

Contents

Introduction	3
Best Practices	7
Section 1: All Applicants	17
Section 2: Finalists	21
Section 3: Prize & Award Winners	25
Section 4: Large Organisations	29
Section 5: Small & Medium Organisations	33
Section 6: Private Sector Organisations	37
Section 7: Public Sector Organisations	41

Moving Ideas Forward

Building a sustainable organisation that continually achieves its goals is only possible with a strong team of people, who understand the organisation's vision, mission and strategy. It is important that they are supported within the business to thrive both personally and professionally. This is a key challenge not only for Human Resources professionals within an organisation but for all leaders. Creating a genuine dialogue between the people and leaders of the organisation is key, enabling clear communication of strategies and how the organisation can rise to meet the challenges it will face. This is especially important in the current economic climate, where many organisations are under extreme pressure and face many uncertainties in their core area of business, but let us be clear that these challenges of constant change will not disappear as economies recover. The way and the speed with which they organisations adapt to these challenges will determine their future success.

Engaging people in these changes is vital; ensuring they are clear on the overall direction of the business and are motivated to succeed. To effectively engage people, leaders must have the trust of their people and ensure they have the processes in place to deliver on their promises. Assessing current organisational capabilities and determining the skills required to meet new challenges are only the start. Being able to effectively deliver the training and development required is crucial. In addition to the right skills, people also need the right tools, encouragement and environment to deliver.

People Perception Surveys are a key tool in understanding how effective the strategies and processes developed are performing. However, without external reference they only tell us introspectively how well we are performing. Benchmarking with other organisations helps us to understand general trends and identify areas where we either have advantages or need to improve to ensure our organisation retains, motivates and manages the performance of their people at all stages of their career.

The EFQM Excellence Model provides organisations with a common language, enabling the exchange of ideas between members, regardless of size or sector. It is our ability to learn from these examples that will determine our ability to move our ideas forward, meet the challenges we face and succeed in achieving sustainable benefits for our stakeholders into the future.



Greg Holder
Vice President, Human Resources
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Compiling this Report

The data contained in this report has been provided by applicants from the European Excellence Award processes during 2007, 2008 and 2009. These organisations have achieved a known and comparable level of excellence, as determined by the Award Assessor Teams who visited them as part of the assessment process.

As users of the EFQM Excellence Model, we understand the need to compare our performance levels with external organisations to understand where we excel and where we may need to make improvements to stay competitive and deliver sustainable benefits to our stakeholders. These comparisons can be made both within the market we operate and beyond, to bring in new ideas and innovative ways of working that will enable us to make “breakthrough improvements” or gain access to new markets.

The EFQM Excellence Model provides us with a “common language” for sharing information, ideas and good practices between organisations. Once the “level of excellence” of an organisation has been determined through assessment against the Model, it is possible for them to compare their performance against organisations who have achieved either a similar level of maturity or to compare themselves with members who have achieved their target “level of excellence” to understand where they need to make improvements in order to achieve this.

Obviously, benchmarking goes far beyond comparing numbers but this can be a useful step in identifying gaps and which areas to focus on. Aligning this to the strategic objectives will help identify the priorities for improvement. Once these priorities are agreed, the process of benchmarking approaches can begin.

Creating Comparable Data

There are 2 common issues encountered when people try to compare perception data:

- The questions are worded differently
- The scoring scales are not the same

What tends to happen is people buy benchmark data from their survey provider, although often have little idea who they are benchmarking against, therefore how valid the benchmark is. This also does little to promote the exchange of ideas.

However, whilst the wording of the questions might be different, the themes explored are usually the same, such as “communications” and “personal development”. For example, one company may have a question worded “How satisfied are you with opportunities for personal development?” in their People Perception Survey and another may ask “Do you have opportunities to learn and develop in your current role?”. In essence, these both ask about the same thing and the approaches adopted in a company that will drive this result will have the same objective. By identifying the common themes, we can ask the participants to select the relevant questions from their survey which measure perception against these themes.

The other issue is the range of different scoring scales used. Ultimately, if someone is highly satisfied, they will give you a high score and, if they’re not, they’ll give a low score. Calculating the average score and converting this to a percentage, we can create a common approach to scoring that enables us to create a benchmarking index to identify companies with very high levels of

People Perception Benchmark Report 2009

people satisfaction. For example, if the organisation is using a scale of 1 to 5 and the average rating was 4.0, this would be equivalent to 75%. Whether the comparison between organisations A & B is 100% accurate is not the point. The objective is to identify areas where organisation A could learn from organisation B.

Identifying the Common Themes for Comparison

To identify the “common themes” which were being used to measure customer perception, we took a sample of submission documents from the last 3 years, taking a mix of 75 page and 25 page submissions and ensuring we had a mix of private and public sector organisations. We then compared the data presented in the “People Perception” criteria and compiled the list below:

- Overall Satisfaction
- Understanding vision, mission & strategy
- Trust in leadership
- Communications
- Recognition
- My manager
- Setting personal targets & objectives
- Performance appraisal
- Team working
- Training
- Personal development
- Career development
- Working environment
- Involvement in improvements
- Job security
- Management of change
- Environmental policy / activities
- Health and safety
- Contribution to society / local community
- Response Rate

Identifying “Best Practices”

The Assessor Teams identify and describe “best practices” during the assessment process, based on the 8 Fundamental Concepts of Excellence which underpin the EFQM Excellence Model. These provide the EEA Jury with further information on the applicant and why the Assessor Team feel they should be considered as a “role model” for other organisations. The “best practices” identified are documented in a standard template, based on the RADAR.

The “best practices” included in this report have been taken directly from the feedback reports produced by the Assessor Teams. These examples should give an insight into the different types of approaches adopted by organisations recognised through the EEA process as “excellent” which can be adapted for use within other member organisations.

Segmentation of Data

For this report, we have segmented the data into 7 categories:

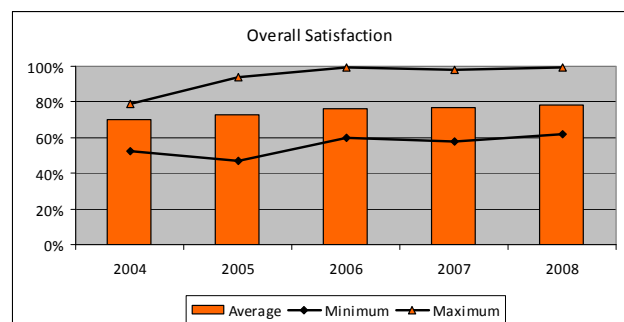
- All applicants
- Finalists
- Prize and Award Winners
- Large Organisations
- Small and Medium Organisations
- Private Sector Organisations
- Public Sector Organisations

For each category, we have included data on the “Average” of the group, plus the Maximum and Minimum scores achieved each year. This may not always be the same organisation i.e. Applicant A might have the maximum score in 2007 but Applicant B could have the maximum score in 2008.

Data Presentation

As described previously, we asked the applicants to send the average rating given, expressed as a percentage, for each of the themes we had identified. We have presented the data in both tables and in graphical format.

- The theme appears at the top as the title of the graph.
- The average rating for each organisation has been given as a percentage. For example, if they are using a scale of 1 to 5 and the average rating was 4.0, this would be 80%.
- The Average, Minimum and Maximum ratings for each segment are presented as a percentage.



How can this report be used?

Organisations compare results so they can identify where they have “competitive advantages”, where they need to improve and how much they need to improve by to achieve their strategic objectives.

This Benchmark Report can be used by members to:

- Understand where they’re particularly good compared to a suitable peer group, depending on their current or desired “Level of Excellence”
- Identify priorities for improvements
- Calibrate their target setting processes and aspirations
- Understand key approaches adopted by leading organisations