

# Quality Management and Organizational Excellence



It might surprise quality management professionals that there is quite low awareness amongst this population about excellence models. In fact when presenting at various conferences, it seems they have the same level of awareness as the working population at large (20%). Many professionals invest in training and certification and use a variety of quality approaches but they are not familiar with leading excellence

models such as the EFQM, Baldrige, Canadian Framework for Excellence and Australian Business Excellence Framework. Today, excellence models provide the basis for national excellence award programs in 67 countries <http://blog.bpir.com/latest-news/new-research-shows-67-countries-with-national-business-excellence-awards/>

Knowing more about these models can help quality professionals add value to their (client) organization(s), speak the language of management and contribute to strategic imperatives.

## Roles in Quality Management

Quality managers aim to ensure the product or service an organization provides is fit for purpose, is consistent and meets both external and internal requirements. This includes legal compliance and customer expectations.

Generally, the quality manager coordinates the activities required to meet quality standards. The role is concerned with monitoring and advising on the performance of the quality management system, producing data and reporting on performance and measuring against set standards.

Liaising with other managers and staff throughout the organization, they:

- Ensure the quality management system is functioning properly
- Advise on changes and how to implement them
- Provide training, tools and techniques to enable others to achieve quality standards

Quality managers use approaches to establish a quality system and tools and techniques to help organizations monitor, improve and report progress. Popular approaches include the ISO family of standards and favored tools and techniques include Lean, Six Sigma, Balanced Scorecard, 7 Tools and Benchmarking.

These approaches and tools and techniques help an organization to work as effectively and efficiently as possible. For example:

- Effective - the degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which targeted problems are solved. In other words, "doing the right thing." For example:
  - Remain profitable and competitive (e.g. business)
  - Govern well at a community, state or national level, enforce policies and manage public programs (e.g. government)
  - Provide support to a profession, industry sector or important cause (e.g. association)
- Efficient - The comparison of what is actually produced or performed with what can be achieved with the same consumption of resources (e.g. money, time, labor). In other words, "doing things right". For example, making improvements to:
  - Cycle time (e.g. turnaround time)
  - Process design changes (e.g. workflow)
  - Process capability (e.g. speed)
  - Level of service or product quality (e.g. customer satisfaction, conformance to specifications)
  - Performance of products and services (e.g. sales)

### **Roles in Organizational Excellence**

Professionals engaged in organizational excellence play a variety of roles and take a more holistic view. They can be academics, researchers, consultants, trainers, coaches and employees. In these roles they work closely with leaders to transfer knowledge to others and/or help an organization move from where it is today to where it wants to be tomorrow. For those working with organizations across sectors, they help implement the best management practices of an excellence model, develop a culture committed to excellence and achieve exceptional results (Figure 1). Did you know this entire process is a tried and true formula for success that has been validated by leading excellence models for over 25 years?

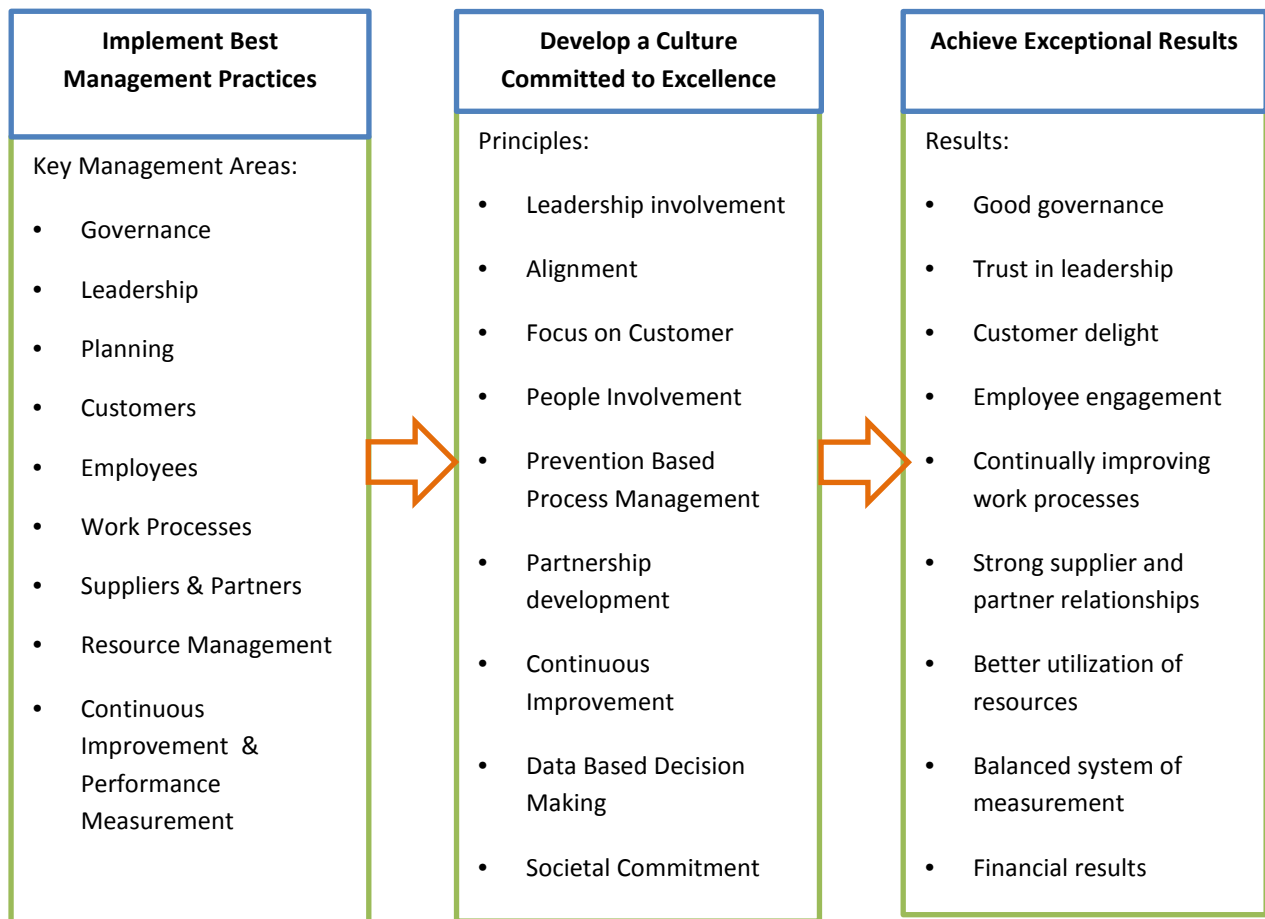
A short while ago, I was asked for a job description of an organizational excellence specialist and found a job description for an operational excellence specialist

<https://polyone.taleo.net/careersection/2/jobdetail.ftl?job=17001830&tz=GMT-07%3A00> But then I thought about the variety of professionals we have on our team and thought they would each have a different job description ! Here are a few examples of what our professionals do:

- Work with an organization to:
  - Address an issue (e.g. have not documented the way work is done)
  - Address a key management area (e.g. need to improve governance)
  - Implement a good management system (e.g. improve performance)

- Elevate the performance of a larger group (e.g. members of an industry sector association, government entity)
- Deliver an educational program (e.g. for professionals pursuing general professional development, augmenting their knowledge and skill set, wishing to specialize or earn a designation)
- Conduct research (e.g. 'first global assessment on the current state of organizational excellence')
- Provide guidance to an organization that is preparing an application for a national excellence award programs
- Provide guidance to an international company that is preparing applications for a number of different national excellence award programs across jurisdiction (e.g. EFQM, Baldrige)
- Engage in a special project (e.g. benchmarking)
- Assist with a merger or acquisition (e.g. developing a common culture of excellence)

Figure 1.



## Future Role of Quality Management Professionals

At one of the last quality conferences I attended, the delegates in attendance were speaking about their future role. The presenter was proposing their role was evolving to that of an internal consultant. In a recent article <http://asq.org/quality-participation/2017/01/change-management/the-changing-role-of-quality-in-the-future-required-competencies-for-quality-professionals-to-succeed.pdf> the authors captured pre-competencies that quality professionals will need to succeed in the future. While the research findings are most valuable, I also think considerable emphasis should be placed on developing a strategic mindset and being well equipped to deliver the formula for success (Figure1). A strategic mindset would allow the quality professional to hold a conversation with leadership about how their work contributes to the organization's vision, mission, goals and objectives. Being equipped to deliver the formula for success means that quality professionals should augment their existing skill set and learn more about the generally accepted implementation guidelines for each of the best management practices in an excellence model.

Where do you get information on these implementation guidelines? Until recently, there was a huge gap in the quality management literature in this respect and I even heard quality professionals at international conferences proclaim "we should not tell employees how to implement the practices but ask them to figure it out for themselves". "OMG", I said and wrote a publication that integrated leading excellence models and provided implementation guidelines used by seasoned management consultants. Where can you find this publication? The Organizational Excellence Framework publication is intended to provide support for the quality profession in general and the working population at large. It answers the most frequently asked question by people in organizations which is "how do you implement this practice? And it supports the need to know more when leaders exclaim after a workshop "how come everyone doesn't know about this?" Perhaps the best news of all is the publication is downloadable at no charge here <http://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/> And don't worry about organizations not needing the services of quality management professionals as we can each take a deeper dive into an area of specialty (e.g. work processes and Six Sigma).

This way of working acknowledges that an excellence model, that integrates other excellence models and provides implementation guidelines, can provide support for the entire quality profession (e.g. national excellence models, quality approaches, tools and techniques, professional development bodies, certified professionals) and for the organizations striving for improvement or excellence.

Such an excellence model:

- Provides a big umbrella under which all excellence models fit
- Aligns with the different quality approaches, tools and techniques used by professionals
- Continues to involve professional development bodies that provide education, training and certification programs
- Engages certified professionals that deliver auditing, consulting and training services
- Delivers some of the required competencies for quality professionals to succeed in the future

- Allows these professionals to work with organizations to achieve results, desired outcomes and recognition
- Supports research and benchmarking exercises regardless of the quality / excellence approach used

Even though the quality landscape is quite political, fragmented and competitive, I believe that quality professionals can all work together toward a common aim - achieving results, desired outcomes and recognition for organizations ! And if we are able to accomplish this, the profession will be stronger and leverage the ability to speak with one voice. It will be a welcome change from quality professionals each claiming they have the best approach, tools and techniques and quality membership organizations each claiming they have a global excellence model or a global award program. Interested in a visual that depicts how we might work together? At this link is a diagram that you can ponder

[http://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/OES\\_BigPictureImageMarch19\\_2018.pdf](http://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/OES_BigPictureImageMarch19_2018.pdf)

## About the Author



**Dawn Ringrose** MBA, FCMC is Principal of Organizational Excellence Specialists and Author of the Organizational Excellence Framework and accompanying toolkit. The publication integrates leading excellence models and provides implementation guidelines for the user. It is accompanied by a turnkey toolkit for quality professionals that includes: scenario games, holistic and modular workshops, automated assessment and reporting tool, train-the-trainer program. The automated tool is being used to do the 'first global

assessment on the current state of organizational excellence' that was launched by the ASQ QMD Organizational Excellence Technical Committee and will provide an opportunity for organizations to benchmark with others by size, industry sector and country - regardless of the quality approach used!

<http://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/activities/global-oe-index/> Her qualifications include: Masters of Business Administration, Fellow Certified Management Consultant, Certified Organizational Excellence Specialist, Certified Excellence Professional, Registered ISO 9000 Specialist and Assessor of Quality Systems. She has worked in the area of organizational excellence since 1990 and several clients have earned national excellence awards. Dawn is currently the representative for Canada on the ASQ QMD Organizational Excellence Technical Committee and Global Benchmarking Network.

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