assessing the results criteria: Using the pro-forma below, carry out an assessment to understand the current state of the organization in relation to EFQM results criteria. Answer each of the question in relation to your organization. After you have completed this table, list what do you do the best and what do you need to improve individually or as a team (Table 5.1).

**Table 5.1** Results Assessment Pro-forma

| |
| --- |
| Does your organization survey its customers to monitor their satisfaction? |
| Does your organization survey measure the loyalty of your customers? Our |
| Does your organization survey measures if your customers are recommending you to others? |
| Do you capture and monitor complaints and suggestions of your customers? |
| Do you monitor the customer's perception of your performance? |
| Do you have positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators in the customer survey. |
| Do you achieve your targets of on various customer measures? |
| Do you monitor and predict your performance and compare it with benchmarks. |
| Do you have people survey that monitor the satisfaction of your employees. |
| Do you monitor the understanding of the employees on the strategy and the quality of internal communication. |
| Do you undertake exercise to map the employee competencies to the job skills needed |
| Do you measure employees' productivity. |
| Do you positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators concerning your people |
| Do you achieve the results that you set for your people. |
| Do you benchmark your results with others |
| Do you to assess the image of the organisation as being concerned about the environment. |
| Do you to assess the environmental impact of the organisation. |
| Does your organisation regularly supports activities that encourage employees' social commitment. |
| Do you measure our financial health with an appropriate set of indicators? |
| Do you have indicators measuring your market and sales performance? |
| Do you have indicators to measure your productivity and your overall operational performance? |
| Do you have positive trends over the past 3 years for the indicators measuring your business results. |
| Do you achieve your targets set for business results |
| Do you compare your performance with indicators of others in the industry? Measuring our business results. |

## Conclusion

The core idea behind excellence framework is to derive business results. They provide a flexibility in choosing the means to achieve superior performance. The achievement of excellent results by any organization heavily depends on how the organization deploys it performance management culture. A completely deployed performance culture coupled with appropriate systems, processes, and motivated human workforce will make it easy for an organization to achieve excellent results based on its pre-determined objectives and targets. Jaeger (2017) notes that business excellence is a long term process and its achievement is made possible by an organization having core functional processes in place, having the best people, and a quality framework that guides the quality of service provided to customers. So the progress should be monitored by capturing the results in various segments. In fact, as Antony and Bhattacharyya (2010) explicate that organisational excellence requires an 'outstanding measure of relationship of all performance variables influencing an organisation's functioning'. Majorly, the global excellence frameworks and quality models emphasis on capturing the results with respect to customer, leadership, product, process, people, society and business results. Indeed an open, flexible culture oriented towards continuous improvement and the satisfaction of stakeholders, as well as towards an effective leadership and management of human resources, affects the results that the firm attains related to customers, people, society, and key results (Calvo-Mora et al. 2014). Infact to build a synergy of the diverse group into a cohesive team to deliver "expected result" is challenging for those in leadership role (Kappagomtula 2017). However, this effect increases when the organization's culture, the leadership, and the participation of people are subject to the core processes that the organization develops, the management of alliances with suppliers and other partners, as well as an efficient management of the organization's resources (Calvo-Mora et al. 2014).

While these will constantly, guide the achievement of results, future for achieving excellence must also be embedded in analysing the culture of the organization too. Given the multicultural environments have a huge impact on various organizational elements such as creativity, problem solving and team work, it is important that diversity and cultural variables too are measured. One way to measure them is through the surveys focusing on cultural elements, for example Abela company measures its cultural competencies and results of these are presented in Chap. 4 of this book. As a way forward therefore organizations need to use many strategic variables that are relevant for organizations that are deemed to impact the performances of companies besides the quality-related studies. Factors such as mission and vision, corporate culture, planning and intelligence, technical resources, marketing operations, international strategy, performance, market strategy, innovation, human resources, organization and system, and customer orientation will of course remain as crucial importance for excellence. Finally, the results are very influential elements for continuing the cycle of improvement and also to attain commitment of the employees and the top management toward a continuous improvement!

## Case Study: Jumeirah Lake Towers

**Excellence in Practice: A Case Study of People Results at JET**
**People Results @ Jumeirah Emirates Towers (JET)**

Bhupendra Singh, Assistant Business Excellence Manager at Jumeirah Emirates Towers has been instrumental in providing this case. Author acknowledges and thanks his immense support for valuable inputs and being a role model to support the 'learning' initiatives.

This case is about Jumeirah Emirates Towers (JET). JET measures people perception through their system called comprehensive annual Colleague Opinion Survey (COS). An external company administers these surveys. The data processed by Towers Watson, industry leader in customer engagement measurement and the benchmarks available for those years reflect the High Performing organizations in the Middle East across all industries. Their performance has always been in line or outperforming those benchmarks and since 2012 they have chosen to benchmark internally with surveys being administered by Qualtrics. The COS questions are classified into 11 categories to which they adjust targets upwards on a yearly basis following a review of their benchmarks, internal capabilities and BSC Strategic Actions for the following year. Comprehensive demographic data is gathered during their annual COS which allows them to segment results from various aspects such as grade, gender, nationality, department, length of service, age etc. Company has taken a conscious decision to suspend the administration of COS in 2010 and hence no data is displayed for that year. It is encouraging to note however that the trend was sustained despite the interruption.

Company also tracks their most relevant people performance indicators through Oracle system and reports results through what they call the HR Dashboard. The HR Dashboard includes data from all other Jumeirah properties, which allows them to benchmark against the most relevant sister properties. Moreover, their HR corporate and property level teams constantly seek for industry benchmarks in their drive for excellence. Their people performance indicators can also be segmented by grade, gender, nationality, department, length of service, age etc.

Some of the results that are captured in the organization include: People Engagement Rewards and benefits, teamwork, culture and colleagues recognition. The highlights of the people result are:

- Increased focus on colleague engagement activities especially since 2012 with the establishment of the new HR Strategies.
- Salary reviews and increase on formal recognition caused the increase in scores.

- Focus in quality of appraisal as a strategic BSC Target in 2011 and subsequent launch of Continuous Growth and HiPo BSC actions led to sustained improvement in 2012 and 2013.
- HR "Team of the Quarter" activities have all been teamwork oriented and have driven improvement. Moreover, the team-building budget increased and started to be more effectively deployed.
- Review of the JET Welcome program in 2012 led to the improvements, which have been sustained.
- Improvements made in the colleague accommodation include the inauguration of AKG Phase 2, which was well received by the JET Colleagues.
- An increase on periodicity and review of the Town Hall meeting format have increased attendance and have led to improvements. The Communications category was introduced from 2011.
- The colleagues have noticed the focus on sustainability experienced with the introduction of the Green Globe certification in 2011.
- The creation of the Daily Dashboard increased awareness of Customer Results across the business. Moreover, the completion of the rooms refurbishment gave colleagues more confidence on their product.
- The introduction of a measurement to assess quality of appraisals since 2012 and subsequence investment of quality time from leaders with colleagues has led to colleagues perceiving their leaders as more dedicated and available to their teams.

## Key Questions

1. Given the key people results presented in the study, what do you think are some of the major strengths exhibited in the case study?
2. Identify if there are any opportunities for measuring and improving people results.

## Summary

The goal of organizational excellence is to achieve sustainable organizational 'results'. A regular scrutiny and analysis of these organizations results actually guide the new drive of excellence in the organization. This chapter focused on understanding the various results that an organization must capture. The chapter also emphasis on some of the measures that can be used to capture the organizations results while preparing for a self-assessment of a culturally diverse organizations. Examples include employee satisfaction and delight, employee turnover rate, customer satisfaction and delight, stakeholder satisfaction, sales and profits, return on

equity, and churn rate. It is further argued that an open, flexible and diverse culture affects the results that the firm attains related to its customers, people, society, and key business results. In future organizations should also focus on analysing the organizational cultures and diversity outcomes which have a huge impact on quality management programs and on organization as a whole.

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# Self-Assessments: Conducting an Excellence Maturity Assessment for an Organisation

The winners of Dubai Quality Award report a number of benefits as a result of applying for a national quality award. 'Opportunity for a self-assessment however is the most frequently admitted benefit among the many others. Truly, besides winning award, organizations can also perform a health check of the organizations in order to introduce improvement and to excel on the path of excellence. So what does self-assessments mean for an organization? Why are these self-assessments undertaken? What does it involve? Knowing this helps an organization to on its journey to excellence.

## Introduction

Organisations that assess and undertake improvements, advance and excel when compared to their competition. Self-assessment enables the organization to regularly verify what activities are going as desired, is there a decline, what needs to be developed and what the gaps between actual and desired results are (Yang et al. 2001). They form a basis for assessing excellence and help an organization to understand its position on its excellence journey. It in fact offers clear identification of strengths and improvement areas for improvements. Moreover, Dahlgaard et al. (2013) explains the use of Business excellence model in fact has two purposes: to guide the organisation towards BE, and to conduct an assessment of its performance. From this perspective, self-assessment can be understood as an organisation looking at itself in a mirror using an excellence models that evaluates the organisation from a holistic perspective by examining how the organisation works (the enablers) and what is achieved (the results) (Samuelsson and Nilsson 2002). In addition to that, many researchers have found that conducting self-assessment improves the company's financial and non-financial performance (Dubey 2016). Self-assessment is increasingly seen as a powerful tool for organisational learning.

In this chapter we will explore how to conduct self-assessment using an excellence model that has its origin in the TQM philosophy. In particular, we will explore the self-assessment cycle and how BEMs can be used to undertake an organizations self-assessment.

## The Significance of Self-Assessment

According to Samuelsson and Nilsson (2002), self-assessment could be categorised into two types. The first self-assessment is related to the ISO standard, which relates to quality assurance self-assessment or audits. Therefore, the self-assessment is centred on ascertaining if the required standards are met. The second type is a quality management self-assessment based on an excellence model that has its origin in the TQM philosophy. In fact, the TQM is the thirst for improvement that goes beyond the focus on doing things right and embraces looking for ways of doing things better" (Laszlo 1999). Hence self-assessment is conceptualized as identifying areas for improvement and directing the improvement process. This is a common reason for using the self-assessment technique and it can be understood as a prerequisite in order to move on to the more advanced TQM organisational characteristics (Dale 1996).

There are a number of benefits and uses of self-assessment that have been described in the literature. From these it is evident that self-assessment indeed is not a 'quick- fix' but offers both short-term and long term benefits. Moreover, they help to develop TQM values in the organization as well. For example, Ritchie and Dale (2000) described these various benefits as shown in Table 6.1.

Self-assessment in fact implies the use of a model on which to base the evaluation and diagnostics (Ritchie and Dale 2000). Thus it organizes and prioritizes action plans based on the fact of what has been achieved and what needs to be achieved, (Hillman 1994). The EFQM Excellence Model is a tried and tested tool for self-assessment, which recognises that there are many approaches to achieve sustainable excellence (Samuelsson and Nilsson 2002). The process of self-assessment against the EFQM Excellence Model offers a systematic measure of the organization's strengths and areas of improvement which drive the organization to develop and implement action plans (Bou-Llusar et al. 2009).

Overall the self assessment an organization to examine their results and to determine where have reached on their journey of sustaining business excellence. It is known that self-assessment against a Business Excellence Model is becoming increasingly recognised as an effective business performance management system. Several business excellence models such as European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) model for business excellence and Baldridge Criteria for Performance Excellence (BCPE) (Mann et al. 2011) have been introduced in countries around the world that can be used as a framework to facilitate the assessment process (Ritchie and Dale 2000). In fact the process of self-assessment is the basis for all the major quality awards: in the USA this is the Baldrige award; in Japan the Deming prize, and in Europe the European Quality Award (EQA) based on the European model for total quality management (Zaremba and Crew 1995).

**Table 6.1** Benefits of self-assessments

| |
|---|
| • Promotes benchmarking |
| • Inspire continuous development |
| • Provides vision, which gives a sense of direction to the organisation |
| • Promotes the involvement of employees and ownership |
| • Brings into attention the awareness of quality related issues |
| • It encourages organisations to come up with a common approach to improve the activities of the organisation. This is considered as a marketing strategy, as it raises the organisation's profile. As such, it stimulates people to develop friendly business plans |
| • Lowers the costs |
| • Brings improvement to the results |
| • Encourages balance between long-term and short-term investments |
| • Allows a disciplined approach in development of business plan |
| • Advances a holistic approach aimed towards meeting and exceeding the expectations of clients |
| • Maintain a reputable image |
| • Introduce a link between the customers and suppliers. |
| • Provide support to TQM, which is vital in refocusing the employees' attention on quality. An organisation is positioned to evaluate the effectiveness of processes and operations |

Source: Ritchie and Dale (2000)

Moreover, self-assessment also assists organizations in planning their next actions as it gives a "comprehensive, and systematic review of an organization's activities and results" that help identify the "strengths and areas of improvement for the organization" (Dubey 2016). The EFQM defines self-assessment as

> Self-assessment is a comprehensive, systematic and regular review of an organisation's activities and results against a model of business excellence. The self-assessment process allows the organisation to discern clearly its strengths and areas in which improvements can be made and culminates in planned improvement actions which are monitored for progress.

It thus offers an organization an opportunity to learn about its strengths and areas for improvement, what total quality means when applied to the organization and where the organization is on the road to quality (Zaremba and Crew 1995). In the European context research of Wiele had suggested the reasons why organization undertake self-assessments are:

(1) find opportunities for improvement; (2) create a focus on a model of TQM based on either the EQA or the MBNQA criteria; (3) direct the improvement process; (4) provide new motivation for the quality improvement process; (5) manage the business.

Overall, self-assessment could provide a form of gap analysis indicating the areas in need of improvement and utilize self-assessment for a number of reasons, many of those are not related in any way to the quality awards (Arumugam et al. 2009). However if the self-assessment process is not linked with the business cycles of strategic planning, policy, deployment, human resources systems, budget decisions, etc., then it will never become a fit with the day-to-day fabric of management activities (Van der Wiele et al. 1996).

The participation of the top management of an organization is a must in a self-assessment for better results. This will help the top management by helping them remove the avoidable problems and letting them focus on business performance improvements. Self-assessment's full potential could be tapped only when it is in conjecture with leadership.

Organizations have a choice to use either standardized quality models or academic models as reference for their self-assessment. The well known standardized quality models, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award model in the USA, the EFQM model in Europe and the Deming Prize model in Japan as we have already noted in the previous chapters. Through these models the organizations must identify the areas where improvements could be made. In the end, self-assessment is a methodology, while standardized quality models and academic models are tools for self-assessment. While it is beneficial for all type of organizations, a study conducted in school context also confirmed that confirmed that teachers using self-assessment in connection with the Business Excellence Model were more committed, more pro-active, more influential and were able to act more strategically (Powell 2000).

An early study of Ritchie and Dale (2000) reported some of the difficulties associated with conducting self-assessment and these include:

- Lack of commitment and enthusiasm
- The time consuming nature of the process
- Not knowing where to start
- Selling the concept to the start as something other than an "add-on" to their existing duties
- People not realising the need for documented evidence
- Lack of resources; time, manpower, finance
- Maintaining the self-assessment skills of the assessors
- Lack of cross-functional integration between departments and units
- Getting the assessment done in time to link it into the business plans

Excellence, however, is not the same thing as perfection: perfection is focusing on the destination, excellence is focusing the journey (Samuelsson and Nilsson 2002). Afterall, self-assessment is of great importance because it identifies strengths and weaknesses (Svensson and Klefsjo 2000), and signals how close the organisation is in achieving its goals and objectives. Interestingly, self-assessments also reveals the reasons that block continuous improvement in an organization (Jørgensen et al. 2003). So, self-assessment is much of importance for organizations for those who choose to mature on the path of excellence. Despite its many benefits, self-assessment is a highly challenging task, because approximately 70% of these procedures fail to live up to the expectations of leadership (Neely and Bourne 2000). So a systematic assessment with a structured process is necessary to be followed to gage the organization's current position and to plan the improvement. In the next section we will explore the various steps involved in conducting a self-assessment.

## Steps in Carrying Out Self-Assessments

Self-assessment involves performing of several activities in a defined time sequence and constitutes a cyclical process (Benavent et al. 2005). Generally, the process of self-assessment has several steps, which includes provision of training, data gathering, writing of self-assessment reports, analysing of reports by the assessors, presentation of the results to the assessment management, definition of goals and activities, which helps the overall planning of the business. Hence, the process of conducting a self-assessment has been described as involving for example: three phases (Gadd 1995), four phases (Teo and Dale 1997), five phases (Samuelsson and Nilsson 2002), eight phases model used in Royal Mill or even seven phases proposed by EFQM.

In a three phase model, the assessment emphasizes on gathering the data, carrying out the assessment and drawing on plans and actions for improvement. Although these are three essential phases, a good assessment should be planned well to create a good awareness within the organization. This is crucial in culturally diverse organizations, to spread the awareness of the assessment. This is especially because, self-assessment particularly should be useful to draw future plans and therefore current state of affairs must be captured transparently. Samuelsson and Nilsson (2002) suggested a five component model Plan-Assess-Improve, share and Develop. They suggested to plan the conduct the self-assessment and prioritise the actions to be taken into further action planning. This is to be then followed by planning, handling an d improving of the actions of the improvement to ensure the performance. Upon completion of these, the knowledge and learning are to be shared within and outside the organization and should continuously develop and improve work procedures.

A model suggested by EFQM emphasis on seven steps which focuses on gaining top management support first and beginning the process with training of the team. In addition, training of employees is also key to undertake an effective assessment. Moreover, a successful self-assessment, as Ritchie and Dale (2000) suggests, requires

1. Securing a committed and supportive staff in different levels of the organisation.
2. Considering taking action based on the previous assessments.
3. Creating awareness in the application of BEM measurement tool.
4. Introducing self-assessment, as part of the business planning process.
5. Not authorizing the inclusion of process to the employees in the existing workload.
6. Setting up a framework aimed at monitoring the performance.

The process of self-assessment in fact has evolved over a period of time involving a number of important considerations. Today, in fact in organizations which have to take into cultural aspects and that of diversity. The success of the self-assessment will largely depend on the rigour of the process deployed. Employee involvement is not only privy to success, employees required to have a good understandings of the evaluation model itself. A survey conducted by Lasrado (2017) in this context also

suggested that trainings and through knowledge of the model as crucial importance in carrying out the self-assessment specially because excellence is largely dependent on people perception.

The success of a quality initiative indeed is hugely dependent on top management support and commitment. In culturally diverse organization, top management support is of much importance not only to guide and direct the team but also to sufficiently motivate the team and envisage the detail road map so the team feels confident and comfortable with the initiative. This in fact however is central to the whole initiative of continuous improvement.

With a sound background and with diverse team, organizations can conduct the assessment as per the model guidelines using any of the most suitable approaches. Approaches can vary from simple questionnaire to award type of submission. (These are discussed in the next section.) Leadership is crucial for the entire process in the creation and development of effective cross cultural collectivism, trust, communication and empathy.

A self-assessment cycle as shown in Fig. 6.1 is proposed to carry out a self-assessment in a culturally diverse organization.

1. Plan the assessment: Planning is crucial for any project, so is for an improvement project. A team should be formed to undertake this activity. Research has suggested
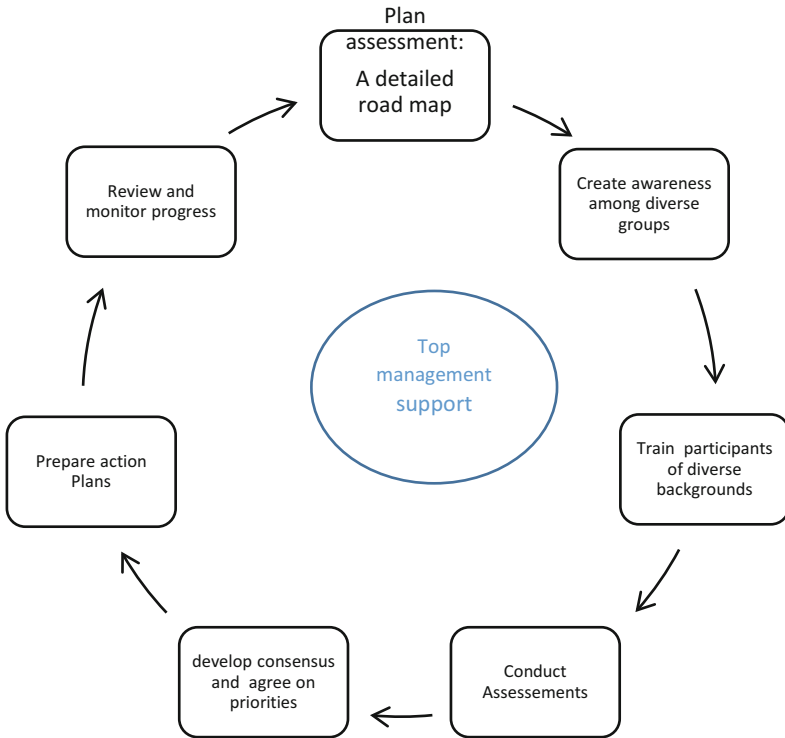


**Fig. 6.1** Self-Assessment cycle

that that multicultural teams are perceived to out-perform monoculture teams, especially when performance requires multiple skills and judgement (Earley and Mosakowski 2000). Research has also suggested that that diversity increases the number of different perspectives, styles, knowledge and insights that the team bring to complex problems (Ely and Thomas 2001; Jehn et al. 1999). Given the "perception" based nature of excellence, a team coming together with diverse and multicultural will be very useful in carrying out the self-assessment. Multicultural team work in fact has been used in world most innovative firm such a Microsoft (Ochieng and Price 2010). In addition a detailed roadmap with activities will have to slated. While planning the assessment, a detailed road map helps in diverse organization because different cultures assume job responsibility differently.

2. Create awareness among diverse groups: Equally important is of creating the awareness of self-assessment in the organization. The purpose and the set of outcomes must be clear to the entire organization. In a diverse multicultural setting, sharing information will help to motivate the employees. The role of communication is also particularly lauded in multiculturalism.

3. Train the participants: It is then important to ensure the team possesses skills to carry out the assessment and therefore, team must be trained on a chosen framework. This would also help to level the understanding and expectations of each group members and carryout an effective team work. Since trainings are important not only to level the knowledge of all involved but also to guide the conduct of assessment itself.

4. Conduct assessments: This is the most crucial step as the remaining actions depend on the success of this phase. Based on the model used, team should collect the necessary data and analyze the same. Team must ensure to have effective instruments and methods to gather the data. It would be good to have a data gathering plan so as to include all essential departments and sources from whom data has to be gathered. The information from different sources such as documents, reports, in-depth interview, surveys, discussions, and site visits. Finally, all the gathered information should be cross verified and analysed to give positive feedback that would positively benefit the organization. The results must then be shared with the top management.

5. Develop consensus and priorities: Individuals in multicultural project teams have different perceptions of the orgnaziation, motives and behaviour intentions. The diversity of participants enhances differences in perceptions and understanding of meaning of the variety of signals such as drawings and messages too (Fellows and Liu 2016). However, culturally diverse teams perform better than homogenous teams when it comes to identifying problems and generating answers (Jackson et al. 1992). So, through conversational practices, individuals can exchange, combine and construct interpretations which can underpin future-oriented planning of improvement projects. So by assembling the energy and synergy of individuals from different backgrounds, team could develop smart consensus and use creative approaches to prioritise the problems and challenges that are faced by organizations. Multi cultured teams depend on a team culture of straightforward rules, performance expectations and individual perceptions (Ochieng and Price 2010). The next action item following this phase is another important activity.

Based on the assessment results, consensus have to be worked out among the team members and must be duly agreed with the top management on the top priorities for the organization. Top management support is central to the assessment. Different opinions and multiple views will indeed help in exploring the options but to arrive at consensus, a team must have a pre-defined rules for arriving at agreement and mostly consensus should be based on the discussion for an effective outcome.

6. Prepare action plans: The previous stage will provide sufficient input on the strengths and weakness. Consensus meetings will help the team to list the priorities. So at this point the team should draw a clear action plan to follow up with the assessment cycle. Indeed, an assessment conducted without a feedback and follow-up plan would be of no use. As the assessment involves numerous resources, the ending other cycle must therefore clearly draw these action plans which can then be disseminated to the various organizational areas.

7. Review and monitor progress: This is stage that requires reviewing and monitoring the actioning of various improvements planned as part of the action plan stage. Unless, there is a progress report and check on the actions, it will not be possible to determine if efforts are culminating into desired result.

## Approaches to Self-Assessments

Self-assessments can be conducted in different ways using different approaches. Ritchie and Dale (2000) study revealed there are plethora of approaches used by the organization which can be grouped such as award based approaches, questionnaires and workshops. Let us explore each of these in detail.

Questionnaire approach: Ritchie and Dale (2000) noted that questionnaire is the most effective approach for collecting data of the organisation independent model award being used. It entails providing answers to the series of statements and questions that are based on the criteria of the award being adopted. The process uses a no/yes format or a graduated response scale.

The scores or answers obtained from these questionnaires are further studied to generate a final score or an overall of the organization is put out. The main drawback with this approach is it's length since a normal questionnaire contains about an average of 100 questions which tend to make the respondents bored and impatient sometimes leading to inaccurate data. The pros could be that this approach uses less resources and the results could be obtained faster. The approach is mainly used as a data gathering tool.

The following are the steps involved in the questionnaire approach process:

1. Planning—The main objective and the result that is expected is first projected. Based on the activities to be carried out, the range of operation, the time limit and amount of resources to be consumed are planned.

2. Briefing—The target survey group are first communicated with the main objective of the survey and as such to obtain accurate data.

3. Data collection—This step involves the distribution of the questionnaires to our target group and obtaining the filled questionnaires within the time limit that has been set
4. Data analysis—Here we gather all the questionnaires and extract the information that are deemed useful for our case. The information is then represented in the form of graphs, tables or charts to make it more understandable.
5. Action—From the information we have gathered, some have great importance which requires immediate actions. Such actions are prioritized and improvement is done as soon as possible.
6. Review—This step involves the reviewing of the whole process from preparation to execution to know the effectiveness of the self-assessment.

Questionnaires are usually used to test the state of the organization. The main attraction of this approach is it's range that is hundreds of employees could be surveyed in a short period and the data could be analyzed through a simple spreadsheet. High levels of involvement can be achieved using this method. The questionnaires can be tailor made to the organization's needs.

The main drawback for this approach is that the validity of the information gathered since questions are targeted more towards the perception. Thus, the accuracy level is low and depends highly on the quality of questions. This approach also doesn't point out the strengths and weaknesses of an organization. However companies use more sophisticated questionnaires as the prime method for analysing strengths and areas for improvement, and establishing the basis for the business improvement plan (Zink and Schimdt 1998).

*Awards Based Approach* can be carried out in two steps. The first step, data collection, involves writing an extensive evaluation report according to the guidelines for applications for the chosen quality awards such as EFQM, DQA SKEA etc. The data is collected by a selected project team that is also responsible for provision of part of the information. Subsequently, a team leader of the project is responsible for compiling the final report, which is presented to the top management. After the report has been accepted by the top-management as being important to the organisation, analysis of the report is carried out. It states that all trained assessors must individually asses all areas of weakness, to point out areas that require further attention. Additionally, the team also identifies areas of strengths. Thereafter, the team suggests improvement strategies for areas of weaknesses, which they discuss and reach an agreement on. After the report is presented to the management, it is reviewed and the strengths are prioritised. This is followed by addressing areas that require improvement. However, this approach is regarded as resource intensive and therefore it needs a team that is dedicated to pull evidences together, which have been gathered for months (3–6). This approach can create a significant workload for an organisation, as it involves the writing of a full submission document using the criteria of the chosen quality award model (Ritchie and Dale 2000).

The award model has several benefits such as:

- Provides a list of strengths and areas for improvement
- It is based on the collection of evidence and is therefore fairly robust
- It provides an excellent communication document for internal and external use
- Based on this submission, future report writings can become much easier as it helps build a systemic way of documenting the evidences and analysis of the same.

In diverse organizations, this approach must follow a well-defined process involving distinct phases. Much like carrying out self-assessment, at the end of the assessment process, the team may choose to write an award submission. Managing team will be a challenging task, however with experienced team leaders this approach can be useful in diverse organizations too.

Workshop approach: This approach of self-assessment is typically management driven since it requires the active involvement of the management team (Zink and Schimdt 1998). According to Zink and Schimdt (1998), this approach can be regarded as managerial approach since it requires the top management team to be actively involved in gathering of the self-assessment report. The approach has a compressed variant of what is entailed in the pro-forma method that has the information regarding all the analysis criteria carried out at a single workshop. However, workshop approach method needs support from a team of qualified professionals particularly when it is being conducted for the first time. In addition, it also requires that all participants should have collected information for self-assessment in the workshop. In order to be successful the method demands active involvement of the participants to a higher extent than many of the other methods. The advantage of this approach is that it requires the active involvement of the management team of the business unit performing the self-assessment. Managers are responsible for gathering the data and presenting the evidence to colleagues at a workshop (Ritchie and Dale 2000; Zink and Schimdt 1998). There are five components of the process: Explained by Zink and Schimdt (1998):

Training: Training sessions include an overview of the excellence model criteria and scoring system and boost the learning with an EFQM case study extract. These sessions are followed by a brief simulation of the scoring workshop to enable the trainees to fall in with the issues to be addressed. This is quiet useful in a multi cultured organizations to create a common understanding of the purpose of self-assessment.

Data gathering: Adequate time is allocated to perform this task.

Workshop: Typically, the workshop has the information of the self-assessment, which is provided by the facilitator. Notably, information is provided after having going through EFQM model criteria. One of the management team has the responsibilities of describing the criterion and presenting the collected data to other members while reminding them of strengths and areas of weaknesses that should be improved. The responsibilities of the team is to review on the data provided, discuss it and provide information on the way forward particularly in areas identified to having weakness.

- It is the best way to make the teams familiarize teams with the Model adopted
- It encourages team work particularly in diverse culture working environment
- It is easy to produce an agreed list of strengths and areas for improvement, which improves organisation performance.

However, this method has a number of disadvantages:

- It is less effective as compared to other methods since information collected is largely based on the opinion of those within the workshop.
- It requires trained professionals to aid in preparation, planning and management
- It is difficult to assess on the evidence, reviews and to carry out deployment actions.
- It is not accurate as it produces scores that are over generous.

Matrix approach: A matrix chart approach to self-assessment involves the creation of a company-specific achievement matrix within the framework of the European model for total quality management (Zink and Schimdt 1998). This approach typically has series of statements of success and is presented on a scale against the number ranging 0–10 or similar. With the fact that every organisation is different and faces different issues, these diagrams of matrix provided are used to aid in understanding on what is entailed in criteria in a more practical way and provide a team with an easy way of assessing their progress in a simple and a more effective way. It is simple and fairly quick to use and

- Requires minimal training
- Can involve as few or as many of the organisation's people as necessary
- Supports team discussion too

A proforma approach: this approach has at least 33 forms and one of the forms provides sub-criteria information on the model. These forms have sections detailing the sub-criteria and the areas of weakness that would require improvement. What is included in the sub-criteria is information of evidence verified based on the available evidence. This provides an opportunity for the members of the organisation to collect information fill in the forms individually as far as self-assessment is concerned. Each trained assessor can then grade their performance on self-assessment, based on the team's terms of agreement. In cases of large organisations, pro-forma documents from a number of units are collated to identify common strengths and areas for improvements. This facilitates helps in improving the organisation since there are wide plans of improvement methods (Zink and Schimdt 1998).

## Benefits

- It is a reliable approach since it provides information that has evidences.
- It provides a range of strengths, areas for improvements and can also be used for recording actions which depend upon the templates used.

– Can involve all diverse cultures of people in an organization.
– It gives a reasonable accurate as far as an award application score is concerned.
– Output assessment is documented in a clear way.
– Scoring profiles can be close to the Award simulation approach in terms of accuracy.
– The profiles, which are scoring are usually close to the award simulation approach, particularly when accuracy is needed.
– It needs less resource as compared to the simulation award approach.

However, this method has been associated with a number of limitations, which include:

– The process largely depends on only the best collected data.
– The pro-forma is not reliable as it can be used to stifle recognition as far as the analysed report is concerned since it is mostly not used in an open and honest way. It provides an opportunity for creative writings.
– Only the summary of the current position is provided in the output.
– Can be challenging for managers to collect the right data, particularly in areas where no data may exist.
– It is sometimes more challenging for managers to collect the correct data, particularly in areas where researches have never been conducted before.
– Some time and resource required, although not as much as for Award simulation approach.
– It is time consuming and expensive method.

However as Samuelsson and Nilsson (2002) suggested there is no such thing as "the right method for self-assessment". In fact, self-assessments can and should be conducted in different ways within different organisations. All approaches to self-assessment described above can be useful.

Based on the above benefits and risks involved, mature organizations can use award simulation or questionnaire are most suitable option. The developing organizations can use workshops or proforma type facilitated by workshop may be appropriate. A standard matrix or basic questionnaire can be used by organizations starting their journey towards excellence. However, as part of the self-assessment process, it is possible for an organisation to derive a score. This score in fact helps to understand how much progress has been made and where the company stands in terms of Excellence. In cases where an organisation needs to compare its performance with others, it is necessary for scores to be benchmarked from the self-assessment against other provided scores. In addition, scores are also used to show areas that need improvement and also where priorities should be placed. For instance, RADAR methodology is regarded as an integral part of model scoring mechanism. This method is commonly used by Assessors for assessment applications for European Quality Award. This implies that any of the scores that are obtained from a self-assessment are benchmarked against the winning organisations from across the European continent. More information this method is provided on website that is referred to as EFQM.

## Using Software Tools for Self-Assessment

In order to undertake the self-assessments, following software tools provided by EFQM can be obtained. There are a number of self-assessment tools available to support organisations on their journey towards excellence, using the EFQM Excellence Model 2013. As with any tool, knowing what to use and when to use it helps ensure you get the desired outcome. The ***Quick Check*** is derived from the EFQM Excellence Model 2013. It has been designed to give a quick overview of your organisation's current capabilities against the EFQM Fundamental Concepts of Excellence. The Quick Check is designed to assess the approaches you have in place and determine where the key opportunities for improvement are, based on the maturity of these approaches and their impact on your ability to deliver your strategy.

It is designed as a 'first step' on your journey to excellence and the exercise can be completed, with an agreed action plan aligned to your strategy, in a 2 hour workshop. This simple assessment can also form the basis for a 'Committed to Excellence' submission and the Improvement Planning templates have been aligned to make this quick and easy.

The Quick Check 2013 is an Excel based tool. It is designed to be completed in a workshop with senior management and requires limited knowledge of the EFQM Excellence Model. There is no scoring, so knowledge of the RADAR scoring is not required. It is designed to help organisations taking their first step in applying the EFQM Excellence Model, using a simple assessment to determine your current capabilities and prioritise the opportunities for improvement identified. The most effective method for completing the Quick Check assessment is with a group of senior managers with a range of responsibilities in a workshop. This group should be able to:

- Summarise the approaches currently in place, aligned to the Fundamental Concepts of Excellence
- Determine the current maturity level of the approach and the impact this approach has on your ability to achieve your strategic objectives
- Take ownership of any relevant improvement actions identified The workshop can be completed in 2 hours, based on:
- 5 minutes summarising and rating each approach
- 20 minutes prioritising the improvements identified and agreeing the improvement owners for the Top 3.

EFQM itself proposes following self -assessment methods. The Business Excellence Matrix (BEM) has been specifically designed as the "next step" following the Quick Check. Information about using these various Excel based tools can be obtained from EFQM website.

## Self-Assessment: The Context of Multicultural Environment

A multi-culture society is a complex demographic scenario with their unique beliefs and societal interactions (Kappagomtula 2017). Building an effective team and carrying out self-assessment indeed a challenge in such scenarios. Given the various considerations for the success of self-assessment, some guidelines as suggested by Huang (2016) to a diverse environment are:

1. Take time for the relationship management.
2. "Getting together" in the beginning during the team building process is an important stage for the exchange of expectations with the team members.
3. Try to maintain a personal atmosphere where the team members feel free to talk to each other.
4. If a personal understanding has developed between the team members it helps to overcome cultural constraints. If the partners get to know each other better, personal clashes are unlikely to happen.
5. Stakeholder management is all about identifying the most influential figures and the person, who could be your "on-site" deputy.
6. Communication: Ensure a transparent communication system keeping in mind global and local communication skills and habits. Some topics may require a group discussion while others are better handled discreetly.

## Conclusion

A substantial number of organizations take part in self-assessment, aimed at verifying their strengths and opportunities, geared towards bringing improvements to the development plan. Indeed, self-assessment greatly affects the organization, considering it provides an assessment of the entire business, in line with the standardized model.

However, the self-assessment does fail if there is no strong commitment of leadership. Self-assessment process is essential to the organization and they need to carefully select the right framework and approach to conduct it. It aims at improving company's internal processes and its external business activities as well as its image. The process can vary depending on various factors including the size of the organization, the quality maturity level as well the availability of resources.

Several approaches for self-assessment can be successful, but whatever approach is chosen it must fit the organisation, be used continuously and foster participation. In summary it helps to establish a baseline position so you can measure your progress over time. However, the success of self-assessment 'excellence' does not originate in choosing one particular cycle but from creating and mediating a holistic perspective of the use of self-assessment. In the sense it must have clearly defined activities that will guide the implementation. Interestingly, the selection of method can also be based on Organisations ability exhibit certain TQM-related characteristics (Ritchie and Dale 2000). The implementation of self-assessment based on excellence models usually involves many people and requires a high investment in resources (Van der Wiele et al.

2000). However depending the level of quality maturity of small organizations, alternative methods could also be employed as these are easy to implement by companies with low maturity level in quality (Teixeira et al. 2015).

## Case Study: Its All About People

**Excellence in Practice: A Case Study**
*Robin Silvan: It's All About People*

> This case is written anonymously based on the experiences HR and excellence managers in UAE organizations. Author would like to thank each of the participants for their time and effort to provides their insights in compiling this case.

Here is a sample of exchange with a HR manager of an award winning organization in UAE on discussing how people enabler is leveraged within their organization and what personally employee involvement meant for him. HR Manager, Robin Selvan, a hotelier, explained e that their hotel group, has a mentality of "it's all about people,". The matter of cross-exposure opportunities for employees within the hotel operations is a crucial factor for him. He says, there are plenty of examples of how their chefs have obtained experience—for example, from *Delia*, a sever star facility—in order to see large-scale hotel operations. Secondly, managers in food and beverage outlets, are train their co-workers. For example, the restaurant managers are given trainings to other outlet team members. When team members are sent on a task force to other group hotels in the region, hoteliers see and reflect on the good things that are done and the things which could be further improved on the property.

So in a nutshell, for Robin employee involvement matters because:

It allows the employees to make informed decision, taking logical decisions, given their deep understanding of the process.

The employees are likely to support the decisions that they took an important part in making.

The employees can note and report on areas that require improvements or where there is competency.

The employees have access to equipment necessary in taking instant corrective action.

The employees feel they belong to the company, and they are motivated to ensure that the corporation achieves its objectives.

The employees are able to communicate with their peers, working effectively and productive together.

> The employees have an opportunity to handle change and desire to have control in their work environment.
>
> The employees are dedicated to committing and realizing the goals, considering employees feel truly invested.
>
> He further says, instead of seeing employee involvement as a one-off thing that is not really anything to stress over on a long-term scale, realise that when it comes to your improvement strategies, involvement needs to be done on a holistic, deeper level throughout the organisation. When this is mastered properly, there are far more chances of your quality management strategies succeeding. Employee involvement is the secret to quality management success.
>
> Other important observation, Robin makes, he says, speaking from the hospitality point of view, Indeed, there are several design and facility-related factors, which play a part in experience-features and furnishing, décor and dining options, perks and price points, the single biggest ingredient in the guest experience is the personal touch. People play a pivotal role in making hotels successful, outstanding, and largely contribute to their profitability.

## Key Questions

1. Why do you agree with Robin's view about employee involvement?
2. What do you understand when Robin says—*'Its all about people'*? How would you probe Robin to explain the deployment of employee involvement?
3. Which other business sector can benefit from Robing view point and how and why?
4. If you were to advocate Robin to excellence maturity, what would be your advice for analysing the processes of employee involvement?
5. Role Play: Robin's Interview on Employee Engagement Assessment

## Summary

The chapter has provided a basis for planning a self-assessment for an organization. However, the process obtained can be purely novel but the effectiveness of the process however remains a crucial factor for its success at all times. The key strategic factors are of importance here. The sophisticated tools can however further help organizations to undertake quick self-assessment, but providing training to employees in this area would always be a worthwhile investment given the growing pressure on organizations to perform better and better!

Self-assessment help an organization to understand its position on its excellence journey. It involves using an excellence model to base the assessment, depending on maturity of the organization, a mix of various approaches can be adopted. It's important that people are given the right training to conduct the self-assessment. The process can vary depending on various factors including the size of the organization, the quality maturity level as well the availability of resources.

Self-assessment helps an organization to understand its position on its excellence journey It involves using an excellence model to base the assessment, depending on maturity of the organization, a mix of various approaches can be adopted. It's important that people are given the right training to conduct the self-assessment. The self-assessment process is aligned with the organization's model hence process like execution will give better results. Self-assessment finally is a better tool in identifying areas of improvement and analysing the organizations current position and trying to resolve it!

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# Awards and Assessments

<div style="text-align:right">**7**</div>

This chapter is developed in consultation with Dubai Quality awards to explain the DQA award process and more precisely to prepare a strong award application. This chapter illustrates the guidelines as explained and provided by the DQA award office. The Author also appreciates and acknowledges the full support received from the Dubai Quality Award office to presented this chapter with ready pro-forma and templates that are necessary to prepare the award documentation.

## Introduction

Countries and organizations strive to institute and adopt quality standards and awards for several reasons. Such reasons, according to Mann et al. (2011), include (1) the need of a company to operate globally and therefore global awards provide global status; (2) the need for continuous improvement; (3) quality improvement; and (4) for measurement of organizational performance. A study by Talwar (2011) showed that organizations in China, India, and Thailand strive to attain world class certifications using world class criteria as a way of improving their performances.

As explained in Chap. 3, the UAE has received massive benefits through Dubai Quality Awards since its launching. Such benefits are the reason why many organizations should participate and implement quality models so as to propel their organizations to world class status.

## Dubai Quality Awards in Focus

The Dubai Quality Award has three main levels of participation and recognition by organizations;

- Dubai Quality Appreciation Award (DQAA): this award is given to organizations which have put significant effort and hard work to become excellent organizations as a token of appreciation. The appreciation award is used as a DQA initiative and all organizations in the sectors are eligible for the award.
- Dubai Quality Award (DQA): this award is given to organizations for demonstrating excellence in their operations. Both public and private sector organizations from the following sector can apply for this award: service, tourism, construction, finance, professional, healthcare, education, real estate, media and trade. DQA winners can apply for DQAG 3 years after winning.
- Dubai Quality Gold Award (DQAG): this is the highest quality award that any organization in the UAE can win. Only winners of Dubai Quality Award can apply for this award.

In the next section, the eligibility criteria for winning the different awards in the levels discussed above is discussed. The Dubai Quality Appreciation award is typically a level 1 award and is given to organizations which start their journey to becoming excellent organizations. For organizations which have travelled the quality journey and made some significant milestones, acquired some level of maturity and demonstrated good practices they can apply for Dubai Quality Award. For organizations that demonstrate outstanding maturity in the application of excellent practices in their operations and are typically role models in the industry, the third level of the Dubai quality award is reserved for them.

After an organization has applied to be considered for an award, the quality team performs an initial document assessment followed a short (about 1–2 hours) site visit to the organization premises. At a later date, the quality team will then conduct a detailed site visit to check submission validity and clarify various issue for purposes of understanding. Prior to the day of site visit, the award office sends the applicants various documents including a detailed schedule, documents to be reviewed, and important preparation guidelines.

However, the assessment of the organization will be done based on the agreed and confirmed strengths and areas for improvement (AFIs) which will be scored from 0 to 1000 points using the Excellence Model framework and the RADAR assessment and management tool. When the site visit and assessments are completed, the Award Jury reviews the scores and assessment of the applicants and then goes ahead to decide on the winners. Only organizations that demonstrate excellence and attain the required scores are awarded. If no organization makes to the cut of points, no awards are given out.

The assessment team then prepares a final feedback report to each of the applicants and sends it to them. The feedback report contains the following the sections:

- An executive summary: this section provides an overview of the strengths of the applicant, and opportunities for improvement based on the Fundamental Concepts of Excellence
- Detailed feedback: in this section a detailed report on the strengths of the organization and opportunities for improvement using the Excellence Model is provided. This information is usually gathered from both documents provided by the applicant and the site visit.
- The scoring profile by criterion and criterion part: this provide score on organizational strength and areas identified for improvement.

After receiving a report from the award office, the organization is expected to communicate on assessment outcome and the courses of action across the organization. The process of award application is shown in Fig. 7.1. In the next section, a description of how to make a strong application for the award is presented.

## Writing a Strong Application for Dubai Quality Award

Preparing and submitting an application to be considered for a quality award is the first step for an organization to reflect and build on its strengths and drive itself towards excellence, according to the Dubai Quality Award Office. DQA application process is simple and is divided into an organized set of activities. The application has two main parts. To align with the application criteria, the award office advises organizations to follow two main phases. The two main parts are provided in Figs. 7.2 and 7.3.

## Phase 1: Preparation of Application

The first step in the application process for the award starts with the organization verifying that it is eligible for participation. Table 7.1 provides eligibility clauses for organizations that wishes to participate.

For the respective level of award, the award office applies different rules. The applying organization must comply with the rules to participate. Table 7.2 lists the rules for each level.

After going through the rules of application of the various awards, a company can then make a decision on whether or not to participate and which award they qualify to apply. It is advisable that the decision of the organization to participate should have approval of top management of the applying organization. Senior management should understand the reasons for the participation of their organization and therefore take an active role besides proving the necessary support for leaders of the process. The list of areas on which senior management of an organization should provide support is provided in Table 7.3.

On the organization has the above checklist confirmed and decision for its participation has been reached, it can go on to express its "*Intention to participate*
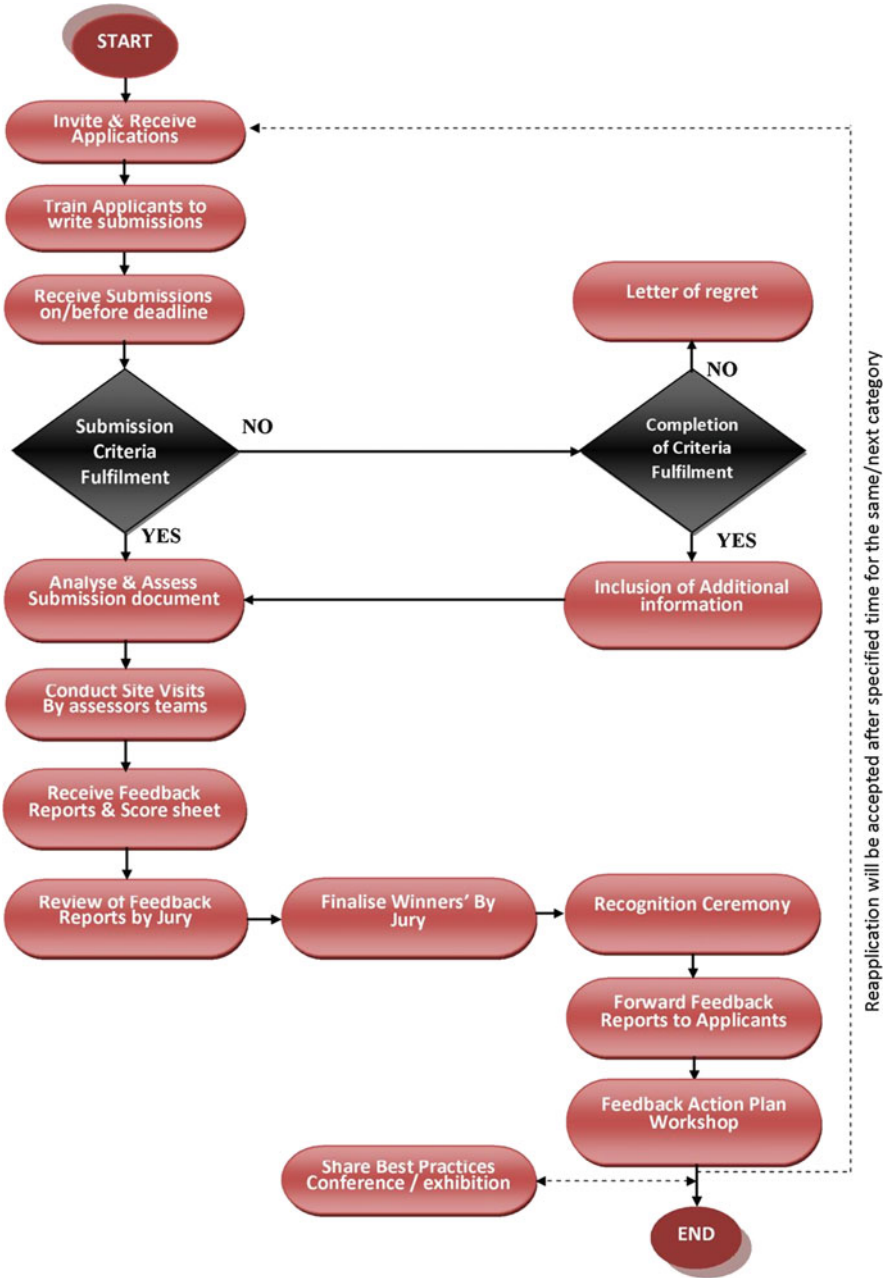
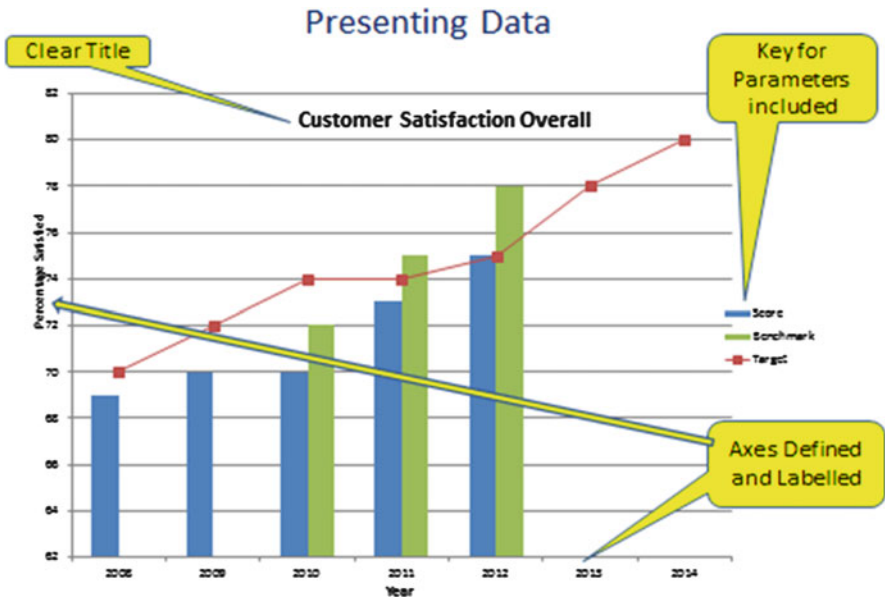**Fig. 7.1** Phase 1 of award process. Source: Dubai quality award office

**Fig. 7.2** Result template. Source: Dubai quality award office

*in the DQA*" by filling in a pro-forma provided by the award office. This will make it possible for the award office to invite the applicant for all the relevant conferences and workshops pertaining to the applied award. The organization must also submit a pre-qualification checklist while expressing its intention to participate in the awards. It is a must for all the organizations which have applied to be considered for the award to participate. The workshops provide the participating organizations with important information and guidance on how to conduct self-assessments and preparation of the documents to be submitted to the award office.

The organization is then expected to communicate to it's employees and stakeholders of it's participation and make them understand what the process involves. It is expected that the organization will be in constant communication with its employees even after the awards have been given out so as to implement the various recommendations, take improvement action, and ensure the organization sustains its performance. In its communication, the organization should follow the guidelines listed in Tables 7.4 and 7.5.

Additionally, the organization should ensure that its project team has at least 6–10 people based on the size of the organization. The organizations can create subgroups to be in charge of different parts of the organization and distribute the responsibility for the criterions to different sub-groups.

| Confirm Eligibility |
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| Decide to Participate |
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| Assemble the Project Team |
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| Register "Intention to participate" with the DQA Office along with pre-qualification checklist and Attend DQA workshop on Self-Assessment & preparing a submission |
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| Develop internal communication plan |
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| Gather evidence and conduct Internal Self-Assessment |
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| Prioritise and implement initial improvements |
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| Produce the Qualification File |
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| Confirm "sign-off" of Qualification File by Senior Managers |
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| Submit Qualification, brief enabler map & Self Assessment File to award office |
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| Deadline - End of June |
|---|

**Fig. 7.3** DQA phase 1 process. Source: Dubai quality award office

As a good practice, the organization should involve willing and enthusiastic members from different organizational functions. Enthusiasm about the "Excellence" and Continuous Improvement should guide the involvement of different members. Additionally, those involved should have good knowledge about the organization and its objectives. Other skills that members should have include good communication skills, good listening skills, and ability the write concisely and clearly. The assignment of different criteria should be done according to the expertise required. For example, criterion 3 (people) should be assigned to a HR expert.

**Table 7.1** Award criteria

| Award eligibility criteria |
| --- |
| • The applicant organization must be located in the UAE |
| • A current trade license in the UAE |
| • A minimum of 3 years continuous operating history in the UAE |
| • At least half of the applicant's employees or asset base must be located and examinable in the UAE |
| • If a subsidiary or business unit of a larger entity, must be considered as a "stand alone" business with clear boundaries and financial autonomy, managing their own accounts |

Source: DQA award Office

**Table 7.2** Rules for award levels

| Dubai quality appreciation award (DQAA) |
| --- |
| • Companies may make direct application for this award category (applicants must not be past winners of this award) |
| • Applicants should exhibit stronger performance in the Enablers criteria than in the Results area. However, applicants must illustrate results arising from approaches and favourable trends that extend for at least 2 years plus |
| • For applicants who do not win the award after their previous application, they may only re-apply after 2 years from the date of receiving their last feedback report |
| **Dubai quality award (DQA)** |
| • Companies may either make direct application or apply as past DQAA winners |
| • Demonstration of results is important here and therefore, applicants must demonstrate results arising from approaches and favourable trends for at least 3 years, with benchmarking against national competitors and/or industry standards as applicable |
| • For applicants who do not win the award after their previous application, they may only re-apply after 2 years from the date of receiving their last feedback report |
| **Dubai quality gold award—(DQGA)** |
| • Applicants for this award must be past DQA or GOLD category winners. Reapplication from last win should occur after at least 2 years |
| • Winners of the GOLD award may reapply for a 2nd or subsequent GOLD after at least 3 years from their last win |
| • Sustained improvement is key here and therefore applicants must demonstrate sustained improvement on their activities from their last win and thus there should be no reproduction of previous submitted documents. There should be strong evidence of creativity, innovation, improved and/or newly introduced approaches |
| • Results should ideally be for 5 years plus and cover all relevant areas extending beyond the 3 years expected for DQA applicants in most cases, showing favourable comparisons with national and international benchmarks and "best in class" as applicable |
| • For applicants who do not win the award after their application, they may only re-apply after 2 years from the date of receiving their last feedback report |

Criterion 4 (Partnerships and Resources) may need to be assigned to a specialist who can handle it appropriately.

The Project team will have specific duties that include gathering evidence from across the whole organization and conduct and initial self-assessment of the organization. The team also has the responsibility of preparing the documents to be

**Table 7.3**  Requirements from senior management

| Requirements for senior management |
| --- |
| • Should demonstrate they are fully and actively involved throughout the entire process |
| • Provide all necessary resources include time, finances, external support, and project team |
| • Actively provide information when requested to do so |
| • Provide the necessary support to those involved in evidence gathering and preparation of submission of the award |
| • Provide leadership and support to internal communication related pertaining to submission and award process |
| • Exercising honesty and transparency in supporting the award office and providing the necessary information as requested by assessor during the assessment cycle |
| • Committing to "sign off" documents for submission at each stage of the process |
| • Set time to review and understand the feedback report from assessors |
| • Should prioritize and develop action plans from assessors feedback report |

**Table 7.4**  Communication guidelines

| Communication guidelines |
| --- |
| • The organization should provide a clear statement about its decision to participate in DQA and indicate that it has the full support of senior managers |
| • The organization should also explain to its people why it has decided to enter and indicate clearly that winning the award should not be expected |
| • The Dubai Quality Award should also be explained briefly to the organization outlining the process of assessment utilized by assessors. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that the DQA acts as an external party that provides feedback on the strengths of the organization and the various opportunities that the organization has for improvement, but may also lead to organization recognition |
| • Details of the team leader and project leader should also be communicated |
| • Timescales of the project/process should also be indicated |
| • A statement indicating that many people may get involved in the entire process by some being asked to participate while others being asked to shared specific data or information |
| • The communication should also indicate the commitment of the organization the continually keep people informed about the progress and the outcomes of the process |

**Table 7.5**  Project sponsor skills

| Skills of the project sponsor |
| --- |
| • High enthusiasm and passion about "Excellence" and Continuous Improvement |
| • Should be knowledgeable and with a clear understanding of RADAR and EFQM model |
| • Possession of good team leadership and motivation skills |
| • Excellent planning skills and adherence to timescales |
| • Good documentation skills and ability |
| • Effective communicator at all organization levels |
| • Should have EFQM Award assessor training and experience or equivalent |

submitted to the award office. The initial self-assessment and the preparation of the submission documents by the project team will also serve as opportunities for bringing out the opportunities for improvement that the organization can start with through its project teams.

*Developing the Project Plan* Creating a strong application for an award solely depends on the project plan and how much time has been used on such preparation. A good project plan should have a clear list of what should be done within what time frame. The time between deciding to participate in the awards is about and submitting documents is about 6–9 months. This is enough time to prepare good project plan. A good plan also includes accurate timeframe for implementing different parts of the project. It is also a god practice to ensure that the various deadlines and action plans provided by the award office should also be embedded in the project plan.

*The Internal Self-Assessment*  provides the organization with an opportune time for the project team to collect and summarize important data, information, and evidence that will form part of the final document to be submitted to the award office. The project team should focus on collecting data that demonstrates the strength of the organization and the various opportunities that the organization has for improvement. This information will not only help the project team to present accurate information about the operations of the organization but also allow them to present organizational achievements to the external assessors in an accurate way.

The Excellence Model consists of two types of criteria that are the Enabler criteria and the Results criteria. Enablers and Results have different assessment RADAR methodology. The Enabler, in broad terms, looks at how the organization works (the methods) while the Results describe the achievements of the organization (the performance).

While conducting a self-assessment, the project team of the organization would find it useful if it considered the Model and RADAR (the tool of assessment) as a set of questions presented to the organization. There are several guiding points for each Enabler criterion and in each of them, there are several questions that can guide the project team. These include;

- How does the organization go about doing this?
- What is the reason for doing it this way?
- How is this in line with your strategy?
- How extensively is this done?
- Is it done consistently in all areas?
- How do you check whether it is working?
- What improvements or changes have taken place?

A simple pro-forma for helping with the collection and summarizing of data and evidence on Enabler aspects comes with the book.

On the other hand, each of the Results criterion come with several guiding points and a set of question that may include;

- What does your organization measure?
- Why do you measure those things?

- Is the data collection robust and accurate?
- Does your organization analyse the data for variation across different groups?
- Does your organizations performance improving over time?
- Does your organization set and achieve targets for your performance?
- Does your organization compare your performance with others?
- Does your organization know that their performance is caused by the way they work?
- Is there confidence that their performance will be maintained in the future?

*Data Gathering*  The organization can collect various needed information from (1) knowledgeable team members; (2) specific people or groups in the organization; and (3) from organizational documents, records or data. While most of these data may be available from individual people, some may be readily available on company-wide intranet or shared folders.

Gathering of evidence for Enablers may be a little bit different and involve two different approaches:

- An explanation of the way things should be done is provided be experts on the subject matter plus how monitoring and review should be conducted
- Confirmation of whether things are done as intended will be done by groups of operational people. Effectiveness of the way things are done is also conducted

Additionally, it is important for the project team to understand the difference between true evidence and "anecdotal" evidence as it is expected by the Model when gathering Enabler data. As such, substantiation of statements to give them a true evidence characteristic is necessary, however, this does not mean that the data should be quantified or documented.

*Completing the Self-Assessment*  After completing the collection of the necessary data, the project team can then proceed to identify the strengths of the organization and area where improvements should be made. Self-assessment can be performed best using the *self-assessment scorecard* template provided by the Award office. The template comes in the form of an MS excel worksheet.

Where the organization has provided good answers to the questions, the project team considers it an area of strength. For example, when asked on which method of work or performance is widely used and the answer provided indicates performance measures with good trends, achievement of internal targets, and use of relevant benchmarks and standards for comparison., then this is considered a strength for the organization.

In contrast, if the project team finds it difficult to answer a question accurately, then this is identified as an area of improvement. For example, there was lack of evidence about the measurement and refinement of the work method besides results were not only available for 1 year but there was also lack of comparison with other results.

Lastly, the organization should carefully consider the outcome of self-assessment. This is because self-assessment results act as an important decision making tool of whether the organization should proceed with submission of its documents to the award office or it should shelve its application until a future time.

*Initial Improvement Action* Once the project team completes the gathering of data, the next step is to take initial steps in the identification of the opportunities of improvement for the organization. Taking action on the identified improvement opportunities can help the organization increase its performance. Practically, during the initial self-assessment, the organization may identify many opportunities for improvement. However, the organization may not have the time or resources to implement all of them. Nonetheless, whether implemented or not, the organization has to document all the opportunities and submit it to the award office.

A starting point may be to implement opportunities that have a quick return or do not need a lot of investment. Senior management of the organization may need to provide their support by allocating managers who will take the role of acting on the opportunities and providing quick feedback. Implementing opportunities with quick wins will allow the organization to report this in their application for the award. However, care should be taken not to make mistakes in the classification of opportunities as quick wins when they are not. The majority of the opportunities may require sustained effort to deliver sustainable improvements.

*Creating the Submission Document* After the completion of the initial self-assessment and that the organization is satisfied with its progress, the preparation of documents to be submitted to the award office is started. Creation of the submission documents basically involves converting the evidence and data collected in the self-assessment stage into a format that is appropriate for submission to the award office. Given that many members will be providing their inputs care should be taken to ensure that the report has one tone. For this reason, the project team at this stage must ensure that:

- They develop and agree on the "major strategic themes" to utilize.
- They appropriately identify the many links in the excellence model that apply to the organization given that the model has many linkages between criteria and criterion. The identified links have to be described in the submission documents. For example, the organization can prepare a wall chart for the map of the Model showing the relationship between the various strategic themes which will act as a guide all those involved in the preparation of the report for the various sections of the submission document.
- They agree on the templates, styles, and conventions to be used by everyone involved in the preparation of the submission document. This may include the following:
  - Page layout, font style and size
  - Organizational References (for example, Company Name)

   – Abbreviations and Capitalization
   – Use of bold, italics or underlining
   – Format for cross references and links
   – Numbering system for graphics, diagrams and charts
 • Format for results and data (graphs, charts and tables)

## Phase 2: Submission

The qualification file is the most important document at this stage. It must be produced during the award pre-qualification process. The file has two major sections that include (1) the overview and (2) the results sections. In the overview section, a description of the organization is provided and in the summary section, a summary of the performance of the organization in the four results criteria of the model is provided (Fig. 7.4).

*Overview* The overview section provides important information that helps the assessor to understand the organization and the industry in which it operates. It preparing this section, it is considered a good practice for the organization to make use of the structure provided by the award office as part of the training process. Generally, the overview should be arranged in the following order

 • The scope of submission
 • Key information—consists of six categories on information that the assessors will be looking for
 • Detailed organization chart

*Scope of the Submission* In this section, a clear explanation on the unit, division or group or the company to be assessed is provided.

### Key Information
1. Facts and Figures
   Mission, Vision, Values, Owners, Scope, Sites, Size
2. History
   Narrative on past key achievements
3. Challenges & Strategy
   Risks and opportunities in current and future value propositions
4. Markets, Offerings & Customers
   Current and potential markets; intermediaries; competitors; customers
5. Operations, Partners & Suppliers
   Structure of assets and partners
6. Management Structure
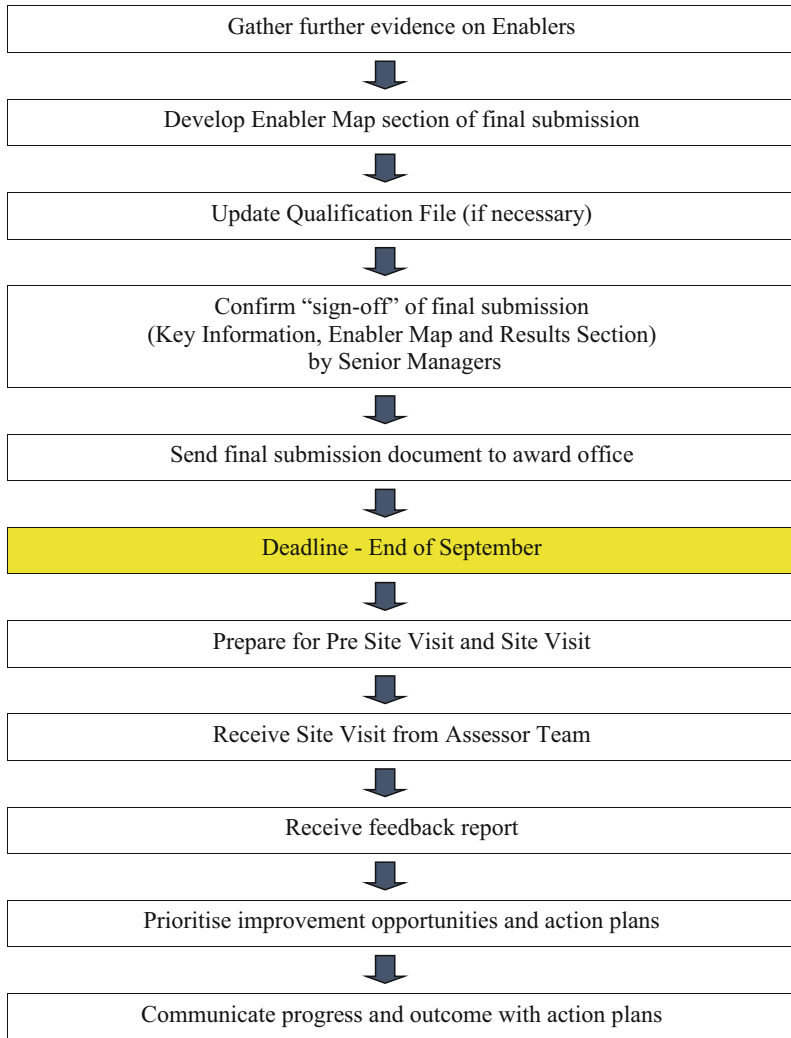   Governance and performance management

| Gather further evidence on Enablers |
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| Develop Enabler Map section of final submission |
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| Update Qualification File (if necessary) |
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| Confirm "sign-off" of final submission<br>(Key Information, Enabler Map and Results Section)<br>by Senior Managers |
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| Send final submission document to award office |
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⬇

| Deadline - End of September |
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| Prepare for Pre Site Visit and Site Visit |
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| Receive Site Visit from Assessor Team |
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⬇

| Receive feedback report |
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| Prioritise improvement opportunities and action plans |
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| Communicate progress and outcome with action plans |
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**Fig. 7.4** Phase 2 of award process. Source: Dubai quality award office

*Detailed Organization Chart* The organization chart should clearly indicated the main departments and work groups in the organization. Key people in charge of the various sections divisions or departments should also be indicated. For individuals who hold more than one role in the organization, the project team should indicate it in the chart.

*Presenting Results and Enabler Maps in the Application* In the Results section as shown in Fig. 7.5 a summary of important data is provided to demonstrate organizational performance against the four Results criteria of the Model. The results can be
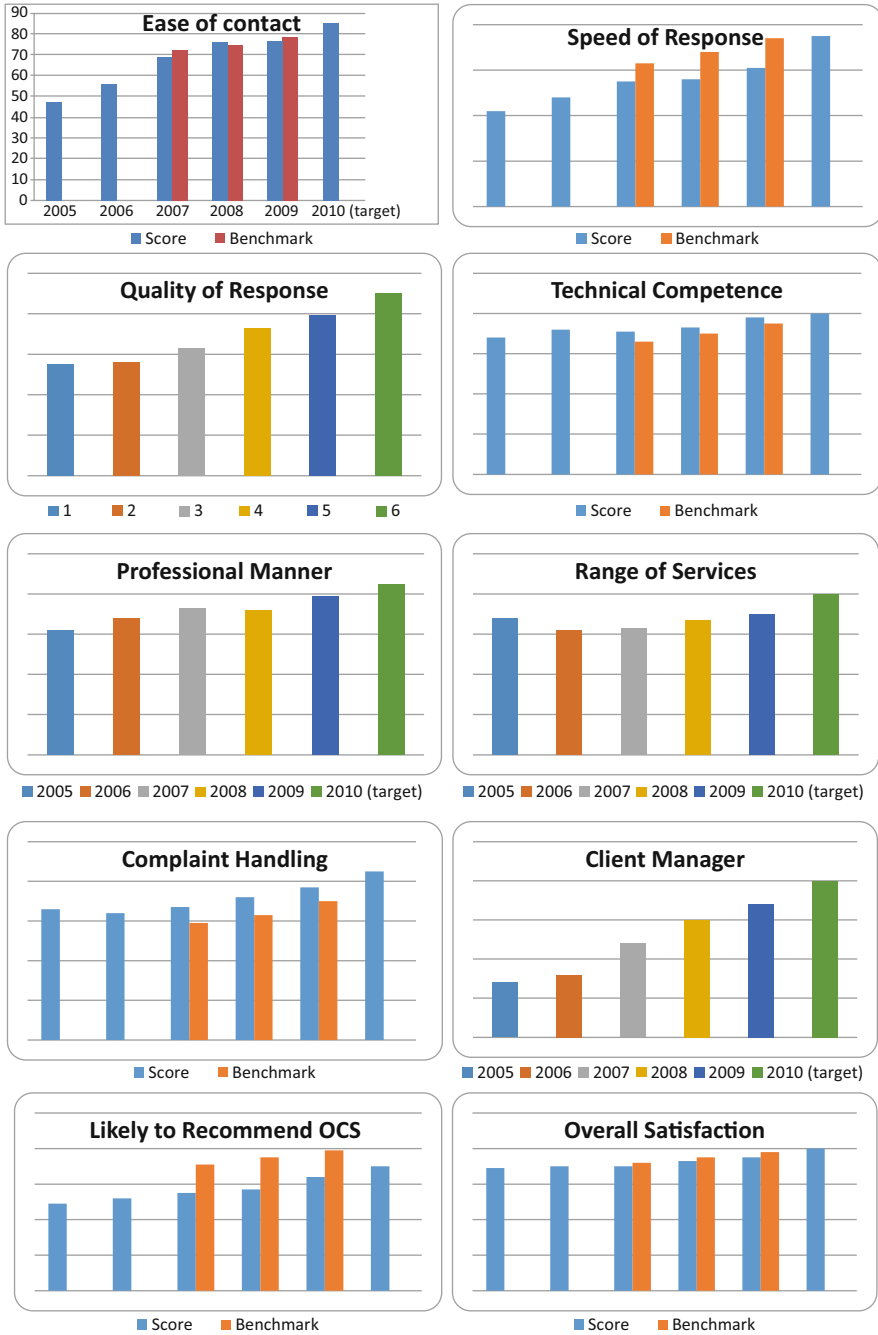
**Fig. 7.5** Sample results maps. Source: Dubai quality award office

presented in a table format, graph, chart (bar or pie) or histograms as considered appropriate. Additionally, a section providing an overview of the measurement systems and philosophy employed by the organization should be included to facilitate the understanding, interpretation, and evaluation of presented data. It may also be important to include information on the design and layout of charts and graphs, target setting, and benchmarks used for all the results criteria. Information on any additional results should also be included.

A 2–3 page summary of each of the Results criteria should then be made. On the first page, several information should be provided and include performance trends, target setting, external or internal comparisons used, link to related enablers, and future performance projection. Additionally, results which are considered to be key for the various criterion parts should also be indicated.

In the rest of the pages, performance trends, targets, and benchmarks should be included. Adverse trends or comparisons should be accompanied by supporting commentary for clarification purposes. When using MS Excel one should make sure that only necessary charting tools are used. The use of tools such as 3D bar charts may not be important if they are not clear enough. Colours should also be used carefully in graphical data to make it easy for assessor to differentiate the various shades of grey. Some of the strategies that one can use to make understanding of the data easy to assessors include:

- Clarifying if organizational improvement is upward (for example, increase in sales) or downward (for example, decrease in the number of accidents)
- Using different colours to present data on performance, target, and benchmark
- Ensuring consistency in the use of colours between charts and criteria. This is especially the case when different writers compile data on different criterion.

When taking a lot of care in making charts and layouts, it is possible to include 8–10 charts in one A4 page. Along with the Results Qualification file, the following should also be presented:

- A brief Enabler Map—should outline a few enabler criteria only
- A brief self-assessment report

This documents should be submitted to the award office, end of June, for review.

*Presenting the Enabler Map*  The Enabler Map makes use of a very simple format and does not require a lot of details and therefore it is easy for applicants to produce. During the site visit process, details and clarification are addressed. The Enabler map should be written using an easy language and a concise style. The editor-in-chief should take the responsibility of ensuring that the Enabler map is written using a consistent format and writing style regardless of how many people contributed.

The Enabler Criteria should have a brief overview of about 1–2 pages. The overview should include main strategies, policies, approaches, and processes that

are adopted for the various criterion. The overview will make it easier to understand, interpret, and evaluate the working ways of the organization and thus enable the planning and execution of an effective site visit.

The overview is then followed by a 1 page tabulated summary of approaches for each criterion and the relationship between the various approaches and how they relate to the results presented in the qualification file. Additional site evidence should be indicated with the relevant owner and/or subject matter expert if possible.

Other general points to observe include:

- Use plain English—given that the document is intended for another audience, the level of English used should be easy to read and understand.
- Avoid unnecessary jargon—closely related to the first point, the organization should make sure that language and shorthand's only understood in the organizations are used to the minimum. In case abbreviations and acronyms are used, the writer should provide a comprehensive glossary of all the used terms.
- Improving on clarity of information: use of graphics, diagrams or pictures should be done to aid making of information clear.
- Before finalizing the preparation of the document, spell-check using English (UK) rather than English (US) to make sure the document is consistent all through.

*Possible Layout of an Enabler Map (Table 7.6)* Completing each Phase of the Submission: While the writing of the submission document may not be done by senior managers, they should act as sponsor of various project sub-teams or individual criteria. Most importantly, the sponsor should agree to sign off the final submission document. Additionally, the sponsors should be involved in the production of the final document. They also make sure that the document provides a fair and accurate description of the organization in addition to making sure that important information and evidence is not left out. The final document to be submitted to the

**Table 7.6**  Enabler map

| Ref. | Approach | Objective or purpose | Deployment | Assessment & refinement | Linkages and key results | Owner and subject matter expert |
|------|----------|----------------------|------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 5a.1 | Process framework | To provide a clear definition of key processes, their relationships and interaction | All key processes defined in 3 categories; management, operational and support | Initial review at annual strategic planning meeting. Breakdown to 3 sub-process levels agreed | Integrated management system (1b). Strategy deployment (2d). Business results (9a & 9b) | Ove Anderson George Wilson |

award office must have the approval and endorsement of the most Senior Manager in the organization.

For organizations that previously applied for DQAA, DQA or Gold awards, the submission document should be accompanied by an Action Taken Report at Phase 2 in the Enabler Map section of the submission document. This will allow the assessor to see which actions have been taken by the organization based on the feedback report from the previous DQA application.

## Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed guideline of how an organization can make a strong application for the DQA award. The chapter has provided steps on how the award office carries out the process in addition to the various key stages and steps that organizations should follow to submit their application documents. A summary of the steps for submitting application documents for applicants is provided here.

## Case Study: Dubai Quality Award in Focus

**Excellence in Practice: DQA in Focus**

This good practice example is provided by Ms Seema Sequeira, DQA specialist to encourage to conduct effective self-assessment and to prepare a strong award application

This example provides a sample for writing up the results sections. It illustrates the Criterion part 6a—Customer Results—Perceptions and people results—people perceptions (Table 7.7).

Criterion part 7a—People Results—Perceptions (Table 7.8)

**Table 7.7**  Sample customer results: part 6a—Customer Results—Perceptions

| Depending on the purpose of the organisation measures may focus on: |
| --- |
| • Reputation and Image |
| • Product and service value |
| • Product and service delivery |
| • Customer service, relationship and support |
| • Customer Loyalty and engagement |
| We have many customers, varying in size from the small business users on single sites to national clients who operate from multiple sites. The needs and expectations differ in certain areas but there are many core aspects of service provision that are important to all customers |
| We use a common customer satisfaction survey for all our customers. This gives us our base data for review and comparison but we supplement this with face to face review meetings for each of our top 50 clients, carried out at least annually. This gives us additional qualitative data, highlights potential future problem areas and generates ideas for additional facilities or services |
| The customer survey is designed and operated by an independent survey company. The company carried out research with a cross section of our customers to ensure that the survey factors are both relevant and important. In this way we are confident that the measurements give us a true picture of customer perceptions |
| The survey company has confirmed that the response rate over the past 4 years has increased from 52 to 68% which confirms that we have robust data for analysis |
| Our customer survey covers 15 major service aspects and we have shown below the 8 factors which our customer research showed as the most important. These are our key results for 6a. Data for the remaining parameters can be reviewed at the site visit |
| Our performance over the last 5 years is illustrated in the charts which follow (these show % satisfied or very satisfied). The charts do not contain our internal targets. We have only set targets for the past 2 years, and these are agreed at our annual customer planning workshop, based on benchmark comparisons where available or previous trends where they are not available |
| In all cases you will see performance improvements which are directly related to the initiatives we have taken in training and empowering our people (see 3b and 3c) together with the changes to service delivery (see 5d) and customer relationship management (see 5e) |
| The comparative (benchmark) data is provided from our research company and represents the "top performing" company in a similar or related business sector |
| All the data presented in the charts can be analysed by customer segment and by region but this is not shown due to the space restriction in the submission. Variation in performance between regions is not significant and all the segmented data is available for review at the site visit |
| Please see Fig. 7.6 maps for Criterion |

Source: DQA office, 2017

## Key Questions

1. Discuss the various *radar* components discussed in this sample template?
2. Discuss the some of the results that your organizations could present in light of this template?

**Table 7.8** People perception

| |
|---|
| Depending on the purpose of the organisation measures may focus on:<br>• Satisfaction, involvement and engagement<br>• Pride and fulfilment<br>• Leadership and management<br>• Target setting, competency and performance management<br>• Competency, training and career development<br>• Effective communications<br>• Working Conditions |
| We recognise that people are the most critical asset in running an effective service business and have invested in several areas of people development and support (see Criterion 3). Measuring effectiveness is equally important and we now gather people's perception through an annual survey. This was originally launched in 2002, based on a survey endorsed as good practice by the Institute of Human Resource Development (IHRD) |
| We commissioned Surveys Unlimited (UK) to update and re-launch our survey in 2005 and to manage the data capture and analysis. They ran several focus groups to identify the critical parameters for our people and the final version was trialled and endorsed at our management conference. Our survey covers 12 parameters (we wanted to make it easy to complete but still relevant). After our employee communications manager was appointed she carried out further focus group research to rank the parameters in order of importance. In the charts below we have presented the data for the top six, which represents the Key results for people perception |
| This current survey uses a rating scale of 1 (extremely dissatisfied) to 10 (extremely satisfied) with 5 representing an acceptable performance for each question in the survey. The category scores below represent the arithmetic mean of all respondents. The survey is anonymous and can be completed online or on paper, and in the last 2 years we have incentivised survey completion by making local charitable donations for every completed form received. As a result our response rate has increased from 46% in 2008 to 79% in 2010, so we have very robust data available |
| We did not set targets until 2008 as we were initially concerned to see the rate of change that resulted from our initial efforts. Since then we have set targets based on extrapolation of previous performance and consideration of benchmark data where this is available |
| Due to the design of the survey we are advised by Surveys Unlimited (UK) that not all the parameters can be directly compared with results from their database. For this reason benchmarks are absent in certain areas but we actively seeking relevant comparisons from other sources. The benchmarks shown are drawn from the database of Surveys Unlimited (UK) for comparable questions. The database is compiled from over 600 client companies across a range of business sectors and the benchmarks provided are the top quartile scores |
| We have further analysis of the survey results by location, staff grade, length of service, etc., and all segmented data will available for review at the site visit. We not that there are slightly higher scoring levels from the management grades but we are advised by the survey company that the variance is not statistically significant |
| Links to our enabling approaches are shown in commentary for each chart. |

Source: DQA office, 2017

**Overall Satisfaction**

Score  Target
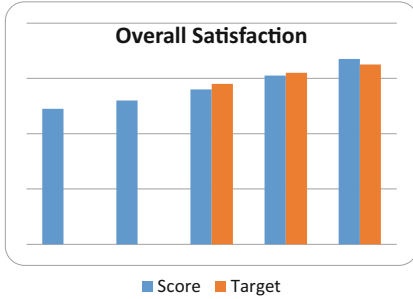
7.1 We believe the steady progress in overall performance is due to the range of initiatives we have taken in leadership and people management

**Leadership**

Score  Target  Benchmark
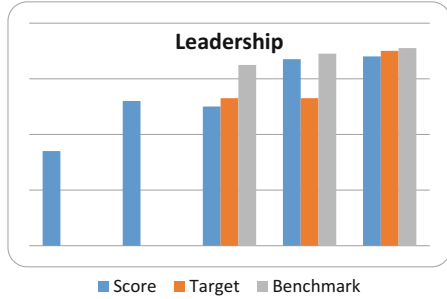
7.2 The leadership development programme that we began to roll out from early 2008 made an impact in this area over the next 2 years

**Training & Coaching**

Score  Target

7.3 As our training events have been more focused and more importantly delivered on a timely basis we have seen improving satisfaction in this area

**Performance Management**

Score  Target  Benchmark
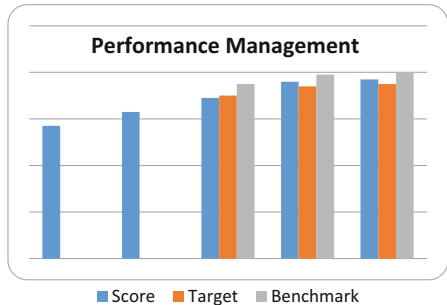
7.4 The deployment of targets to team leaders and individual technicians has generally been welcomed but we have seen a variation in this parameter across the regions

**Internal Communications**

Score  Target  Benchmark
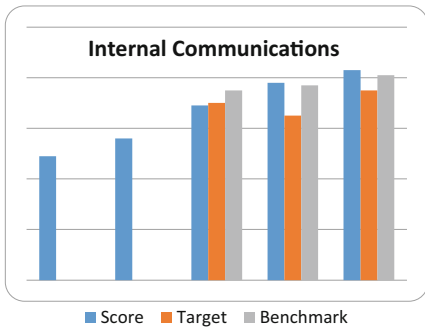
7.5 We have put considerable efforts into this area over the last 3-4 years so are encouraged to see the significant improvements achieved

**Career Development**

Score  Target  Benchmark
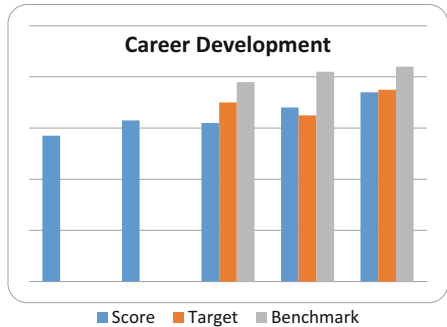
7.6 Improved coaching from line managers has influenced this to some degree but we have not improved at the rate we would have liked to achieve

**Fig. 7.6** Reporting people results. Source: Dubai Quality Award office

## Summary

The Dubai Quality award provides very clear and organized that all applicants should follow in submitting their application documents.

- Step 1: It is mandatory for all applicants to attend a workshop hosted by the award office in the first quarter of the year. In the workshop, applicants are trained on DQA processes and on how to write a strong application.
- Step 2: After the workshop applicants are expected to fill an application form, and a Pre-*Qualification checklist*, and a benchmarking booking form with a copy of their Trading license by the end of March. The award office will then use this information to prepare for a benchmarking program and then invite the applicants.
- Step 3: Organizations are then required to prepare their submission documents. This process is divide into two main stages.
  - In stage 1, the organization should sent an official letter approved by the highest authority to the award office by the end of June. The letter should be accompanied by the following documentation:
    - Key Information and Results Qualification file (between 14 and 18 pages),
    - Brief Enabler Map (on any 1 criteria),
    - Brief Self-Assessment 2-page report (just a simple word document with top strengths and top areas for improvement. Self-assessment templates provided for your detailed internal self-assessment, but for award office a brief summarized report will do)
    - DQA Scorecard: A template is provided by DQA
  - The application will then be reviewed and assessed by DQA evaluating committee and provide a feedback by end of July indicating whether the organization can proceed with the application or should re-apply the following year.
  - In the second stage, applying organizations are required to complete an Enabler *Map* and *Results Qualification file* not exceeding 45–50 pages by the end of September. For organizations which had applied previously, the qualification file should be accompanied by Action Taken report.
- Step 4: applicants are required to pay application fees for the respective awards in their applications by end of September so as to complete the application submission process.

## References

Mann, R., Adebanjo, D., Laosirihongthong, T., & Punnakitikashem, P. (2011). Awareness and impact of business excellence in Asia. *Total Quality Management & Business Excellence, 22* (11), 1237–1258.

Talwar, B. (2011). Business excellence models and the path ahead. ... *The TQM Journal, 23*(1), 21–35.

# Assessment for an External Award

**8**

Ms. Sequeira, a business excellence specialist at the Dubai Quality Award, mentions 'our relationship with our client actually begins after the award process. Our engagement with our client is to support the organization in it's efforts for continuous improvement. Hence, we ensure our clients are with us and are able to withstand the rigour needed'. Thus, it is not surprising that the winners of the Dubai Quality Award say that one of the advantages of participating is the receipt of the 'assessment report' or the feedback report that provides additional value to their organization in addition to the award. Thus, it is important to determine how this assessment can be made more effective to enable organizations to pursue continuous organizational improvement for achieving consistent organizational excellence. What are the various steps involved in embarking or setting out for assessment of an award?

## Introduction

Indeed, around the world, there are many business excellence awards that offer valuable feedback reports, recognitions, performance enhancement, and many more advantages (Metaxas and Koulouriotis 2014). Competitive quality awards can provide several benefits in terms of innovation, organizational learning, and reputational promotion (Bovaird and Löffler 2009). Moreover, they also serve as assessment tools, with several being applied in areas beyond their standard areas of implementation. Alongside the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) and Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA), the regional and national quality awards also provide such an assessment that could help develop a roadmap for organizations to achieve organizational excellence. In this chapter, we will discuss the process for assessing organizational excellence particularly for Dubai Quality award based on EFQM guidelines. We will also discuss the process

of award assessment as well as the skills necessary for an external assessor. Finally, we will also deliberate on the launch a new award, regardless of the industry, sector, and criteria.

## Assessment for an External Award

In this section, we will understand the assessment process of an organization for a DQA award model. DQA award is based on EFQM Excellence  Model. The EFQM Excellence Model is internationally acknowledged as the benchmark for excellence. Receipt of EFQM award proves an organization's outstanding achievements for their customers, employees, and other stakeholders. The assessors are the central elements of an assessment system. In Europe, the EFQM assessors are believed to be the best and most experienced award assessors; in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), there are over 1500 assessors trained for the DQA assessment.

Therefore, to conduct an accurate assessment, an assessor who plays a key role in the award assessment process must have a three-dimensional (3D) view of the assessment purpose. That is, he/she should possess an understanding of what an assessment should mean to the application, assessor, and award body in general. EFQM provides a set of guidelines that summarize what comprises a good assessment to each of these involved parties (EFQM 2013):

For example, from an organization's perspective, the expectations of the assessment are as follows:

- The assessors should gain a complete understanding of their organization.
- Assessor should conduct a comprehensive assessment regarding stakeholder insights, perceptions, as well as achievements.
- The assessors should help the organization understand how each enabler or driver can successfully drive the organization towards viable excellence.
- The assessors should be able to provide practical and actionable feedback points that result from an independent, fair, and external analysis of the organization's strengths and areas requiring improvement.
- The assessors should have a close and constructive dialogue with all level of employees.
- Finally, most importantly, the organization should be able to use the provided feedback report for making decisions for essential improvements that would help achieve the desired results in the future and motivate all members of the organization to pursue excellence.
- The process of assessment should be fair, honest, and consistent.
- The assessors should be professional and knowledgeable.
- The internal measurements for assessment need to be calibrated.
- An appropriate degree of confidentiality should be maintained.
- The administration of the assessment procedure should be efficient.
- The assessment process should include smooth and professionally conducted site visits

- The process should provide balanced and value-adding feedback that would help organizational progress and improvement

Similarly, an assessor should be broad-minded and open to learn from the application and the team. Further, he/she must be cooperative and willing to work, using others' experiences. They should understand that they are working in a highly multi-cultural environment and must possess the skills to effectively contribute toward team assessment. It is of utmost importance that the assessors remember that they are serving on the country's most important national award and should consistently function with clear responsibility and utmost care. Moreover, an assessor must:

- Understand the applicant's business and use this knowledge effectively to produce relevant, value-adding feedback for the assessed organization.
- Assimilate and understand the relevant information and data related to the organization that is being assessed and use it to produce clear, accurate, and insightful analysis.

Organizations, in particular, are expected to:

- Adhere to the stipulated timescales and provide the Submission Document in a timely manner.
- Provide an informative, clear, and concise Submission Document that represents their organization well.
- Fully co-operate for both, planning and implementation of the site visit, as requested by the assessor(s).
- Contribute effectively as members of the assessment team and conduct themselves with due professionalism and integrity at all times.
- Accumulate and understand all the relevant information and data pertaining to their organization that is under assessment.

The team also has specific roles in the assessment process. Typically, these include a team leader, team member, and a criterion owner. Some additional roles such as deputies to the criterion and team leaders may also be appointed to facilitate the assessment process. The major duty of the team leader involves facilitating team meetings and ensuring the optimal utilization of everyone's knowledge, experience, and ability. The team leader plays a crucial role in forming a strong consensus and ensuring that everyone's point of view is reflected in the assessment process. In addition to ensuring that the schedules and deliverables are provided on time, they are also responsible for liaising with the award applicant. The assessor team member is also responsible for completing all the assigned assessment tasks to the satisfaction of all the working group members. Each of these members may also act as criterion owners, during which, they are responsible for ensuring that focus is maintained on a set of specific criterion parts across each phase of the assessment process. Criterion owners collect and consolidate the views and findings of other team members to

establish a consensus for the criterion parts. After a consensus has been reached, well-phrased *strength*s and areas for *improvement statements* are prepared.

## The Assessment Process

A typical process of assessment is depicted in the diagram Fig. 8.1.

**Phase 1: Initiation**
At this stage, the team develops a personal understanding of the organization and it's context, based on the *submission document* provided by the organization and any other complementary information sources that have been provided. An initial understanding of the scope and context of the organization is to be provided as the first task that would involve accomplishing the following:

- Reviewing and summarizing the six key information categories to understand the organizational context.
- Identification of two or three key strategic themes for the applicant organization.
- Gaining an understanding of how these themes map across the model and identifying the key approaches and results for each theme.
- Listing the site visit subjects relevant to these two or three themes by the criterion part, including the "missing" or assumed to be missing approaches or results.

However, at this stage it is not necessary to conduct a full analysis of the enabler sections. The objective is to identify the areas perceived to be most important for investigation during the site visit. During the Team Briefing Event, the team consolidates these inputs and decides on the key themes to concentrate on during the site visit. After verifying the individuals' understanding of the context and strategic objectives, members begin focusing on the details of the site visit plan. The next step is to connect with the team. In this task, the team explores and decides how to combine the competencies and team characteristics of each Assessor in the team. Typically, this is accomplished by assigning criterion and/or Fundamental
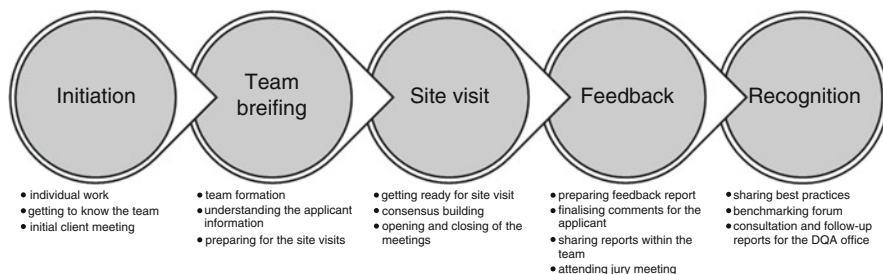


**Fig. 8.1** Process of award assessment

Concept ownership for each team member. Connecting with the team is extremely important for successful assessment, failing which, negative team dynamics may develop, making it difficult to arrive at consensuses. Hence, as a team member, one can help reach a consensus in challenging situations, help provide a helicopter view when detailed discussions are occurring, as well as help finalize the language and style of the feedback report. Overall, the central goal is the establishment of confidence and mutual co-operation between the Assessor team leader and the applicant's representative. Typically, certain discussions pertaining to the initial practical tasks of the assessment plan are conducted, and the foundation of a healthy working relationship is established. By the end of this task:

- The Assessment Team Leader and the applicant have established a basis for mutual cooperation
- An outline agenda for the briefing event meeting has been established.
- A short list of additional or specific material the team wishes to observe during the site visit may be prepared. For example, a video presentation showcasing the organization's products & services
- A list of the names and titles of the representatives along with their arrival and departure times

**Phase II Briefing**
During the second phase of the assessment, several activities are undertaken.

 (i) The introduction and team meeting: A first brief is given by the Assessment Team Leaders for the implementation of the assessment process in a consistent manner. This meeting is also used to build a common understanding of the applicant's organization, it's operating environment, and the key strategies they have adopted. It is important at this stage for all team leaders to understand their role and relationship with the Process Support Person. Team members understand how they can best contribute toward the team goals.
(ii) Thereafter, the aim is to understand the applicant. Therefore, it is important to:
- Obtain and document a high-level, strategic understanding of the organization for continuous use during the assessment process
- Reach a consensus regarding the team's view of the scope of assessment to confirm and adapt with the applicant representative
- Present this understanding as a team so that it can be tested and/or confirmed with the applicant representative
- Make conclusive key points of the organizational understanding (not performance assessment) that may be required to be clarified with the applicant representative

It should be noted that to achieve a strategically relevant assessment, understanding the applicant is imperative. Failure to achieve this understanding has been observed as a major source of applicant dissatisfaction in the past.

The purpose of meeting the client is to establish a positive spirit of cooperation between the applicant and the assessing team. The aim of this meeting is as follows:

- Align the team's point of view regarding the organization's profile with that of the applicant representative(s), and make corrections and/or clarifications if and where required.
- Advise the applicant on best practices for preparations for the site visit, ensuring accurate expectation setting, clearly defining the site visit agenda, and requesting specific information that may be required for the team's stay.
- Accurately document the minutes of this meeting that should then be shared with the team.

Finally, it is important to agree upon the subjects of the site visit. Based on the list of subjects, an outline for the Site Visit Plan needs to be prepared. The purpose is to develop a project plan that outlines all the tasks required to be completed prior to the site visit with time scales, owners, agreed conference call dates, etc. While an individual list of site visit subjects and proposals for the Site Visit Plan are prepared, at the end of this stage, the following should be ready:

- List of consolidated and prioritized site visit subjects
- Drafted master plan for the site visit week, ready to be shared with the applicant
- Confidence in the team members regarding the visit plan and knowledge of the preparations they need to make (for instance, defining the agreed form to be used for each site visit session)
- Agreed contact dates with the Process Support Person to share updates and progress

**Phase III: Site Visit**
A site visit is a core element of the assessment process as it acts as the main source of information on which the feedback and input for both the applicant and the jury is built.

The purpose of the Site Visit is to clarify the enablers (find out all missing information, extent of deployment, as well as review and improvement), clarify the results (figure out missing information, integrity, and confidence), get an insight into the environment of the organization, achieve at a consensus about the final version of the feedback report and assign a final score.

The first task is to develop a site visit plan and distribute the detailed site visit plans to all team members, including detailed meeting schedules. Thereafter, a meeting should be conducted with the senior management team to gain strategic insights and understanding about the different roles of the organization's senior-level employees. Then interviews should be conducted to obtain an understanding and gather supporting evidence regarding the site-visit subjects, as defined by the team. This information should then be shared and evaluated within the team.

All the necessary evidence leading to valuable and actionable feedback should be gathered, and each team member is responsible for sharing his/her findings. During this phase, it is important to ensure that all possible linkages between the detailed feedback and strategic challenges have been identified.

All tasks prior to the site visit are purposely lined to ensure that the site visit becomes a success. During a site visit, interviews are conducted and resulting data is used to compute a score which indicates the strength of the applicant. The results also inform a basis for providing recommendations for improvement. An example of working for consensus meeting is provided below. An analysis of the overview of the criterion is provided by the owner and includes the following information:

- A proposal on strengths and areas which should be improved
- A proposed scoring range
- A proposal on identified good practices
- Opinion on key themes

The team discusses:

- Possible omissions or errors in the analyses, based on evidence collected during other interviews
- Consensus score
- Any changes required for justifying the feedback statements

Assessment is not an exact science. The work of the Criteria Owners may be based on the use of different methods owing to the variations in the industry and professional backgrounds, different perceptions of excellence, varied understanding of the Model Criteria and its assessment methods. The Consensus Meeting discussion helps achieve a consensus through these differences to create a shared team view.

During a site visit, the following questions may be used to verify the enablers:

- What is the approach?
- What is the implementation plan/method?
- Is the approach being consistently used or applied?
- What is the efficacy of the approach and its application?
- What is the method used for reviewing, updating, and improving the approach?
- How is the approach beneficial for the business?

Similarly, the results can be verified by addressing the following questions:

- Are the results relevant for evaluating the delivery of the business objectives?
- What is the reliability of the results?
- How can the results be viewed in a segmented form?
- What method is used for target setting?
- What method is used for setting the benchmarks?
- How are the outcomes linked to the methods/approaches

The following list provides good practices for conducting an interview:

- Initiation: Put the applicant at ease and introduce yourself. Provide an overview of the interview method, roles, and needs, and explain that answers are non-attributable (if relevant)
- Body of the interview: Start with a question to build a rapport. Use a balanced combination of open and closed questions. Listen carefully and react accordingly. Use controlled silence
- Ending: Summarize and evaluate the conclusions that have emerged from the interview. Inquire if the applicant wished to add any important matter. Finally, thank the applicant and decide on the next steps (if relevant).

**Phase 4: Feedback Report**

This phase involves preparing the feedback report, including an executive summary that conveys the key business messages, as follows:

- A value-adding and practically applicable feedback report with scores accompanying the statements
- Customized templates for the identified Good Practices
- Finalization of the feedback report by the Assessment Team Leader, following which, it is sent to the EFQM

Thereafter, the report is sent to the Jury to enable them to make robust and sound decisions on the final recognition levels. A face-to-face closing meeting should also be conducted to give the applicant an opportunity to clarify any issues or ask questions about the feedback report. Finally, the assessors would also have a chance to provide their feedback and report their learnings. While preparing the feedback report, the following points must be considered:

- All feedback statements must be expressed clearly, using complete sentences that convey the message tactfully and accurately.
- The Key Themes from the Executive Summary should be clear in the relevant criterion parts.
- The Strengths and Areas for Improvement (and the number of each) should complement the scores and each other.
- Care should be taken to avoid a consulting tone. Desist from advising the organization about Do's and Don'ts.
- Refrain from using statements such as "It is unclear" because all clarifications should have been sought and made during the site visit.

**Phase 5: Recognition**

This is the final stage that involves recognition of the winners. Assessors may also celebrate their success and share their experiences at this stage.

The next section will provide some guidelines for preparing a good feedback report.

Guidelines for preparing the "Strengths and Areas for Improvement" section of the feedback.

It is important that the final report provides the applicant "value-adding" feedback. Hence, the assessors must develop a good understanding to prepare an accurate list of "strengths" and "areas for improvement". Below are some examples of poorly worded strengths.

*The approaches to communications have improved.*
*The balanced scorecard links to the Strategy Development Forum.*
*Systems aligned to processes.*

Above statements do not provide an indication regarding the extent or type of improvements observed. Hence, it would be difficult to understand the nature of future improvements that need to be planned. In other words, such closed loop feedback does not help an organization in planning future action.

The strengths must be clearly pointed out, as below:

Examples of well-worded Strengths:

- The communication team reviews communication approaches annually and makes significant improvements e.g. informal lunch meetings every week, open plan offices, intranet and monthly newsletter review
- A clear relationship exists between strategy development forum output and objectives within the SMT's balanced scorecard
- Organizational systems are aligned will all processes related to customer service facilitating the integration of customer data in a single technology framework with product data and interfaces for making sales

Thus, the following format can be followed while listing the organizational Strengths:

Generally, in describing the strengths of an organization, the following format can be used

*The organization <<does what? >> <<in what context? >> <<why?/what is the added value? >>. The approach has been reviewed <<when? >> And it has been improved <<how?>>.*

Similarly, some examples of poorly worded Areas for Improvement are:

- *No evidence of market research process being reviewed.*
- *No process to identify needs of potential customers.*
- *Limited evidence of learning within the HR Department.*

The above areas identified for improvement could instead be worded as follows:

- There is a clear lack of evidence that the organization has performed a review of the frequency (currently done on a yearly basis) of collecting and analysing data on market research processes even in the face of rapidly evolving market

- The existing product development approach only pays attention to the needs of existing customers and does not consider the needs of potential customers. This negatively impacts organizational growth strategy and sales targets
- There is also clear lack of strategies for collection of information on why employees are leaving the organization despite the present high levels of unwanted employee turnover

Similarly, in describing the areas for improvement for an organization, the following general format can be used.

The organization <<has not demonstrated what? >> <<in what context? >>.

It is also recommended that the organizational strengths and areas identified for improvement to be expressed together so as to give the applicant high value-adding feedback with appropriate examples to illustrate expectations and non-expectations, as opposed to how it should have been done in case of results as well.

*Structure of the sentence*

General Structure of the sentence

A sentence could take the following general structure

*A wide range of Results has been presented, linked to the strategy>> <<Many/ most results show positive trends over x years. In particular, measures x and y show a growth of x% year on year>> <<Many/most measures have appropriate targets, which are mostly achieved>>.*

Examples of poorly worded strengths for results:

- For the last 3 years positive results have been recorded
- The majority of cases have appropriate targets which have been met
- There is a relationship between adopted strategies and results achieved

Examples of well-worded strengths for results:

- The organization has recorded impressive improvements over the last 5 years in the keys business results areas that include profit, turnover, and market share
- The objectives in the organization strategic plan as agreed by stakeholders have been accomplished in the last 4 of the 5 years
- The improved organizational performance has a clear relationship with the courses of actions outlined in the organization strategic plan

Structure

<<There are very few examples of segmented results for x>> <<Comparisons have been presented for about 20% of the measures>>

Examples of poorly worded Areas for Improvement for results:

- Only four new ideas per employee is too low.
- The company does not measure Society Perception.
- Limited evidence of benchmarking with "best in class" organisations.

Examples of well-worded Areas for Improvement for results:

- The targets set for new ideas generated, which were key to the success of the Innovation Strategy, have not been met for the last 3 years.
- The Organisation has invested significantly in reducing noise pollution from their site but they are not measuring the perceived benefits of this for the local community.
- Although performance has improved significantly in a number of the key results, without relevant benchmarks it is not possible to determine The Organisation's progress towards their goal of being the market leader.

## Skills and Training for Assessors

For an activity to be successful, the involved individuals should possess the necessary skills and knowledge. This section describes the skills and knowledge needed by the main groups of people involved in the process of assessment and the method to develop these skills and knowledge. The type of people involved in the project across the consortium was extensive; however, they tended to fall into the following categories:

**Assessment Leaders** The wide range of skills normally expected of an individual in charge of a project include planning and scheduling, time management, ability to work within the stipulated budgets and timescales, communication skills, persuasion, facilitation, diplomacy, motivation, and team spirit. The ability to work with senior professionals and gain their support in terms of actions and resources, not only verbally is invaluable. The need to expertly organize and facilitate workshops and seminars is also a crucial skill.

**Team Members** It is important that a detailed assessor training be conducted to ensure that all team members have a detailed understanding of the model. This knowledge and understanding can then be expanded through networking activities or by working as award assessors for the EFQM or the British Quality Foundation. Additional guidance and support for members can also be provided by external experts such as Consortium members or the advisory board. Members can also be trained in other areas such as the use of e-pathways as deemed necessary.

## Establishing a New Award

An award is a recognition or appreciation for an achievement for organizations as well as individuals. Several stages and awards are involved in establishing an award. The various stages involved in this process have been detailed in the section below:

**Stage 0: Planning stage—Pre-award Preparation**

The planning stage is the starting point for establishing any award. This stage involves an evaluation of the technical aspects of the award, such as establishing an award criteria and award guidelines, assessing the methodology, and preparing the training materials. Thereafter, marketing-related planning that involves identification of the award patrons, preparation of the sponsorship packages, marketing collaterals, templates, etc. needs to be done. The third level of planning involves the recruitment of human resources to oversee the administrative aspects of the award. Finally, a plan to establish an information technology (IT) infrastructure to support the award facilitation needs to be designed. These planning sessions are to be commissioned among the top management team or its dedicated specialist team who are responsible for completing this task. These planning sessions do not have a pre-requisite, and therefore can be performed in parallel. The actions are listed below, with a brief description of each activity (Table 8.1):

**The Stage 0 Planning stage**

The most crucial stage is that of developing the award criterion, assessment methodology, and vetting the standards in consultation with experts and specialists. Generally, a team of specialists and experts collaborate as a team for this task.

**Stage 1: Announcement of Award**

The stage that follows the planning stage is that of announcing the award to its potential recipients. During this stage, it is essential that the award specialist team have all the necessary award documentations established during the planning stage. At this point, it is important to provide sufficient information to the prospective recipients about the purpose of the award and prepare a suitable application for participation. An online support system provides an added advantage. Some of the specific actions that need to be taken at this stage are listed below:

**Table 8.1** Planning stage of assessment

| Planning Stage 0 | Actions |
| --- | --- |
| Technical planning | • Establish Award Jury<br>• Award Criterion development<br>• Award assessment methodology<br>• Award Guidelines<br>• Award recruitment guidelines<br>• Assessor training program |
| Planning of Marketing | Award Patrons selection Marketing collaterals/Templates Sponsorship packages |
| Planning of HR | • Recruitment of administrative/assessors/IT personnel<br>• Administrative team training<br>• Assessor Training |
| Planning for IT infrastructure | IT resource acquisitions |

- Organizing an award-launching event: An award launch event is particularly suitable when an award is announced for the time while subsequent year another mechanism can be used to announce the opening of the award submission.
- Presentation of the award process and the criteria: Providing clarity and transparency of the award process at the opening event can motivate potential recipients to submit an application

**Stage 2: Accepting the Award Application**
At this stage, an online system or a support system must be in place to accept the award applications. One of the key tasks of the administrative team at this stage would be to repeatedly announce the award scheme and encourage applications. The administrative team should be trained at this point in time to respond to all ad-hoc inquiries and guide the applicants through the process, as needed. As a good practice, award briefings can be conducted by the administrative team for the prospective recipients. As a common practice, the award custodians organize one-day workshops or calendar-based events to accommodate their prospective recipients and conduct detailed information sessions. The quality of the applications, in fact, depends on the information sessions held by the award custodians. Thus, this activity must be given the due importance to encourage good-quality applications.

**Stage 3: Screening of Applications and Assignment of Valid Applications for Evaluations**
The next important stage includes careful screening and short listing of the potential award recipients for the evaluation by the award custodians. Shortlisting of the applications should be performed on the basis of the "qualification" criteria established during the planning stage. It is essential to initiate this first step to prevent the wastage of resources in assessment of ineligible applicants. The eligibility criteria must also be published to minimize incomplete applications.

**Stage 4: Setting for Evaluations**
Training of assessors and establishment of the assessment terms can be performed simultaneously. Generally, an assessment team for global quality awards involves 5–7 members; however, depending on the criteria, the team size may differ. A team should ideally have a leader and a deputy leader to oversee the assessment process. Once the assessment teams are formed, award applications should be assigned for assent. Care must be taken to create a truly diverse and functional tram, considering the diversity of potential recipients. It is also important that potential conflicts of interest are checked and processes are in place to resolve any such issues. Next, the applications are allocated to the assessment teams. Legal experts can help establish the suitable processes and develop the appraiser code of conduct. These would in fact, increase the credibility of the award. Assessor training at this stage is crucial. Generally, a one-day workshop is conducted for this activity.

**Stage 5: Communicate the Initial Decisions to All or the Shortlisted Participants**
Prospective applicants must then be informed about the initial decisions of their application and must introduce the assessment team providing them details of the further actions. This communication may highlight the activities such as the initial team meeting, site visits, etc. It is important to assessment team to families with client organization and take an early meeting to clarify any issues before a fully evaluation begins. This is good first step that helps both the parties to understand each other and avoid waste of time.

**Stage 6: Facilitate Site Visits (As Per Criteria, If Needed)**
Most award teams undertake site visits. Site visits, in fact, provide the actual picture of the organizational processes, deployments, and results achieved. The most credible certifications also undertake site visits to establish and confirm the evidences. A credible award should therefore involve a site visit for a deeper understanding of the ability of an organization to deploy the leading practices and sustain the results to prove themselves as leaders in practices or market leaders. Upon completion of this stage, the team is expected to provide the evaluation reports to the award office.

**Stage 7: Jury's Review and Final Decision Meetings**
At this stage, all award evaluation reports are reviewed by the Jury. This process facilitates the selection of a winner based on the evaluation process. A jury follows the established guidelines and may hold meetings, as required, with the teams or team leaders to seek any additional information to facilitate the award decision. Although much groundwork has already been done by the team by this stage, the jury can undertake scrutiny of the process already completed by the team for conducting an assessment in line with the client's achievement and may conduct a final check to ensure fair assessment of each applicant.

**Stage 8: Feedback to the Participating Organizations**
This stage is as crucial as the previous stages. It is important to provide feedback to all applicants, irrespective of the winner. It is also important that the award custodians provide assessment feedback. The potential recipients may also be given a second chance to discuss their stand if they feel it is necessary. However, an appeal process at this stage can also be established. Clients must be provided a chance to review the feedback report and give their opinions, if any.

**Stage 9: Award Ceremony and Post Award Stage**
This stage marks the end of the award process. During this stage, it is important to announce and felicitate the winners, jury, and assessment teams, as required. At this stage, the assessors are felicitated, and their feedback is used for learning and fine-tuning the process, as needed. Best practices of the winning organizations can also be shared with the audience. The learnings of this stage are further used for continued improvement.

Overall, depending on the nature of the award, the above process can be tailored. In general, an award assessment must include the major process of developing,

assessing, and refining the overall award criteria in addition to facilitating the deployment of the award initiatives. The assessors' competency must be regularly reviewed; training sessions and workshops should be updated to meet the changing requirements of the award specifications.

## Conclusion

Competition is necessary for both, the policy makers and managers (Cetindamar and Kilitcioglu 2013). Thus, assessors are the key components of the award assessment process. For successful assessment, a team must follow the processes and carry out the responsibilities. In particular, the credibility and acceptance of the results from the assessment process against the EFQM model depend on several factors, including the variability of the scores obtained and the assessors' knowledge of the TQM/excellence/continuous improvement (Yang et al. 2001). The issues may increase if the assessors do not follow a systematic process and if individual assessors do not adhere to good practices.

Given that the applicants may be from multiple sectors, the assessment team should be composed of members from diverse backgrounds. Moreover, the peoples' perceptions of excellence differ; therefore, the team must establish a sound consensus-building process to provide the best possible and most realistic assessment. The global award offices, and the DQA, train their assessors through training programs and guide them to become mature assessors. It is a good opportunity for interested individuals to undergo these training and become familiar with the expectations of the award offices.

## Case Study : Self Assessment at Jumbo-Mumbo

**Excellence in Practice: Self-Assessment @ JAMBO MUMBO**
*This case is written anonymously based on the experiences of DQA award assessors in UAE. Author would like to thank each of the participants for their time and effort to provides their insights in compiling this* case.

**Jambo Mumbo** is a finance company, operating in UAE with a paid capital of AED 659 Mn. The company was established in 2007 by Dubai Group and was acquired by the Everest group in 2013. By 2014, the customer assets recorded a 38% growth and the customer base increased by 9%. The company also registered a 22% increase in revenue leading to an astounding growth in net profits of approximately 300% over one year. This case illustrates how this organization has succeeded in embracing the partnership and supplier's criterion.

The Partnership selection at Jumbo Mumbo is based on our vendor selection policy, stipulated wherein the requirements are provided by the business; the related support unit calls for quotation to ensure sanity of the process; minimum three quotes for three different vendors are solicited and evaluation of the quotes are done by select team of senior management. Partners are selected based on a rigorous assessment process using a framework. Partnerships are defined and placed in categories on a value continuum: Non-Core, Core, Strategic Providers and Innovation Stakeholders. Strategic providers and Innovation partners support business and delivery, foster revenue building and help enhance customer experience. Key Relationship Managers are identified for key partnership categories. Core partners are those that add significant value to the operations and the customers. The non-core partners are one- off partnership opportunities that help the Company to create short term business wins. Each partnership is reviewed annually based on the value evaluation matrix to assess partnership performance. The procurement process is centralized to manage resource in a consolidated manner for effective resource usage and enhanced negotiating power.

The budget of Jumbo Mumbo is prepared annually based on a cycle applied across departments. The 3-year strategy culminates into the crystallization of the annual business plan and the budgets. The annual plan is debated, discussed, and agreed by Group Leaders and the CEO prior to Board approval.

The budget is split into three sections—high level template, staff and non-staff expense templates.

Some of the practices of the company are:

- Management of Leases: To select lessor/landlords who will collaborate to ensure long term benefits to the Company
- Partnership Continuum:To identify and develop a partnership with key partners for mutual benefits
- Partnership Selection: To select partners based on set criterions that are beneficial to both parties
- 3 Year Strategy Planning
- Half yearly Review & annual audit by External Auditors
- Rolling Forecast
- Asset management: To ensure proper account of asset inventory in the books of the Company.
- Physical Security Management: To ensure the safe keeping of all property owned by the company
- Centralized Procurement Process
- Technology partnerships: To bring in Core expertise and agility ensuring innovation and negate Technology obsolescence
- Centralized Data Management & Analytics: To share information and analysis to support decision making.

## Key Questions

1. Discuss Enabler and sub-criterion addressed in this sample brief of a self-assessment report of Jumbo Mumbo.
2. Map the various good practices tabled in this scenario with that of DQA criterions.
3. What suggestion do you have for Jumbo Mumbo do improvise on 'partnership' enabler?

## Summary

This chapter explains the importance of assessor role in carrying out an award assessment. The participating organizations not only expect a fair assessment of their organization but also an evaluation report based on which a new drive for excellence can be initiated. As such organizations expects that assessors are not only professional but also know much of their organizations information. This rests a greater responsibility on assessors to be fully prepared to carry out as assessment following the process of "award assessment" and adhering to the various guidelines. At the end, the quality professionals can also benefit from knowing how to establish an internal or external award in the pursuit of recognitions for excellence.

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# Quality Management Systems: Where and How We Can Make a Significant Contribution Toward Excellence

<span style="text-align:right">**9**</span>

Mr. Krishna Kumar, General Manager—Quality & Business Excellence for Engineering Services Group|Oasis Investment Company LLC|Al Shirawi Group. He is a champion who lead quality efforts of implementing the ISO standards across all his group companies. He is not only passionate about each of these implementation, but also recognizes the immense benefits that such systems bring to the organizations. He comments, if you need to see how the quality tools are used to drive organizational performance and its impact, you must visit our site, we show you how they work for us. It is no doubt that organization is proud to be one among those who have already began to incorporate risk assessment and frameworks within the organization. So much so the importance of ISO standards is well recognized in UAE settings, the question therefore is: Where and how we can make a significant contribution toward excellence? what can organizational learn from these implementations?

## Introduction

Quality standards such as ISO 9000 are applied in organizations to improve quality, and a plethora of research exists that supports the ubiquitous implementation of various quality management programs (particularly the ISO 9000) in different countries (Castka et al. 2015; Prajogo 2011; Psomas et al. 2010). Prior research shows that the implementation of ISO standards in the Arab context suggests that certifications have been used as a marketing tool to promote firms' public images (Zaramdini 2007). Furthermore, research examining the costs and benefits of the ISO certification process shows that firms benefit from its improvement to their customer service, as well as other internal operational benefits, such as greater efficiency in their quality management system (QMS; Terziovski et al. 2003). A report from the

American Society of Quality states that the Arab region in particular is in need of quality tools and programs. However, there is a paucity of research in the Arab world on quality management standards (McAdam et al. 2013; Zaramdini 2007). This chapter explores ISO and benchmarking aspects to successfully manage quality within organization.

## Understanding ISO 9008:2015

Assessments are carried out in organizations to basically understand their conformance to quality standard such as ISO. In ISO, the assessments are mainly referred to as internal or external audits, which are conducted using excellence models. The ISO 9000 family addresses various aspects of quality management and contains some of ISO's best known standards. The standards provide guidance and tools for companies and organizations that want to ensure that their products and services consistently meet customers' requirements, and that quality consistently improves. In fact, over one million companies and organizations in over 170 countries are certified to ISO 9001.

In relation to ISO family standards, it has been established that internal drivers to implement and certify the ISO 14001 standard have a significantly higher degree of influence on achieved benefits than external drivers (Heras-Saizarbitoria et al. 2011). Furthermore, research into ISO standards in the UAE shows that the certification process generates more internal benefits than external ones (Zaramdini 2007).

Ghobadian and Woo (1996) explain that there is a substantial difference between the requirements for achieving quality awards and ISO standards. ISO standards entail an audit of procedures, whereas the awards are concerned with wider issues, such as leadership and results. Overall, the benefits of quality awards are much broader, as they extend well beyond quality improvement.

The ISO 9000 series of standards is based on the idea of continual improvement. It is again a non-perspective framework for quality improvement in the sense that the standard does not specify what the objectives relating to "quality" or "meeting customer needs" should be. Instead, it requires organizations to define these objectives themselves and continually improve their processes in order to achieve them. Hence, it is suitable for organizations of all types, sizes, and sectors. More importantly, one of the key improvements of the newly revised series is that companies can still enjoy the benefits of implementing the standard, including smaller companies that do not have staff dedicated to quality control.

The ISO 9000 series of standards, first introduced in 1987, soon became the established global quality assurance standards. National standards around the world were word-for-word copies of the ISO standards. Since then, the standards have been revised, for example in 1994, 2000, and 2008, and most recently, in 2015. The structure of ISO 9001:2015 now follows the same overall structure as other ISO management system standards, making it easier for anyone using multiple management systems. It thus provides a standardized 10-clause structure for all ISO management system standards, including a standardized set of core definitions. Using this common basic structure and terminology for all ISO management systems standards allows for addressing multiple management systems requirements and integrating management systems more efficiently.

The second major addition to the latest version is the risk-based thinking. In fact, it states, "In ISO 9001:2015 risk-based thinking needs to be considered from the beginning and throughout the system, making preventive action inherent to planning, operation, analysis and evaluation activities." Overall, the newest version:

- Puts greater emphasis on leadership engagement;
- Helps address organizational risks and opportunities in a structured manner;
- Uses simplified language and a common structure and terms, which are particularly helpful to organizations using multiple management systems, such as those for the environment, health & safety, or the business continuity;
- Addresses supply chain management more effectively; and
- Is more user-friendly for service and knowledge-based organizations.

Overall, the standard aims to ensure that customers get consistent, good quality products and services, which in turn brings many business benefits. In fact, organizations choose to adopt ISO 9001 for many reasons and have achieved several benefits in terms of organizational performance, quality awareness and product quality, etc.

All the requirements of ISO 9001:2015 are generic and are intended to be applicable to any organization, regardless of its type or size, or the products and services it provides. The standards first part, ISO 9000, Quality management systems—Fundamentals and vocabulary, provides the fundamental concepts, principles, and vocabulary used in the entire ISO 9000 family of standards. It sets the stage for understanding the basic elements of quality management as described in the ISO standards. ISO 9001, Quality management systems—Requirements, is used when an organization is seeking to establish a QMS that will instill confidence in its ability to provide products that fulfil customers' needs and expectations. ISO 9001 specifies the requirements against which your QMS can be certified by an external body.

Internal audits or assessments are arranged to verify the extent to which the organization holds compliance quality standards. The requirements of ISO 9001 standard for example call for organizations to regularly evaluate their quality systems by appointing an independent resource within an organization. However, the procedure of carrying out such an audit internally, is not very different from that of the external audit but both procedures offer different levels of learning. Organizations can gain various benefits from both type of assessments and they are of great value to the organization. The internal quality assessment process is discussed in two parts.

A typical internal assessment system evaluates the entire quality system over a one-year assessment cycle. The procedure contains four main steps

1. Making an assessment plan
2. Carrying out the assessment
3. Preparing the report on finding
4. Closure of the assessment.

During the planning stage, the senior assessor should define the scope and purpose of the assessment. After this, the assessment team is selected. Only assessors who have been trained to conduct assessments and are independent of the area to be assessed should be used. The assessment team members should collectively have the skills to conduct the assessment, which includes having any specialist knowledge required for the area.

Once the assessment team has been established, the members of the team review the relevant standard and top-level quality documentation. From this review, a checklist of areas to examine is compiled; this helps with the planning of the assessment and serves as a record of events. A detailed schedule giving the role of each assessor, the areas they are to visit, and the areas to be examined can then be developed.

The next stage is to conduct the assessment. During this stage of the assessment, staff are interviewed and asked questions to determine whether procedures are understood and are being carried out as stated in the documented quality system. The general process is to "observe, verify, and record." Information gained during the interview is confirmed by watching the process as it is being done, and by reviewing records that have previously been generated. Any significant observations should be recorded.

A third stage is to report the assessment findings. In a closing meeting, a verbal summary of the findings (both positive and negative) is presented to the management team. Any non-conformances that have been observed and reported will be "signed-off" by an area representative who witnessed the event. This is to confirm that the observation took place. After the closing meeting, a formal report containing all the non-conformances is issued so that the particular area can prepare its corrective action plan.

The final stage is to close off the assessment. After the corrective action has been taken, a follow-up review by a member of the assessment team should be conducted to ensure that the corrective action has been effective.

There are many other standards in the ISO 9000 series that can help you reap the full benefits of a QMS and put customer satisfaction at the heart of your business.

ISO 9000 contains detailed explanations of the seven quality management principles with tips on how to ensure these are reflected in daily work practices. It also contains many of the terms and definitions used in ISO 9001.

ISO 9004 provides guidance on how to achieve sustained success with your QMS.

ISO 19011 gives guidance for performing both internal and external audits to ISO 9001. This will help ensure that the QMS delivers on its promise and will prepare the organization for an external audit, should you decide to seek third-party certification.

## Role of Benchmarking

"Benchmarking one's own performance against that of another better performance is key to ongoing improvement," says Singhal, Director of Emirates Business Management International Consultants and Visual ACE Business Solutions in the UAE. Truly, it is. Otherwise,

where and how can we significantly contribute to the organization and its success through the business plan and the long-term vision? Dubai embraced this fact in 2015 as Emirates Business Management International Consultants launch the EBM Benchmarking Partners' Program, which has gone on to benefit scores of companies in the region. This program is a platform that has brought together leading organizations that are actively sharing data previously held close to their chests. The EBM Benchmarking visits take participants to the Gemba of Host Organizations to learn best practices through live demonstrations of same on their premises.

In the world of modern day management, "benchmarking" has come to represent the level of performance to which others must aspire if they are to be seen as offering outstanding levels of performance. Benchmarking is not an end in itself. It is rather a method of making a structured comparison with other organizations with respect to their ideas, processes, best practices, and data with the sole purpose of understanding your own organization's strengths and areas for improvement. It is also to help identify appropriate changes that may be implemented in your organization in order to become more effective and efficient in driving results. Therefore, benchmarking is an important component of continuous improvement and quality programs, including Six Sigma. It facilitates experience sharing and helps an organization build its capabilities toward "superior performance." Thus, the essence of benchmarking is the process of identifying the highest standards of excellence for products, services, or processes, and then making the necessary improvements to reach those standards—commonly called "best practices" (Bhutta and Huq 1999). Although there are different types of benchmarking and a plethora of benchmarking process models, the process itself should provide the basic framework for action with built-in flexibility for modifications to meet individual needs (Anand and Kodali 2008; Elmuti and Kathawala 1997).

In this section, we will focus on understanding a particular type of benchmarking and its relationship to the EFQM excellence model. Its importance will then be exemplified through a case study.

In the EFQM Excellence Model 2013, benchmarking is defined as:

> A systematic comparison of approaches with other relevant organisations that gains insights that will help the organisation to take action to improve its performance.

So, the idea behind benchmarking is indeed not just about carrying out a comparison of results, but it is also to understand how an organization is doing better in terms of their approaches. Moreover, the thinking behind the benchmarking approach is to develop "good practices" that suit the organization because "best" may not necessarily mean "best" all the time. The obvious link to benchmarking is shown in its RADAR methodology and assessment cycle. The performance elements, particularly the assessment and refinement, emanate the benchmarking. Similarly, in the cycle of self-assessment, once an organization has agreed on the priorities and is developing the action plans, this is actually where benchmarking happens.

## The Process for Benchmarking

The process for benchmarking is pretty much the same as that of carrying out the self-assessment. It is like any other project that requires planning before embarking on the planned actions, while analyzing the various opportunities for improvements and acting based on those proposed improvements. So, typically benchmarking can involve four stages as follows:

*Plan*  Every project requires planning. The intention of the project should be clear at this stage in order to develop an appropriate plan to achieve the best possible result. Thus, the planning stage may include:

- The theme for the project;
- What outcomes are to be expected;
- Who from your organization should be involved in the project team;
- The current process flow and performance levels;
- What information needs to be collected; and
- Target organizations to compare/benchmark with.

*Collect Information*  The next stage of the cycle is to collect the data. It is important to collect relevant performance data from potential benchmark partners. It would be beneficial to prepare a questionnaire/checklist to collect structured information and collect the required information.

*Analyze*  The collected information should be examined to understand where the opportunities for improvement exists. Essential, the analysis at this stage should be performed to examine comparison of the process performance indicators and to compare the process flows or key activities. This should help to identify the gaps between the organization and the benchmark.

*Refine*  The final stage is to action the final improvement and of monitoring the progress and effectiveness of the implementation plan proposed.

## Role of Six Sigma

A second approach widely used for improving process performance and enhancing the value added for the customers and other stakeholders is Lean Six Sigma. It is not only used in manufacturing; its use in the services sector has been steadily increasing. Lean techniques also complement the excellence model. Six Sigma approach in fact is embedded into the Business Excellence as excellence enablers encourage organizations to measure and improve business processes (Kanji 2008). So Six sigma logically supports the Business Excellence process. The Lean Six Sigma model emphasizes on several aspects, which are embedded in the five enabler criteria of leadership, strategy, people, processes, and products. For example, promoting culture of improvements, training program clear communication, defining

performance level measures are all embedded in a six-sigma approach which well compliments the excellence journey of an organization.

## Conclusion

In the pursuit of Business excellence, organization will adopt many quality tools and approaches to foster improvements. The use of each of these approaches can strengthen organizations approach to quality. Each of the tools and approaches will have specific objectives and outcomes however they complement and support overall quality strategy. So depending on the maturity of organizations status, organizations can consider using them.

## Case Study: Benchmarking Insights

**Excellence in Practice: Emirates Business Management 3Ds Approach to Benchmarking**

**Insights from the Director of EBM—*Indu Singhal: A Case Study***

*This case is about—Indu Singhal, Director of EBM. Author acknowledges and thanks her immense support for valuable inputs and being a role model to support the 'learning' initiatives.*

Indu Singhal is Director of Emirates Business Management (EBM) International Consultants and Visual ACE Business Solutions based in the UAE. She is passionate about quality and strives to promote quality initiatives in the region. Through this case demonstration, we will understand how an organization can use benchmarking to improve performance. The case illustrates Singhal's extensive experience with benchmarking and her passion for business excellence.

Singhal explained, "There are several ways that organizations can use benchmarking for self-improvement and business excellence. Internal and external benchmarking are two methods. Local and global benchmarking are another two methods. All these are further categorized into industry- and non–industry-specific benchmarking. No matter which method one uses, one needs to be focused on the 3Ds—Discipline, Diligence, Discernment. These make up the main fibers of the fabric of success."

She adds, "Several organizations conceive fantastic initiatives in order to attain their objectives. Yet, these often end up leaving the drawing board to find a place in the bin". To deploy the initiative to its successful completion calls for strong discipline–keeping in mind the bigger picture at all times, adhering to the processes and frameworks established to propel actions in the right direction, and the governance of each process.

"Diligence will result in a doggedness that will propel all efforts towards the goalpost. This implies a synergy of all initiatives that may be inter-linked to achieve a common purpose. Gone are the times when it was alright to work in silos. Teamwork is the name of the game". Thus, process linkages need to be understood, with a proactive approach to make inter-dependent teams work together in synergy.

"Discernment to be able to balance between short-term gains and long term goals, between quality and cost, between investment and divestment decisions—these and more are key to successful attainment of objectives at the macro level."

Thus, for any organization to deploy benchmarking, it is imperative that they use the 3Ds as a basis for the project. It may not suffice to organize a benchmarking visit to an organization with the best practices. Great discipline must be incorporated within the team to ensure that the existing processes are changed to bring about an improvement. Doing things in the same way as before cannot and will not bring about improvement, and the exercise of benchmarking would be lost. As Einstein said, 'Insanity is in doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.'

The EBM Benchmarking Partners' program is a great system that is locally available for organizations to share their data and processes transparently. Since its inception in 2015, this program has facilitated the sharing of best practices in all areas of business excellence, including leadership, strategy, employees, partnerships, resource management, financial planning, sustainability, knowledge management, IT, process management, process improvement, product & service portfolio management, customer, etc. Across more than 130 EBM Benchmarking Club sessions, it has facilitated sharing of best practices between over 400 corporate professionals. The EBM Benchmarking Visits have enabled nearly 100 corporate professionals to mingle freely with host organizations and learn from their best practices.

The UAE has, of course, witnessed individual organizations making personal efforts towards gathering global benchmarks for industry-specific updates for industries that do not offer enough local competition. However, local data for over 60 Key Performance Measures has been facilitated by the EBM Benchmarking Partners' program in such a short span of time.

Benchmarking has made a significant contribution towards helping organizations understand how they compare with not just the best in the region, but also to know the average performance of organizations in the region. It has helped them to make proactive moves towards setting stretch targets and working towards attaining them. Over the years, organizations have been able to easily access the maximum, average, and minimum numbers for a wide range of customer, employee, process, IT, societal, financial, and

other business-related Key Performance Measures for a very economical price and from the comfort of their own offices.

The process of active benchmarking through the EBM Benchmarking Partners' program has had another significant positive outcome—that of unifying the calculation methodology for various Key Performance Measures. It has helped to bring out the difference between the weighted average calculation method of Perception Measures and the method of calculating using the number of positive responses received for perception surveys. This has helped in making assessments more objective and accurate. Prior to this program, there was no differentiation between the two, and thus, benchmarking was not comparable for the same Key Performance Measures.

"Benchmarking is a tool that must be used with maturity. It is important for us to not only go about the process of benchmarking, but also to know how to use the data to our advantage for continual improvement. This is what I recommend you bear in mind while benchmarking:" Says Singal

- Understand your own data well, using the right method while number crunching. It is not so important to have great results as it is to have accurate results.
- Know your own process well prior to embarking upon studying someone else's process.
- Keep the context of your process always in focus. Also, remember your key objective at all times.
- Set realistic targets for improvement.
- Select your baseline data well in advance.
- Try to engage with as many process owners within your organization as possible, rather than leaving it to a select few. Often, the temptation is to cut costs and not include the larger team in the benchmarking exercise. This may result in compromising on the benefits of an all-rounded study of the 'best' process, by relevant process owners.
- Identify clearly 'what to benchmark' and focus on using the information for setting rational targets for improvement.
- Actually work towards making a positive change to your internal processes after having studied the benchmark process. Without this important step, any benchmarking study is redundant.
- Rely on third-party benchmarking programs (such as EBM Benchmarking Partners' program) so as to ensure the objectivity and reliability of information sharing.
- Refrain from seeking to acquire commercially sensitive data from competitors, and instead focus on business processes, HR practices, etc.
- The benchmarking exercise may relate to technical, scientific, operational, or other such initiatives, which do not involve confidential price and related

price data, capacity or production data, cost data, profit margins, or sensitive marketing and sales information.
- Participation in the benchmarking exercise must be structured in such a way that information does not flow directly between participants, but only through an independent third party.

Some things that one must avoid while benchmarking are:

- Don't benchmark for the sake of it.
- Do not lose sight of your goals. Do not forget the bigger picture at any time.
- Get your senior management involved in the process of benchmarking so as to get their total commitment towards actioning improvement plans after the process.
- Benchmarking is a two-way exercise. Do not enter this street if you cannot share your internal processes and data.
- Do not succumb to the lure of trying to prove that your processes are the best.
- Do not withhold your own information while benchmarking with others.
- Do not rest after benchmarking once. It is an ongoing process, and one needs to continuously update oneself for continual improvement.
- Don't ignore competition while benchmarking, under the assumption that you are better than them, or that they won't be willing to share honestly with you.
- Do not compromise the data shared confidentially by your benchmarking partner."

Singhal further explains how benchmarking helps.

Benchmarking enables organizations to deal with competition, opens up avenues of new ideas, and generally drives organizations towards continual business improvement. It is a structured exercise that results in improved quality of products and services, reduced costs, improved efficiency, etc.

Benchmarking brings about greater positive competitiveness in the business environment. Benchmarking also leads to data-based and fact-based discussions, rather than working on assumptions and gut feel. It helps organizations to objectively analyze their internal performance, identify their own best practices, identify where their performance needs to shape up, and look for solutions to enhance their output. It triggers a continual improvement across all functions in the organization and often results in Kaizen activities at all levels.

There are several advantages to performance benchmarking. Performance may be of various types, spanning various areas. Some of these are explained below.

1. Process performance: This forces organizations to leave slack and come out of their comfort zones. Process improvement tools are actioned in order to improve turnaround times (TATs), make processes lean, and reduce the cost of doing things. Benchmarking processes with the best in the region allows organizations to develop specific and measurable improvement plans based on the best practices of better performing organizations, rather than being limited to just data of historical performance. Benchmarking removes the cobwebs from the internal system, and makes way for new and innovative ideas for improvement.

2. Product performance: Benchmarking the product performance of competitors could lead to an overall product quality improvement. It has been a common practice amongst manufacturers to purchase products from competitors in order to study them, and try to understand how they outperform their own. This leads to product design improvements.

    Overall, such actions benefit the entire industry at large, since they result in improved product quality for the consumer.

3. Service performance: Benchmarking the service performance of one's own organization against that of others helps to clearly identify improvement opportunities that can turn around customers and ultimately lead to greater market share. New service performance standards may be set, thus raising the bar of services rendered across all customer touch points, thereby ensuring utmost customer satisfaction. Since the change for improvement is triggered by an external organization, there is a better chance of it being accepted internally, and thus a greater chance of it succeeding. It can also result in greater enthusiasm among staff to work towards successful implementation of new ideas, thereby also leading to greater teamwork.

    Benchmarking may result in an increase in sales and overall productivity, and ultimately, in an improved bottom line.

## Key Questions

1. Discuss how would 'benchmarking' help your organization when preparing for an award application.
2. Discuss how 3D approach explained in this case can be used in your organization.

## Summary

Indeed, an organization wants to ensure that they are benchmarking with one that is better than themselves. Hence, benchmarking first requires comparing results to identify which organization is performing better than your own. This is followed

by benchmarking their approaches and supporting processes to find out how they are achieving this. Moreover, when adopting excellence, various other tools, such as Six Sigma, complement the excellence model execution. Organizations can use these to enhance their effectiveness and gain greater maturity on excellence.

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# Towards Developing a Framework for Achieving Organizational Excellence: Theoretical Foundations

# 10

## Excellence Systems: Current, Relevant and Modern!

This chapter provides a summary of how an excellent organization should look like by asking several questions. What is the look of an excellent organization? How is an excellent organization managed? What are the main pillars of the organizational excellence? Are there specific aspects that a manager should pay attention to? Should a manager pay attention to people, technology, leadership, product customer or a combination of these aspects? Do these aspects have a relationship between them? Based on a study of 62 large American companies for 20 years (1961–1980), Peters and Waterman (1982) identified the eight attributes of excellent organization as:

- Predisposed towards business with bias for action and active decision making
- Actively remaining close to the customer and learning from them
- Reliance on autonomy and leadership on innovations and entrepreneurship
- Keen on productivity of its people and taking them as a source of quality for the organization
- Taking a hand-on and value driven philosophy to managing its daily activities
- Sticking to the business that they know best/knitting concept
- Adopting a lean and simple approach to staff numbers
- Have Simultaneous loose-tight properties—autonomy in shop-floor activities plus centralized values.

Additionally, processes that work together must be implemented together and in a coordinated manner to obtain the best results (Tamimi 1998). Therefore, core themes must be classified as influences or enablers and outcomes or results of excellence. EFQM also notes that excellent organizations are those that focus on customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and seek to have a positive impact on the society. Additionally, excellent organizations have strategies that promote good use of their recourse and processes (EFQM 2013).

The early theoretical models of excellence such as EFQM and BCPE are based on core values and set of enablers. These enablers are building blocks of achieving the excellence. The building blocks of achieving excellence are: processes, people, management systems and performance measurement driven by the Total Quality Management philosophy. We indeed are beginning to know that organizations can achieve excellence based on theory of Total Quality Management. TQM is process based approach. Everything we do is a process, which is the transformation of a set of inputs, which can include action, methods and operations, into the desired outputs, which satisfy the customers' needs and expectations. So a pattern of excellence can be conceptualized as a 'process model' that involves inputs, methods and operations and output.

## Structure of Excellence Framework

A generic framework for excellence must encompass a process (a) Identification of core themes and results: The Models of Excellence are designed to recognize excellent practices in managing the organization and achieving results, all based on a set of concepts and values (Ghicajanu et al. 2015). These set of concepts and values have evolved over a period of time as evidenced in EFQM or Malcolm Baldrige awards. Peters and Waterman (1982) based on their study of on a sample of 62 large American companies for a period of 20 years, during the period from 1961 to 1980, reported. The eight attributes of excellence as:

- Predisposition towards business A bias for action, active decision making—'getting on with it'
- Remaining Close to the customer—learning from the people served by the business
- Autonomy and entrepreneurship—promoting and sustaining innovations in company
- Productivity among people—treating rank and file employees as a source of quality
- Hands-on, value-driven—management philosophy that guides everyday practice—management showing its commitment
- Stick to the knitting—stay with the business that you know
- Simple form, lean staff—some of the best companies have minimal headquarters (HQ) staff
- Simultaneous loose-tight properties—autonomy in shop-floor activities plus centralised values.

In a nutshell, all dimensions of an organisation, and in particular, factors that drive performance form a basis of any excellence system. From a broader perspective, As Ghicajanu et al. (2015) reports the most prominent for example today are business innovation, customer satisfaction, human resources, vision and strategy, leadership, business ethics and sustainability in business, financial performance and

success, as measured by financial results or customer, employee, community, investor benefits. The core themes that are relevant to the organizations goal should be identified in weaving an excellence journey.

Secondly, as in case of a process, the activities that need to be put together do not work independently, they will have to be they must be implemented together and in a coordinated fashion in order to achieve excellent results (Tamimi 1998). So the core themes must be classified as influences or enablers and outcomes or results of excellence. For example, In the EFQM is a set of criteria systematically articulated organizational areas of the enterprise which are grouped as enablers and outcomes and it assumes that the satisfaction of the customers, the employees and a positive impact on society can be achieved by means of political and strategic leadership, a right employees management, an effective use of the resources available and an adequate definition of the processes, which finally would lead to excellence in the result (EFQM 2013). This covers management concepts such as the strategic management or information and human resources systems. Wilson and Collier (2000), taking Malcolm Baldrige's model as a reference point, prove the relationship that exists between leadership, human resource management, strategic planning and information and analysis. The influences and outcomes must be mapped in a way that derive value for the organization.

Thirdly it is also of importance to note that any approach or initiatives fail due to its poor implementationpractice. If this happens then the approach is tending to be disregarded. Culture plays a significant role in the implementation of excellence frameworks (Ignacio et al. 2005; Sandholm 2005; Yarrow et al. 2004). Finally, Assessment and follow-up are central to achieve excellence and hence based on these theoretical implications an excellence system can be modelled as shown in Fig. 10.1.

The model is not a rigid model and must involve all dimensions of an organisation, and in particular, factors that drive 'performance'. It should be flexible to incorporate the diverse values along the way. The flexibility should also lie in the interpretation and implementation of the enablers and outcomes.

All organization from small to large, private or public should apply and follow a suitable excellence model which fit to their organizations and lead them toward organizational excellence. A generic framework for excellence therefore must encompass the emerging core themes to make the excellence system modern, current and Relevant!
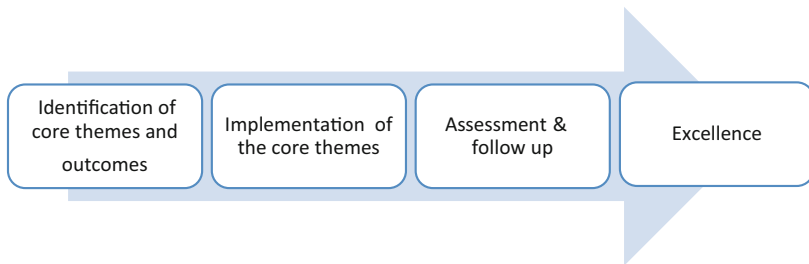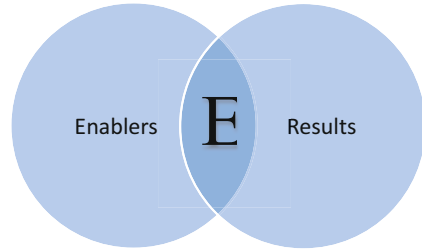


**Fig. 10.1** Excellence roadmap

Excellence is the nexus of union between the drivers of quality called the influences and the results as depicted the Fig. 10.2.

One of the benefits of exploring the theoretical foundations of organizational excellence is that those foundations can tell us something about how to achieve excellence. Finally, yes excellence is the only way to in business of tomorrow!

## Case study: British Orchard Nursery

**Excellence in Practice**

A CASE STUDY: BRITISH ORCHARD NURSERY "SOWING SEEDS OF SUCCESS"

Acknowledgements

*This case study is British Orchard Nursery(BON), Founder and CEO of BON,* **Ms. Vandana Gandhi** *has contributed immensely to this case. Her passion for quality an excellence is clearly result of excellence profile that you will read through in this Author acknowledges and thanks her for her enormous support for valuable inputs and being a role model to support the 'learning' initiatives in UAE.*

British Orchard Nursery (BON) is a strong brand in preschool segment in UAE. BON was established in year 2007 in Mankhool, Dubai offering nursery education for children from age group of 6 months to 4 years. BON adopted the British curriculum EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) with a team for R&D in place continuously developing the curriculum delivery and assessment model. From humble beginnings in 2007, within a span of 10 years, today BON operates in 17 locations in Abu Dhabi, Dubai and Sharjah with more than 1500+ children and staff strength of 300+. Current locations in Dubai are Mankhool, Jumeirah, JBR, Dubai Media City, Dubai Women's College, Mirdif, DEWA, Silicon Oasis, Al Twar, DCL and Municipality. This success can be attributed to the deployment of the business excellence model across all areas of business.

BON is Middle East's first nursery chain to be ISO 9001-2008 quality certified in 2011 and has been awarded several Government partnerships with, DEWA, Dubai Women's College, ADCO, DCL and Dubai Municipality, making it a market leader for government & corporate franchising. BON's mission statement is 'Sowing Seeds of Success' and the vision is 'To be a leader in nursery education, providing high quality international early years provision through best practice'. BON's four core values of Respect & Integrity, Equality & Diversity, Rights & Responsibility and Improvement & Innovation act as guiding principles for behavior and work ethics.

BON is a family owned educational institute with Ms. Vandana Gandhi as its Founder and CEO, Ms. Gandhi is a visionary leader and is a well-known and respected professional in the education community. In addition to several accolades, she was recognized as the Emirates Business Woman which was facilitated by H.H. Sheikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman of Dubai Quality Group. She directs a dedicated multinational management team including a large team of 45+ highly qualified employees.

Indeed, UAE hosts an international and culturally diverse expatriate population. Catering to children of different nationalities and cultures is an added challenge in the field of childcare services. The industry is unique, as the sensitivity of customers (parents) and the end product (the children's learning) is extremely complex. Early Years' education poses a far greater challenge owing to the tender age of the children (0–4 years). The mindset of parents, past schooling & cultural learning, nuclear family environments, multi lingual, and multi religious facets of a varied ethnic population creates added hurdles in this dynamic field, which involves layers of human interface.

BON's strategy is to differentiate itself in the market place by providing high standards of quality education and care for young children through regular risk assessments, strict health and safety procedures, regular doctor visits, GymJuniorz (indoor gym facilities with certified Gymnastics coach), etc. BON's strategy development process has identified stakeholder satisfaction, compliance with internal procedures and regulatory bodies & CSR as critical success factors to its operations.

*Markets, Offerings, Competition and Customers* BON caters to children from the age group of 2 months up to 4 plus years of age. Children of all nationalities are taught including the local Emirati population. In Dubai there are 250+ nurseries. Although the market appears to be competitive, there are very few nurseries offering high quality holistic education to preschoolers. BON nurseries are market leaders in their areas and are part of an ISO quality certified chain under a common brand. BON service offerings are targeted to quality conscious parents interested in quality preschool education for their children. BON offers four levels of education (Foundation, Nursery, Toddlers and Tiddly Toddlers) and has a dedicated multinational R&D (Research &

Development) team in place to benchmark and upgrade BON's curriculum annually in line with leading curricula across the world such as OFSTED, CACHE and EYFS from the UK and NAEYC from the USA. Parents of BON students are considered as Customers. Parents (Customer) feedback scores show children are happy and satisfied consistently over the years with scores touching an astronomical 90% plus for most attributes beating benchmark averages in all aspects of customer perspective.

*Operations—Partners—Suppliers* BON operations are documented in manuals, policies and procedural systems and have been upgraded to include ISO 14001:2004 & OHSAS 18001:2007 standards in 2015. BON has regular audits and maintains high standards for the safety and health of all who come into contact with their services. CCTV, gate intercoms, a DOH qualified nurse on site and doctors' visits all contribute to maintaining this. There is a well-documented quality manual outlining 80+ policies and procedures e.g. Bus Transport, Health and Safety, Medical, Safeguarding, Field trips, Maintenance, Child-Teacher Ratio Management, Risk Assessments etc.

Over the years BON has developed strategic partnerships with key partners such as DEWA, Dubai Municipality, Dubai Women's College, DQG, EEG, WWF and has effectively utilized these partnerships for the benefit of the organization. BON has recently tied up with UK's CACHE, British Orchard Training Centre (BOC) to ensure continual teacher training certifications for its employees and the community in line with international standards. BON sources high quality products to implement in the daily running of the nursery and believes in retaining loyal and long term business partners such as Bank of Baroda, Cadgulf, Thumbay, and World Fashion. BON proactively seeks feedback of its partners & suppliers and uses these as inputs for improvement.

*Structure of Assets* Fixed assets such as shades, furniture for school, educational equipment, computers, gym etc. are fixed assets of the school. These are managed as per documented management systems to ensure their continuing suitability. Asset Register is maintained, and updated with every purchase, and for scrapped items. Physical verification is now a bi-annual exercise. Non-tangible assets like BON & GymJuniorz trademarks are registered in UAE with NDAs are signed as per requirements.

Management Structure: BON has well-defined roles and responsibilities for all positions in the organization along with clear job descriptions for employees in place. Whilst believing in a flat hierarchy and empowerment of personnel, BON adheres to best practices based on international corporate standards which has led to high retention of staff & ensures smooth execution & operational excellence.

Journey towards Excellence and Achievements: Historically, BON has a proven track record of success and achievement in all aspects of business

covering all stakeholders. BON is a recognized brand in the UAE and has developed a solid reputation in the market place. BON started implementing the key components of the DQA model from 2008 onwards. Some of the key milestones and achievements in BON's journey towards excellence are:

Governance and Performance Management: At the operating level, SMT is a part of the overall governance structure along with a management team that comprises of Principals, BSMs & Finance Manager. To ensure independence & objective decision making process and to ensure there is no conflict of interest, BON has documented policies and procedures since inception that are revised on an annual basis. BON has internal and external auditors to help with effective governance. Potential conflicts are resolved by Code of Business Conduct including voluntary disclosures as part of its governance framework.

The differing regulatory bodies and the evolving legal framework and statutory conditions have to be adhered to from time to time. BON complies with legal norms and is continuously inspected by many Government departments such as MOSA/MOE, KHDA, Civil Defense, Municipality (Health department & building facilities), and Ministry of Labor, Economic Department, Chamber of Commerce etc. (Table 10.1).

Bons External recognition for its excellence and achievements in heighted below in Fig. 10.3.

**The Enabler Overview of BON**

BON's Vision, Mission and Values were developed when BON was established in year 2007 having since been refined through stakeholder feedback and quality assessments that today shape BON's growth & expansion, creating a culture of quality and excellence by monitoring, reviewing and driving improvement in the organization's management system and performance. BON leaders provide strategic and value-added inputs, ensuring sustained success and satisfaction of all its stakeholders.

Leadership Team consists of Principal; a Teaching/Deputy as well as other long-standing members of staff. BON have an established team; with numerous Teachers/TA's having worked for BON since inception. BON have implemented a Junior Management Team (JMT); including the Curriculum Coordinators; TA Coordinator & Gym Coach who, along with the Principal & Deputy, meet weekly to discuss branch specific issues thus empowering the team to make decisions and decide the best course of action in rolling out changes. Leaders strongly believe BON employees are its biggest assets & it is only through nurturing, motivating, developing and recognizing employees that BON can truly create a culture of excellence & sow the seeds of success.

**Table 10.1** Bon values

| BON's vision | BON's mission | BON's values |
|---|---|---|
| To be a leader in nursery education, providing high quality international early years provision through best practice. | *"Sowing Seeds of Success"* | Respect and Integrity Equality and Diversity Rights and Responsibilities Improvement and Innovation |
| BON's commitments | | |
| Employees | | Our real assets. We commit towards employee well- being and development |
| Stakeholders | | Commitment towards our educational endeavour |
| Transformation | | Appreciation of change and strive for positive development |
| Performance | | Doing the right things right |
| Interdependence | | Focus on teamwork through cooperation and sharing of ideas |
| Innovation | | Adoption of initiatives and recognition of innovators |
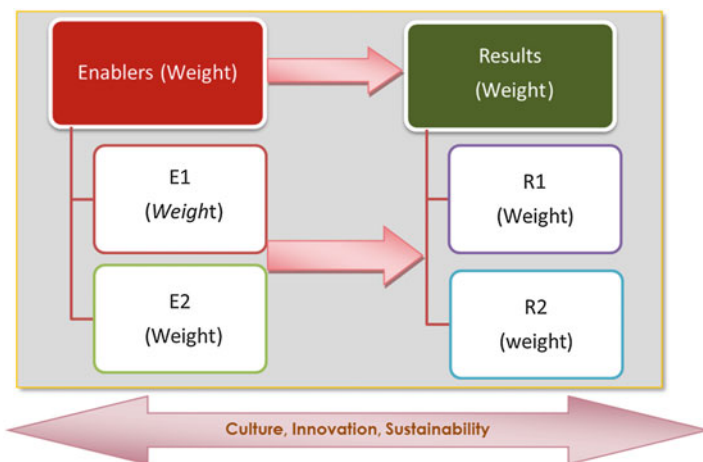


**Fig. 10.3** Excellence system model

**Fig. 10.4** Recognitions for Bon

# # of Recognitions
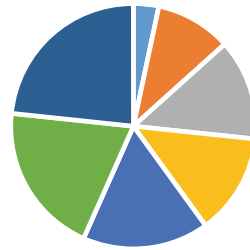


■ 2011  ■ 2012  ■ 2013  ■ 2014
■ 2015  ■ 2016  ■ 2017

BON has clearly identified its stakeholders and proactively engages with them at all levels. During annual strategy review, leaders understand & monitor market behavior, stakeholder expectations & perceptions, having used a variety of tools such as PESTLE, PORTER-5, PRIMO-F, etc. to analyze the impact of internal & external factors such as market share studies, stakeholder surveys, consultant inputs and focused meetings with regulatory authorities such as MOSA/MOE, MOL, MOH, Dubai Municipality, etc. on its business. This helps ensure BON strategies are in line & integrated into business plans.

BON's strategy development process is an annual process and is top-down & bottom-up process wherein the CEO & MT together develop the strategy. Key outcome of the discussions is BON's strategy in line with its VMV—admin, school, HR & training, financial & quality calendars, annual business plans and annual budget that are further divided on termly basis to suit the needs of the academic calendar. BON's top-level strategy is then cascaded to develop Branch specific and Departmental KPIs for Finance, HR, Stakeholders, etc. To ensure a common strategy and shared VMV, KPIs are cascaded to all levels & integrated into annual performance management system. Annual performance results are linked to rewards and recognition through promotion, bonus, & career advancements (Fig. 10.4).

BON is committed to providing value for its customers, such as extended sessions, customized curriculum provision and quality systems whilst remaining competitive—including regular parent contact events & information sharing sessions. To build, maintain and enhance relationships with customers is one of the strategic goals of BON and customer satisfaction is one of the targets both of the CEO and Business Support Managers. BON uses both formal & informal methods such as customer surveys, competitor/market

(continued)

share studies, discussions with customers, mystery shopping, tour call backs and walk in parent's inputs, Government agency partner's inputs & Employee feedback to develop new innovative products/services and improve existing products.

BON encourages staff across the organization to suggest new ideas for improvement through the suggestion & innovation scheme. Leaders encourage employees by seeking their suggestions in meetings & 'walk arounds'. The implementation of a structured innovation and suggestion procedure to ensure continuous generation of ideas lead to improvements in BON's products & services. Cash benefits/vouchers are given for ideas that are implemented. People efforts are aligned with annual business plans through the BSC approach linked to performance management. Staff and teams are empowered to take operational decisions based on their roles. Policies & procedures define the empowerment criteria, including financial authorities, for various levels and positions without recourse to approaching CEO or Principals for approval. All policies & procedures have owners ensuring accountability & deliverance. Internal communication is integral to bring people together and work towards a common goal.

BON builds mutually beneficial business partnerships with organizations to provide value to stakeholders, execute its strategy and support each other in achieving the business objectives of both the organizations, such as MOSA/MOE, Civil Defense, Municipality (regulatory partners) & other recent partners such as CACHE from UK. BON proactively seeks feedback from its Partners & suppliers to improve. BON champions its core values—respect & integrity, equality & diversity, rights & responsibility and improvement & innovation in its business relationships with its partners and suppliers.

To ensure BON procures quality products and services such as toys, suppliers are carefully selected using tri-party invoicing as a minimum standard and a well-defined evaluation and selection process. BON's management system was developed early on with a strong focus on process management to deliver a consistent education curriculum and embed continual improvement leading to the ISO 9001:2008 certification in 2011. Management systems have been upgraded to ISO 14001:2015 and OHSAS 18001 in early 2015 and BON is currently transitioning to ISO 9001:2015 Certification, which is an upgrade from the current version of the Quality Management Standard (ISO 9001:2008) that we were previously certified for. These systems have laid a solid foundation for BON to embed improvements and innovations such as in-depth & improved curriculum to include Arabic & French, ensuring detailed planning and assessment, leading to improved outcomes for children. Quality assessments by the DQA, DHDA and MRM awards have further enriched operational management.

**Leadership**

VMV displayed for all to see in branches, used in communication e.g. induction procedure, P&P, website, CPD folders, training, etc. Wider community awareness created though registration packs, HSB, newsletters, Website, Facebook &Twitter.

Corporate Ethics policy created 2014–2015. Leaders share common values & ethics that promote goodwill & support colleagues, children in their care & wider community e.g. Children & parents engage in diversity through child-friendly activities—celebrating various cultures through festivals & events. CEO donates 1% of child fees to orphanages in UAE and India in line with BON's corporate values.

Implementation of BSC in 2013 has resulted in KPIs being aligned to BON's VMV, replacing the earlier system of management of objectives through ISO. KPIs from BSC have been cascaded to all levels and are supported by periodic meetings, training, clear policies & procedures to support operational systems etc. to ensure integration. BON roles & responsibilities are defined through JDs, KPIs & P&P to empower staff. Additional competencies are utilized during special events and/or projects, ensuring engagement & commitment. Specific roles—TA coordinator, H&S Officers, etc. are given to staff based on their strengths, promoting role responsibility. Weekly meetings & Management visits enable sharing best practices.

BON reviews and updates its KPIs, initially as per Quality Policy objectives and recently through the refined Strategy Process. BON's strategy process begins in Q3 each year and involved the use of formal management tools such as PESTLE, PORTER-5 & Primo-F to analyze business environment. Data from feedback mechanisms such as weekly meetings and annual surveys feeds into this process. Participation of Management Team ensures wider scope is covered. KPIs & performance standards are measured termly, evaluating next steps for improved performance and stakeholder satisfaction, this includes reviewing business partner's feedback to enhance the process. For example: a file is maintained for each teacher to monitor her KPIs, performance and skill levels for career progression, sharing of best practices, training needs, etc. Another example is that of improved weekly reporting to parent—Home School Books. At the end of each academic year, annual feedback mechanisms are rolled out, academic results & process measurements are conducted to ensure that factually reliable information is gathered to interpret & analyze performance.

Weekly reports from all operations staff and termly audits ensure timely recording of data. BON has contracted lawyers, appointed senior CAs and BDM to ensure that all external triggers are under constant scrutiny and evaluated through a structured Risk Mitigation process. Ongoing Market Research, formulating long/short term Business plan by Baker Tilly (UK),

informal networking, industry meetings organized by MOSA and Arabian Child, prompt actions incorporate their impact.

Channels for assessment include stakeholder feedback analysis, feasibility studies by external consultants as well as BEX systems such as EFQM model. Since implementation of VMV in 2010 it has been reviewed and refined 2 times to its current state. 2015–2016 onwards: Ethics policy reviewed annually in line with full P&P review. Feedback on effectiveness is assessed through stakeholder surveys & 360 degree feedbacks. Refinements are visible in Weekly Meetings & Observations to ensure service delivery & sharing of best practice. The effectiveness of this approach is assessed by measuring KPIs and analysis of feedback mechanisms ensuring improvement in clarity of goals. Resulting improvements are: more frequent staff meetings (weekly) to ensure sharing best practice; inclusion of VMV during staff induction; an improved and transparent rewards & recognition procedure. Staff feedback through annual surveys assessed, weekly meetings and termly measurement of KPIs are used to measure effectiveness. Action plans have led to updating all P&P in 2014–2015 aligned to roles & KPIs, individual competency mapping exercises for additional roles for staff, with added compensation, thus ensuring empowerment, accountability & responsibility.

Improvement: establishment of an internal quality team to continually monitor performance of KPIs in line with strategy. Business partner relationships were reviewed at corporate level and de-centralized LPO ordering process was centralized to benefit all branches & suppliers. Additional refinement of admin meetings, now includes representative from Operations team (one or both BSM's) to ensure feedback across all departments. Effectiveness is assessed by feedback from respective stakeholders & data analysis of internal measures & resulted in process revisions based on available results. Integrity of data has been further enhanced in 2013–2014 through an independent quality team & online surveys to ensure accuracy and confidentiality.

Progress is monitored intermittently by the respective KPI owners. Refinements include: updated Stakeholder Well-being Procedure, broadened stakeholder base, updated ESS and CSS in 2013–2014 with clear picture of stakeholder perception. This approach is reviewed annually. Some refinements introduced are: Branch monthly newsletters and an increase in communication channels e.g.: parent WhatsApp communication, as well as Increase usage of Facebook/Instagram to provide information back to stakeholders and to ensure voice of customer is always heard. Improvements brought about: Leaders now participates in international share best practice events e.g. Golden Peacock, in addition to local events. Internal Audit & inspection reports from regulatory bodies are assessed & action plans are formalized. With implementation of BSC all managers required to keep up-to-date with documentations and legal processes. In 2014, Finance & Legal calendar integrated into school calendar

to ensure timely compliance. These are reviewed through CSR KPIs and stakeholder feedback. Unmet KPIs have clear action plans are closely monitored by Managers. BON now financially supports its staff for participation in societal events which has led to all CSR KPIs being met this term.

Leaders believe in staff & encourage professional behavior and practice team work, etc. by role-modeling. Structured 'weekly meetings' and clear P&P help inspire staff with ideas, actions and projects. Inspections, observations & mentoring support continuous improvements. Training programs help to inspire and stimulate thinking. BSC approach implemented in 2013 across the organization, comprising of identified CSF such as Finance, People, Customer, Processes, etc. which is measured on a termly basis. In addition, regular visits to regulatory bodies ensure any sudden changes in stakeholder requirements are proactively addressed. JDs, clear P&P with authorities & responsibilities, Principal & peer observations, competency mapping exercises, weekly meetings, mentoring for new employees, calendarized in-depth internal and external training are used to promote role awareness and development.

CACHE certification subsidy supports staff to enhance their qualification. Both individual and team efforts are recognized and rewarded. BON uses structured PMS procedure for measuring staff effectiveness. The process includes a parameter for appraising new & innovative ideas in addition to meeting KPIs. Promotions are based on performance, resulting in a culture of innovation & organizational progress. BON has in place rewards & recognitions program such as Employee of the Term, Bonus Days off, suggestion & referral schemes, etc. BON encourages staff across the organization to suggest new ideas for improvement through the suggestion & innovation scheme. Cash benefits/vouchers are given for ideas that are implemented. Other rewards include: lunches, bonus, etc. End of Term meetings serve as a forum to celebrate in thematic events and openly laud such contributions. E&D is one of the core values at BON. CEO ensures equal opportunities for all staff. All are treated fairly & respectfully, with equal access to resources, funds or materials in order to reach their full potential Children with special needs attend the nursery where appropriate. All families regardless of nationality are invited to participate in international & cultural events.

Leaders KPI's & 360 degree feedback are used to assess performance. Principals empowered through budget accountability. Helps to achieve higher results—governance of KPI's. 2016–2017: Scoring system added to BSC for further governance. Results of Employee feedback and PMS are used to measure effectiveness of this approach. Training program topics ARE improved, additional competencies utilized for special projects with added remunerations, TNA is now arrived after results of appraisals, observations & individual competency mapping exercises that highlight gaps AND provide

information on competencies required to move to the next level. R&R refinements: frequency of Termly rewards has been increased to monthly; additional rewards for full attendance, long service awards, certificate of appreciation given etc. To increase involvement, 1 suggestion per staff per term is now on BSC. Suggestions are segmented to ensure scope covers all CSF. Managers analyze & prioritize it systematically in line with Innovation Procedure. Suggestion & innovation scheme come out through brainstorming. Cultural diversity, staff ratio, incidents pertaining to disciplinary measures, as well as employee feedback, help to review effectiveness of this approach as is outlined in E&D & Stakeholder Well-being procedure. Some refinements include: ESS & CSS have been modified to include questions on Equality & Diversity, TAs encouraged to enhance their skills through subsidized CACHE studies, etc.

BON has an international MT who brings a wealth of knowledge with them; weekly meetings provide a platform to share knowledge, CEO research owing to her PHD studies allows BON to make well-informed decisions. External feasibility, PESTLE & SWOT studies, and use of BSC for KPI management help to keep change management in check. While working with small children, ethical practice, quality, safety & suitability are considered in all aspects by enforcing detailed P&P.

Potential impact on environment where possible, water, paper, electricity consumption etc. are considered. Targets are set and consumption of cost of utilities is compared year on year. Calendar-scheduled meetings with all stakeholders—Weekly staff meetings for generating and prioritizing creative ideas. Formal Termly meetings with customers provide new ideas and continued understanding on needs and expectations. Staff suggestion box helps generate creative ideas as well as feedback from stakeholders.

BON uses business expertise of consultants and its own knowledge to structure project management procedure. Project costs are tracked for resources (Man, Machine, Material & Money). Processes are updated to ISO frameworks with Business processes and policies are reviewed by MT. Teachers are trained on these processes and encouraged to give feedback, which is used during reviews. KPIs are idea generation in all levels of BSC. Implementation of a structured innovation and suggestion procedure to ensure continuous generation of ideas that lead to improvements in BON's products & services. Ideas generated and suggestions received through the Suggestion Box are discussed in Weekly, management & staff meetings for feasibility for implementation. Stakeholders receive feedback on the status of these. Implemented ideas are recognized for their contributions.

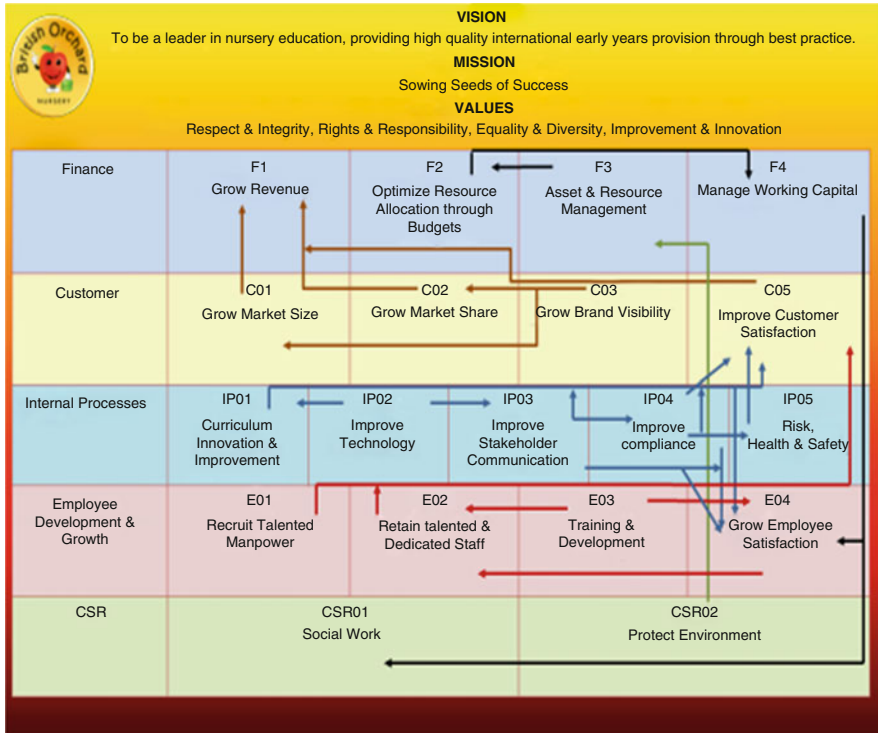Strategy: Bons Strategy is illustrated in Fig. 10.5.

**Fig. 10.5** Strategy of Bon

**Partnerships & Resources**

BON has distinguished between its Partners & Suppliers based on longevity, consistency and mutual sustainable and beneficial relationships i.e. DM, DEWA, World Fashion, CADGulf etc. We maintain good rapport with suppliers through annual contracts. For government partners, we strict ensure compliance to regulations. Special promotions offered to parents of government partners to enroll their children.

BON has a clear supplier selection policy which includes legal and market standing, certifications, product quality etc. mutual benefit to the organization. Three quotes are invited and a CBA is done to select the appropriate partner, as per established procedures. BON seeks out new joint ventures/partnerships through franchising and educational conferences, visiting Govt. depts., corporates, market research as outlined by our business expansion policy and procedure. Once a supplier identified, key competencies are reviewed & matched with BON's requirements. E.g. Dubai Municipality Clinic offers

priority service for BON employee for health checks to recognize the special promotions offered to DM employees for childcare.

Each contract is reviewed depending on changing needs & requirements, leading to evaluation of performance & forming new partnerships. In 2014, supplier evaluation form was enhanced supplier perception was introduced. The financial outcomes of new partnerships determine the robustness of market study leading to refinement of approach by appointing a multi-lingual Business Development Manager to visit all prospective government departments to assess the feasibility of entering into new business with them.

BON assesses the effectiveness of its partnership, by ensuring regular meetings with them. Feedback received from evaluation meeting is utilized to refine Purchasing policy and modification of contracts. E.g. CAD Gulf offered preventive maintenance as add-on benefit during contract renewal. Financial procedures are refined periodically, based on feedback from stakeholders. Some improvements include: Improved MIS reports, Finance Calendar, Daily cash flow report introduced, collection & PDC's etc. BON reviews the effectiveness of its Resource Allocation and Budgeting by comparing projected and actual spending, and takes appropriate measures to ensure that variances are minimized. E.g. Creation of Project lineage helps proper allocation of resources.

BON uses Internal controls & audits for effective governance. The reports give a detailed understanding of BON's financial standing which in-turn sets the platform for improvements. E.g. BON formalized receipts, Requisitions, payment vouchers, etc. Physical verification is now a bi-annual exercise. The effectiveness is in our Asset Management being checked by our Asset Turn-over Ratio, which is compared internally across all branches. E.g. More funds are allocated for acquiring new toys and equipment for the branch each year, after which only replacements are encouraged.

*Technology is managed to support the delivery of strategy:*

BON has implemented state-of-the-art technology. The IT policy ensures constant updates to automated processes and governance of usage of IT equipment. Governed by our IT Policy, we constantly seek to improve the use of technology in our operations such as various social media tools, leading to increased interactions with stakeholders. BON's LinkedIn account supports Recruitment. These are monitored by a dedicated in-house IT team. BON seeks inputs of stakeholders on website & FB content, use of tablets, smartboards, etc. A structured system exists (Requisition form, feedback, IT Budgeting, etc.) to invite IT resource requirements, which are analyzed for CBA, and then required purchases are made. Suggestion Scheme has been actively extended to customers and is supported by R&R program. BON team members attend local exhibitions e.g.: GITEX, Mother & Child as well as

other various nursery exhibitions. These serve to provide insights into new services and identify opportunities to upgrade the technology. BON staff use One Drive as a tool to share creative ideas and initiates across the team. All users have a secure user name & password to ensure information security. The finding are discussed during monthly meetings.

The effectiveness of IT Policy is evidenced through improved efficiency of financial reporting, security systems, feedback from social media inputs business development, etc. E.g. Tablets for children, D6 Communicator for parents to access current information on their computers & phones. To take this to the next level, BON is in the process of implementation of ERP software developed by internationally known firm (Microsoft Technology).

Surveys & informal feedback conducted with stakeholders provide valuable inputs on the effectiveness of these measures which identify gaps and create action plans. E.g. frequency of updates on FB has been increased with albums being created for specific class activities. BON moved to online surveys in 2013. Information is protected through IP laws of UAE, in house servers, firewalls, locked cabinets, password protected computers & maintained back up of systems (POL-BON-22). Staff gains access to areas of information dependent on their role & the importance of confidentiality through Authorized Access Controls, including CCTV (IT policy POL- BON-07). The curriculum is the intellectual property of the company & soft copies are made available to restricted persons only for update purposes. All staff joining BON signs NDA contracts having confidentiality and IP protection clauses. BON initiated the networking of 'critical friends' within the pre-school sector by inviting educational professionals to Mankhool. Thus, we learn by each other's best practices. This is implemented once a year through a structured format. BON has signed partnerships with Cache to enhance staff skills and ensure update with curriculum changes.

**Processes, Products & Services**

BON has a comprehensive framework of processes to implement organizational strategy. Strategy is detailed in company business plan. Processes are deployed across all branches & made available to staff. Process owners are responsible for developing, maintaining and improving key processes; providing feedback and suggestions for change to the corporate office. High level Business Process Map & Operating Model with outlined process ownerships, process level KPIs, policies & Procedures are implemented e.g. currently BON has 40+ procedures which are regularly reviewed and updated. Organization Chart defines roles. JDs are given to all staff, along with clear KPIs through the BSC. A clear framework of procedures outline authorities and responsibilities, ensuring staff have all the support to meet role demands. Staff training given. BON has a clear Strategy Map that enables set annual KPIs to support strategy & VMV. Along with termly reviews, data

collected from audits and feedbacks is used to measure KPI's & improve results. Each of these is implemented using structured processes. Data from stakeholder feedback, measured KPIs & curriculum results are used in line with available regulatory standards and local market competition for benchmarking, establishing new methods or targets as needed e.g. Involving parents further through events and coffee mornings. Market survey reports from various sources, competition updates, annual stakeholder feedback mechanisms, comment cards, events feedback forms, staff suggestions, tour call-back information all contribute to change.

A well-researched curriculum and assessment system implemented since inception that ensures quality education for Dubai's multi-cultural expat population. Clear processes and regular system checks for adherence to the standard exist. Initial and end of year Assessments, Child Observations, termly reports, etc. BON meets customer requirements & provides sustainable value to both existing and potential customers such as: providing holiday camps for working parents between terms. Scheduled visits conducted at competitor nurseries to be aware of new opportunities in the preschool segment. BON communicates its USPs through its structured parent tours, detailed registration packs, innovative marketing and web media. Each of these initiatives is process-driven, with clearly laid out steps and process owners, & clear responsibilities. BON looks for innovative approaches to targeting customers and promoting itself, based on feedback from assessments. BON has undertaken these refinements: Cobone/Groupon vouchers for camps to market the service; participation through employee benefit schemes, participations in nursery exhibitions etc.

BON provides year round care and education for children, allowing inter branch transfers, mid-year entry and exit upon parents' needs (parents relocating etc.). BON's open-door policy encourages communication with parents (customers) through various formal and informal channels such as daily meetings at drop-off and pick-ups, coffee mornings, annual feedback mechanisms, etc. BON works hard to have open channels of communication with customers. The Stakeholder Well-being Policy is followed, ensuring that there is an open door policy in school for all parents to encourage their inputs. Formal & informal feedback is given to parents daily on their child's progress, newsletters, emails, SMS, HSBs, etc. are used to ensure communication. Relevant Policies are shared, e.g. Health & Safety, Quality Policy, Sickness etc. CCTV available across the whole nursery, which allows for transparency. BON endeavor to be clear with all customers regarding responsibilities with engaging the service: 2013 Communicator launched to enable better communication for parent events & processes that involve their participation and include their responsibilities. 2014—feedback welcomed directly by Quality office, registration packs modified to include

acknowledgements. 2013 Suggestion Box introduced to facilitate customer inputs for improvement, 2014—improvement in risk assessments and increase in H&S officer to reduce allergy related incidents. BON moved to online surveys in 2013.

Detailed tours provide information, with informative registration packs. Agreements & forms are signed on entry. Signed 'Promise by parents' and 'promise by child' in registration packs evokes the duties and responsibilities of parents in a polite way. Newsletters update information and are emailed and put up on the website/Facebook. BON works hard to have open channels of communication with customers. The Stakeholder Well-being Policy is followed, ensuring that there is an open door policy in school for all parents to encourage their inputs. Formal & informal feedback is given to parents daily on their child's progress, newsletters, emails, SMS, HSBs, etc. are used to ensure communication. Relevant Policies are shared, e.g. Health & Safety, Quality Policy, Sickness etc. BON delivers high quality, age specific teaching; segmenting children into classes by age; babies, toddlers, nursery & foundation; following best practice norms, internationally acclaimed through research etc., to meet the requirements of the sensitive young ages of children in our care.

**Results Overview**

Bon identified various KPIs for achieving the business goals have been integrated with the Business Plan and have been cascaded to all process owners and the results of their performances are reported periodically and reviewed, and improvement action plans are initiated based on findings.

Development, deployment, assessment & refinement of measurement processes: Structured questionnaires are used to gather the perceptions of various stakeholders through surveys such as Customer (Parent) Survey, Employee Survey, Society survey & Business Associate Survey, and the questionnaires are revised with SMT & key stake holders inputs for suitability before each survey commences, to update the forms and gather additional data, as per changing business needs and quality improvement assessments. The data is collected online and is audited by external consultants for further input & validity. The data received from the surveys are analyzed & compared with previous years' performances and corrective actions and plans are initiated to improve related processes. BON encourages change and innovation and constantly improvises based on feedback received.

Target setting rationale: Although the target setting for financial aspects was prevailing since 2007, formal Business Planning began during 2010 through formal feasibility studies by industry experts, peer reviews and bench marking wherein we set initial targets for aspects related to surveys of various stakeholders. Thereafter, based on the achievement/performance, competition updates, current market dynamics, and ISO Quality Objectives

from 2011, the targets were increased in the subsequent years wherever the performance was near to or greater than the set target. Where targets were not achieved, current year targets were maintained or revised for the next year. Under the weighted average methodology the target is set as per the ratio method.

Benchmarking & comparison process: BON's rationale for setting benchmarks and targets for all key KPIs in the organization is based on information from various sources including: OFSTED (UK), MOSA and KHDA best practices and guidelines, data and friendly inspection results from education conglomerate GEMS, U.K. industry experts consultancy, EBM Benchmarking Partners' Program Data, EBM Benchmarking Club sessions & EBM Benchmarking Visits for Sharing of Best Practices, Data, DQA winning practices report by DED, global research data for industry, internal branch comparisons by city, peer review by critical friends, and leading auditors such as Ernst & Young and Baker Tilly's due diligence report internal benchmarking and visits to/collaborations with other nurseries.

Sales & Financial performances are also benchmarked against the data in the DQA winning practices report by DED, and have also been compared with internal performance of previous periods for setting targets/budgets. The same applies to CSR and employee satisfaction related results.

Segmentation: Bon has segmented results branch-wise, year-wise, class wise, nationality wise, designation wise, etc. as applicable for comparing the trend and identifying how effective those specific areas have been on our implemented strategies and policies and to revise them based on the findings for continual improvement.

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## Key Questions

1. Read the above sample submission document case of Bon- sowing the seeds of success and discuss the exemplary approaches that Bob has adopted in relation to DQA criteria
2. What advice would you give to BON to strengthen its excellence maturity
3. Research on Bons Leadership and identify the unique practices that has resulted in "sowing the seeds of success for Bon"
4. Bon has received several recognitions since its inception. Discuss how each of them have helped Bon in shaping its excellence journey.
5. Discuss the various customer focus strategies and results illustrated in Bon case study

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