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Business Excellence

What is Business Excellence?

Business excellence refers to “outstanding practices in managing the organisation and achieving results, all based on a set of nine fundamental concepts”. These concepts are;

- results orientation
- customer focus
- leadership and constancy of purpose
- management by processes and facts
- people development and involvement
- continuous learning
- innovation and improvement
- partnership development
- public responsibility

Business excellence is largely driven by the “desire to achieve specific strategic outcomes”, which is underpinned by performance measurement and continual improvement. Business excellence operates through a framework that is comprehensive. Starting on a business excellence journey imposes a change on an organisation, which necessitates a transitioning of people from the current way of doing things to a new way of working.

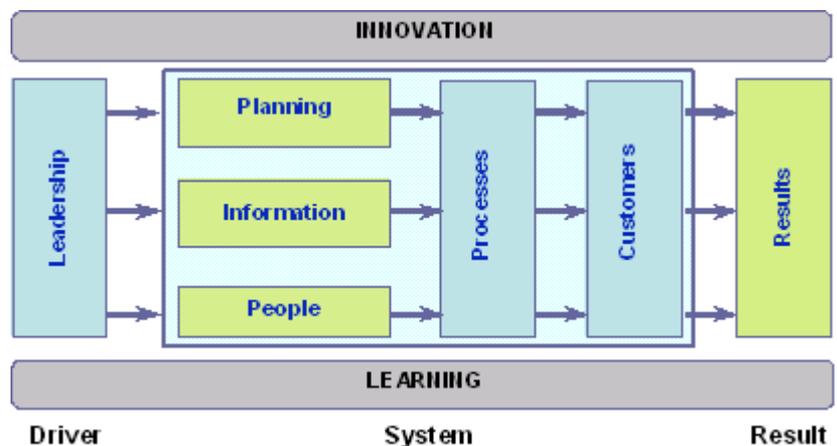
Why Should Businesses Pursue Business Excellence?

Organisations pursue business excellence to;

- establish visionary and inspirational leadership
- ensure organisational sustainability
- develop a competitive edge
- improve financial performance
- drive innovation in products and services
- enhance the organisations capacity to deal with change
- improve organisational effectiveness and capability
- improve systems and processes
- increase productivity and reduce costs
- focus on customer satisfaction

The Business Excellence Framework

The business excellence framework is a structured approach that can be adopted by organisations to set up management systems and processes, which will ensure the business excels. The framework comprises “standards of excellence that organisations can strive for, self-assessment tools for organisations to measure their performance, and certification and awards to recognise businesses that excel”.



Source: Business excellence framework. (2007). Retrieved August 17, 2009, from <http://www.spring.gov.sg/Content/WebPage.aspx?id=95217bfe-6dc7-4f5f-ad58-5d22e2370e5e>

Seven Dimensions of Excellence

The business excellence framework comprises seven categories.

The categories are;

1. Leadership and innovation
2. Strategy and planning process
3. Data information and knowledge
4. People
5. Customer and market focus
6. Processes products and services
7. Business results

Business Excellence Standards

The business excellence framework is also supported by one business excellence standard for organisations to achieve all-round excellence, and three niche standards for people, innovation and service. Each of these standards focuses on the “organisational capabilities required for a key enabler of business excellence”, such as people, innovation and service. Depending on the individual business needs and strategy, organisations could employ any of the business excellence standards to enhance their capabilities.

Standard of Business Excellence	To achieve the standard, businesses need to establish systems and processes in these key areas:						
	Leadership	Planning	Information	People	Processes	Customer	Results
Business Excellence Standard	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Business Excellence Niche Standard (Innovation)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Business Excellence Niche Standard (People)	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
Business Excellence Niche Standard (Service)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

Source: Using the business excellence framework. (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 17, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/TheBasics/excel_basic_use.htm

1. Business Excellence Niche Standard – Innovation

Provides organisations that rely on innovation as a growth strategy with a systematic approach in developing the organisational management capabilities for sustaining innovation.

2. Business Excellence Niche Standard – People

Provides organisations that rely heavily on people to excel with a total approach to managing people and achieving high performance through its people systems.

3. Business Excellence Niche Standard – Service

Provides organisations whose success critically depends on customers with a systematic approach in developing its management capabilities for service excellence. It also assist businesses to assess and address gaps in their service leadership, service agility, customer experience and customer delight.

Self-Assessment Tools

These self-assessment tools assist organisations in identifying gaps in their systems and processes. The self-assessments tools for each standard of excellence are presented in the table below.

Standard of Excellence	Self-Assessment Tool
Business Excellence Standard	Business Excellence Assessment for Continuous Improvement (BEACON) http://www.spring.gov.sg/Resources/BE/document/SQC_BEACON_2Dec08.pdf
Business Excellence Niche Standard (Innovation)	Innovation Scorecard for Business Excellence (I-SCORE) http://www.spring.gov.sg/Resources/BE/document/APEX_2Dec08.pdf
Business Excellence Niche Standard (People)	Assessment for People Excellence (APEX) http://www.spring.gov.sg/Resources/BE/document/IScore_2Dec08.pdf
Business Excellence Niche Standard (Service)	Service Scorecard for Business Excellence (Service Scorecard) http://www.spring.gov.sg/Resources/BE/document/Service_Scorecard_2Dec08.pdf

Source: Using the business excellence framework. (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 17, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/TheBasics/excel_basic_use.htm

Business Excellence Certifications and Awards

For each standard of excellence, there are certification and award, which are presented to organisations. Organisations, who achieved a minimum of 400 out of 1000 points during the certification process, will be granted certifications. Organisations who achieved 700 or more out of 1000 points will be considered for the awards.

Certifications

Singapore Quality Class (SQC)

The Singapore Quality Class was launched in 1997. It is a “national recognition for businesses with management systems and processes in place to achieve all-round business excellence”. The certification is based on internationally benchmarked business excellence framework, and presented to organisations that have achieved the Business Excellence Standard.

The SQC is awarded to organisations of all types and sizes, and comprise seven categories; leadership, planning, information, people, processes, customers and results. The organisation’s performance in the Business Excellence Assessment for Continuous Improvement (BEACON) is a key determinant in the certification. Assessors will also be deployed to evaluate the organisation’s systems and processes. Organisations who scored 400 points or more in the assessment will be certified with the SQC award, hence enabling them to use the SQC logo on their publicity materials, among other benefits.

More information on the certification can be obtained from the following website:

- Business excellence: Singapore quality class (SQC). (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceCertifications/excel_certs_sqc.htm

Singapore Innovation Class (I-Class)

The Singapore Innovation Class (I-Class) was launched in 2002. It is a “national recognition for organisations that have management systems and processes in place to achieve excellence through innovation”. The certification is based on internationally benchmarked business excellence framework, and presented to businesses that have achieved the Business Excellence Niche Standard (Innovation).

The I-Class is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and comprise six categories; leadership, planning, information, people, processes and results. The organisation’s performance in the Innovation Scorecard for Business Excellence (I-SCORE) is a key determinant in the certification. Assessors will also be deployed to evaluate the organisation’s systems and processes. Organisations who scored 400 points or more in the assessment will be certified with the I-Class award, hence enabling them to use the I-Class logo on their publicity materials, among other benefits.

More information on the certification can be obtained from the following website:

- Business excellence: Singapore innovation class (I-Class). (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceCertifications/excel_certs_i-class.htm

People Developer (PD)

The People Developer (PD) certification was launched in 1998. It is a “national recognition for organisations that have management systems and processes in place to achieve excellence through people”. The certification is based on internationally benchmarked business excellence framework, and presented to businesses that have achieved the Business Excellence Niche Standard (People).

The PD is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and comprise five categories; leadership, planning, information, people and results. The organisation’s performance in the Assessment of People Excellence (APEX) is a key determinant in the certification. Assessors will also be deployed to evaluate the organisation’s systems and processes. Organisations who

scored 400 points or more in the assessment will be certified with the PD award, hence enabling them to use the PD logo on their publicity materials, among other benefits.

More information on the certification can be obtained from the following website:

- Business excellence: People developer (PD). (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceCertifications/excel_certs_pd.htm

Singapore Service Class (S-Class)

The Singapore Service Class (S-Class) certification was launched in 2003. It is a “national recognition for organisations that have management systems and processes in place to achieve service excellence”. The certification is based on internationally benchmarked business excellence framework, and presented to businesses that have achieved the Business Excellence Niche Standard (Service).

The S-Class is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and comprise six categories; leadership, planning, information, people, customer and results. The organisation’s performance in the Service Scorecard for Business Excellence is a key determinant in the certification. Assessors will also be deployed to evaluate the organisation’s systems and processes. Organisations who scored 400 points or more in the assessment will be certified with the PD award, hence enabling them to use the PD logo on their publicity materials, among other benefits.

More information on the certification can be obtained from the following website:

- Business excellence: Singapore service class (S-Class). (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceCertifications/excel_certs_s-class.htm

Awards

Singapore Quality Award (SQA)

The Singapore Quality Award, launched in 1994, is the highest national award conferred to organisations with “management and systems and processes that achieve outstanding levels of business excellence in all areas”. The award aims to “establish Singapore as a country committed to world-class business excellence”, where organisations which are presented with the SQA award are referred to as “world-class”.

The SQA award is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and not limited to any particular type of businesses or industries.

More information on the award can be obtained from the following websites:

- Business excellence: Singapore quality award (SQA). (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceAwards/excel_awards_sqa.htm
- Singapore quality award. (2009, April 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from <http://www.spring.gov.sg/Content/WebPage.aspx?id=510802e4-4a99-4790-98a1-c843d9d08849>

Singapore Innovation Award (I-Award)

The Singapore Innovation Award, launched in 2001, is the highest national award conferred to organisations who have achieved the Business Excellence Niche Standard (Innovation). The award is awarded to organisations which have achieved outstanding levels of excellence through innovation.

The I-Award is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and not limited to any particular type of businesses or industries.

More information on the award can be obtained from the following websites:

- Business excellence: Singapore innovation award (I-Award). (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceAwards/excel_awards_sqa.htm

[ellence/BusinessExcellenceAwards/excel_awards_i-award.htm](#)

- Innovation excellence award. (2009, January 28). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from <http://www.spring.gov.sg/Content/WebPage.aspx?id=54c0ca73-6d92-4e75-9c3f-cbc3be2e32bb>

People Excellence Award

The People Award, launched in 2001, is the highest national award conferred to organisations who have achieved the Business Excellence Niche Standard (People). The award is awarded to organisations which have achieved outstanding levels of excellence through people.

The People Award is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and not limited to any particular type of businesses or industries.

More information on the award can be obtained from the following websites:

- Business excellence: Service excellence award. (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceAwards/excel_awards_pe.htm
- Service excellence award. (2009, April 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from <http://www.spring.gov.sg/Content/WebPage.aspx?id=11f50bb9-1d92-4a6b-8b0c-52ef7e31fe6b>

Service Excellence Award

The Service Award, launched in 2006, is the highest national award conferred to organisations who have achieved the Business Excellence Niche Standard (Service). The award is awarded to organisations which have achieved outstanding levels of customer service.

The Service Award is awarded to businesses of all types and sizes, and not limited to any particular type of businesses or industries.

More information on the award can be obtained from the following websites:

- Business excellence: Service excellence award. (2009, July 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/BusinessExcellenceAwards/excel_awards_svcExcel.htm
- Service excellence award. (2009, April 1). Retrieved August 18, 2009, from <http://www.spring.gov.sg/Content/WebPage.aspx?id=3a749bf2-3084-4b89-ae0-a0c81505e7c0>

Sources:

Business excellence. (2009, April). Retrieved August 11, 2009, from <http://www.business.gov.sg/EN/BusinessTopic/BusinessExcellence/>

Business excellence. (2009, April 7). Retrieved August 11, 2009, from <http://www.spring.gov.sg/Content/WebPage.aspx?id=3c6bcb9d-da5d-4db8-b9fc-9a4b2e6246ae>

Business excellence: Rising to the challenge of business excellence ensures sustainability and competitive advantage. (2008). Retrieved August 11, 2009, from <http://www.mercorgroup.com.au/What+We+Do/Mercor+Consulting/default.aspx>

The Australian business excellence framework. (2004). Retrieved August 11, 2009, from <http://www.saiglobal.com/PDFTemp/Previews/OSH/as/misc/gb/GB002.pdf>

What is business excellence? (n.d.). Retrieved August 11, 2009, from <http://www.bpir.com/business-excellence-bpir.com.html>

Articles may be delivered to clients, upon request.

Books are available at the Lee Kong Chian Reference Library.

Recommended Readings

Bovée, C. L. (2007). *Excellence in business*. New Jersey: Pearson/Prentice Hall.
[R BUS 658 BOV]

Breyfogle, F. W. (2008). *Integrated enterprise excellence*. Texas: Bridgeway Books.
[R BUS 658.562 BRE]

Cannon, T. (2006). *The entrepreneur's strategy guide: Ten keys for achieving marketplace leadership and operational excellence*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger.
[R BUS 658.421 CAN]

Goossen, R. J. (2007). *Entrepreneurial excellence: Profit from the best ideas of experts*. New Jersey: Career Press.
[R BUS 658.421 GOO]

Groves, D., Herbert, K., & Correll, J. (2008). *Achieving class A business excellence: An executive's perspective*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
[R BUS 658.409 GRO]

Przekop, P. (2006). *Six sigma for business excellence: A manager's guide to supervising six sigma projects and teams*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
[R BUS 658.4013 PRZ]