

Building An Organizational Culture That Is Committed To Excellence



What is a culture that is committed to excellence?

If we examine excellence models being used around the world, there are nine principles that define high performing organizations (Organizational Excellence Framework © 2010, Dawn Ringrose). The principles form the foundation for continual improvement and organizational excellence, characterize the culture and values of the organization, and depict the way people work together and with their stakeholders.

The nine principles include:

1. Leadership involvement – ensuring senior management is committed and actively involved in establishing and communicating direction.
2. Alignment – understanding the organization is a system of interrelated and interconnected work processes and all activities need to be aligned with the established direction.
3. Focus on the customer – ensuring the primary aim of everyone in the organization is to understand and meet the needs of the customer.
4. People involvement – nurturing and reinforcing cooperation and teamwork and giving employees the opportunity to develop their full potential.
5. Prevention based process management – establishing consistency in work processes and developing a mindset of prevention.

6. Partnership development – developing and maintaining value-adding relationships with suppliers and partners.
7. Continuous improvement – harnessing the collective knowledge, skills, and creativity of stakeholders to relentlessly pursue improvement.
8. Data based decision making – basing decisions on performance measurement findings.
9. Societal commitment – striving to understand and demonstrate corporate commitment to society.

Why is a culture committed to excellence important?

The nine principles are directly related to best management practices across nine key management areas. Over the past 30 years it has been validated by research with national excellence award recipients that organizations successfully implementing these practices realize a culture that is committed to excellence.

National excellence award recipients have demonstrated the successful implementation of best management practices, realized sustainable results across a balanced system of measurement and developed a culture committed to excellence. Some of these organizations have included: 3M Company, American Express, BMW, Boeing, Cargill, Coca Cola, Government of Singapore, Raffles Institution, Siemens and Xerox.

How do we assess the commitment to excellence in an organization?

There is an assessment tool that has been used in a global research study that has captured the current state of organizational excellence. The tool is based on the Organizational Excellence Framework publication (© 2010, 2014 revised, Dawn Ringrose) that has ‘integrated leading global excellence models’ and ‘provided implementation guidelines’ for the user. It is available for download at no charge <http://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/> and Appendix 3 provides an abbreviated version of the assessment tool. Assessing against the Principles (Teaser Assessment) and Best Management Practices (Full Assessment) provides feedback on the extent to which an organization has a culture of excellence and has a good management system in place, respectively.

The global research study commenced in 2015 when the Organizational Excellence Technical Committee (OETC) QMD ASQ launched the study. It was supported by the Global Benchmarking Network, ISO Technical Committee 176 and International Academy for Quality. Voluntarily led by Organizational Excellence Specialists in Canada, the first report (2015) shared aggregate results by organization size, industry sector and region. The study was continued by the same firm and a second report was published in 2021. Both reports are available for download at no charge <https://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/workshops-events/global-oe-index/>

Leadership and Management across industry sectors are invited to participate in the global research study. The Teaser Assessment and Full Assessment take 10 and 30 minutes to complete, respectively,

and the experience delivers two immediate benefits. First, the assessment experience will provide a sense of how your organization measures up to high performing organizations. Second, the published reports will allow you to compare your organization results to others.

What can we do to improve the commitment to excellence?

The Interrelationships document at this link is helpful to understanding the Teaser Assessment. It provides a listing of the principles running horizontally and a list of best management practices running vertically with touch points for the most direct relationships https://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/OES_RelationshipDocument_March28.pdf (note: practices highlighted with an asterisk (*) apply to micro size organizations with 1 to 25 employees). If the organization has a low rating on a Principle, the corresponding low rated Practices can be considered when deciding where to focus improvement effort.

One of the most powerful ways to improve the organization's commitment to excellence is to do a Full Assessment against the Principles and Best Management Practices and unleash the Formula for Success that has been validated over the decades: Implement the best management practices, Develop a culture committed to excellence, Achieve exceptional results across a balanced system of measurement.

Background on the study and links to the Assessments are available here <https://organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca/workshops-events/global-oe-index/> Each assessment instrument is provided in English and several other languages (French, Spanish, Arabic, Italian).

In a perfect world (with courageous leaders), all employees can be invited to participate in the assessment of their organization and provide their confidential ratings and open-ended comments. The aggregate results can be compiled and leadership can share the report with employees and invite them on the excellence journey – working toward a common aim, meeting regularly to review progress, celebrating success along the way.

About the Author



Dawn Ringrose MBA, FCMC is Principal of Organizational Excellence Specialists and Author of the Organizational Excellence Framework publication and accompanying turnkey toolkit. Qualifications include: Masters of Business Administration, Certified Organizational Excellence Specialist, Certified Excellence Professional, Registered ISO 9000 Specialist, Assessor of Quality Systems. Since 1984, she has worked with organizations to improve performance. Dawn currently serves on the Executive Team of the Organizational Excellence Technical Committee QMD ASQ and the Board of the ISCM Foundation. Email dawn@organizationalexcellencespecialists.ca