



White Paper

Quality and Excellence: Time for a National Award in Qatar

Omar Ben-Ayed

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This white paper popularizes the concepts of excellence, quality and related awards. It also demonstrates the role that excellence and quality awards can play in increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of Qatari organizations and ensuring the alignment of their strategic directions with the national vision. It finally proposes a framework for establishing a national quality and/or excellence award in Qatar.

What is the Difference between Quality and Excellence?

Quality (sometimes referred to as business quality) can be defined as “the ability of a product or service to meet customer needs” (Heizer and Render 2014). Excellence (also referred to as business excellence or organizational excellence) can be defined as “achieving and sustaining superior levels of performance that meet or exceed the expectations of the stakeholders” (EFQM 2013). Quality is the old term and excellence is the new one; but, in fact, there is no rigorous distinction between the two concepts.

Business and engineering schools continue to focus on quality management (or strategic process improvement), which is “a philosophy stressing a commitment on the part of the management to have a sustained companywide drive toward excellence in all aspects of products and services”. This philosophy is the bedrock of all quality and excellence awards; the old ones (those created in the second half of the 20th century) are usually called quality awards, while the recent ones (those created in the 21st century) are usually called excellence awards.

Why a Quality Excellence Award in Qatar?

Around 80 countries throughout the world have already established national quality or excellence awards with known websites, known administrative organizations and known criteria (Mohammad and Mann 2010). These countries include all developed countries and many developing ones, including some in the Middle East region. As Qatar is marching to achieve its 2030 vision and preparing to host the 2022 FIFA World Cup, it is prime time to encourage the spirit of quality and excellence in the country.

Several studies have shown that quality and excellence awards increase commitment on the part of the management to assume a sustained organization-wide drive toward higher performance, which would upgrade the competitiveness of their organizations (Bandyopadhyay and Nair 2015). Indeed, these organizations become more economical just by complying with the reward criteria. Although these criteria are primarily designed to be utilized as a basis for award(s), they are also used to fulfill a number of functions:

- As a tool for **self-assessment**
- As a way to **benchmark** with other organizations
- As a guide to identify areas for **improvement**
- As basis for a common **vocabulary** and a way of thinking
- As a **structure** for the organization's management system

How to Measure Quality and Excellence?

Because of their practical orientation, the incubators of quality and excellence awards are concerned with developing practical tools to measure accomplishment rather than studying the theoretical aspects

thereof. Several metrics (also referred to as quality or excellence models), composed of several criteria, have been developed in order to be used as a basis for national, regional or international awards. Since there are around 80 countries throughout the world that have established such awards, the result can be as many as 80 different models. However, 75% of these models are, in one way or another, based on the three best known, namely the Deming Prize (the Japanese model), the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award or MBNQA (the American model) and the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model (the European model). The three models are summarized in the following table (JUSE 2017; NIST 2017 and EFQM 2017):

Model	Performance Criteria (and Weightings)		Points	Assessment Perspectives
Deming Prize	Basic Categories: Management policies (20%), new product development and/or work process innovation (20%), maintenance and improvement of product (20%), establishment of management systems (10%), collection and analysis of quality information (15%) and human resources development (15%)		100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness Consistency Continuity Thoroughness
	Outstanding Total Quality Management Activities (e.g. top management vision, remarkable improvement in organizational performance and creation of values for the customers)		5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectiveness Reproducibility Innovativeness
	Roles of Top Management: Understanding of and enthusiasm for Total Quality Management, establishing and deploying policies, reviewing activities, etc.		100	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall
MBNQA	Leadership: Senior leadership (70), governance and societal responsibilities (50)		120	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach Deployment Learning Integration
	Strategic Planning: Strategy development (45), strategy implementation (40)		85	
	Customer Focus: Voice of the customer (40), customer engagement (45)		85	
	Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management: Measurement, analysis and improvement of organizational performance (45); knowledge management; information; and information technology (45)		90	
	Workforce Focus: Workforce environment (40), workforce engagement (45)		85	
	Operations Focus: Work processes (45), operational effectiveness (40)		85	
	Results: Product and process results (120), customer-focused results (85), workforce-focused results (85), leadership and governance results (80), financial and market results (80)		450	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Levels Trends Comparisons Integration
EFQM Excellence Model	Enablers	Leadership (10)	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approach Deployment Assessment and refinement
		Strategy (10)		
		People (10)		
		Partnerships & resources (10)		
		Processes, products and services (10)		
	Results	Customer results (15)	50	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevance & usability Performance
		People results (10)		
		Society results (10)		
		Business results (15)		

Which Model Suits Best for Qatar?

The EFQM Excellence Model seems to be the most appropriate choice for Qatar for the following reasons:

- It is based on eight fundamental concepts (see the first figure in the appendix), most of which (e.g. creating a sustainable future, developing organizational capability, harnessing creativity and innovation, succeeding through the talent of people and sustaining outstanding results) are directly related to Qatar’s 2030 national vision.

- It uses nine criteria (see the second figure in the appendix), most of which (people; partnerships and resources; processes, products and services; people results; society results; business results) are directly related to the four pillars of Qatar’s 2030 national vision (human development, social development, economic development and environmental development)
- It is based on a dynamic assessment framework and a powerful management tool (called RADAR) that provides a structured approach to questioning the performance of an organization (see the last two figures in the appendix)
- It is adopted by 42.1% of the quality awards in the world, versus 25.2% for MBNQA and 7.5% for the Deming Prize (Dale et al. 2016)
- Most GCC countries are adopting this model.
- It is the most recent model; therefore, it incorporates the strengths of the other two models and adds more competencies.
- It has significantly influenced the other two models; the Deming Prize and the MBNQA, in their current versions presented above, are much closer to the EFQM Excellence Model than to their original versions.
- It is flexible enough to be applied to any organization, whether it is from the public or private sector, manufacturing or services, big or small, for-profit or non-profit, etc.
- Its hosting organization (EFQM) provides a variety of training programs on excellence and assessment.

A Proposed Framework

It goes without saying that any proposed framework for this award will undergo improvements from year to year. A draft framework may consider the following ideas:

Governing Body

The starting point of the award is a **Governing Body** that initiates the award, formulates its policy and directs its affairs. This body can be created by the Ministry of Commerce, the Chamber of Commerce or any prominent organization. Award governing bodies in other countries have been established by some leading organizations that have been acting as the guardians of quality and excellence in their respective geographical region/area or trading block. Qatar University is probably most qualified to engage a similar role thanks to its visibility in the community and the prominence of its human resources. Such an initiative is perfectly in line with one of its four Key Performance Areas, namely to “identify and meet the needs and aspirations of society”.

The Governing Body, whether established by Qatar University or any other organization, will expand from year to year to include members from the government, the industry, society, and any other influential organizations in Qatar. It is expected to grow to become a **Center for Excellence** and its scope to be a **National Excellence Program**. Indeed, a rigorous national excellence program is needed to show Qatari organizations why they should be excellent and how they can pursue excellence. It will raise awareness among Qatari organizations and will mentor them in their excellence journey by providing advice, training and any support needed. The award is also expected to evolve to become the Qatar National Award. A major achievement would be to create a **National Excellence Day** where the award is granted by the **Emir**. The involvement of the country’s leaders in this award would provide a major fillip.

General Considerations

- Although it is recommended to start with only one award, it is possible to expand the idea later to several categories (e.g. Diamond, Gold and Silver) and to specific sectors (manufacturing, service, small business, education, healthcare, and nonprofit). Excellence certificates can also be introduced to be conferred on to the top-ranked organizations that have not made it to the award itself.
- Some adjustments may be needed to the criteria of the EFQM model in order to further meet the needs of Qatar; one example is the introduction of Qatarization as a sixth sub-criterion in the “people” criterion: *“Qatari nationals are being provided with appropriate job opportunities and their talents are being nurtured”*.
- A fee can be imposed on all applying organizations in order to secure the necessary budget for this award. The money will be used for administrative expenditures such as training and paying the assessors, advertising the award, developing and maintaining a website, launching awareness campaigns, organizing awarding ceremonies and the like.
- It may be necessary to form, for each cycle, an Award Council composed of some of the members of the Governing Council (satisfying the no-conflict-of-interest condition), in addition to other members (from the government, the community and the previous winners of the award) designated by the Governing Body. The Award Council will be the jury that decides the award winner(s).

Application

- All Qatari organizations (companies, divisions, departments, etc.) can apply for this award. However, winners may not re-apply before a certain number of years from the year in which they won the award.
- The award may be granted every Gregorian year. The deadline for application submissions may be two months after the end of the year and the award(s) may be conferred no later than four months after the submission.
- Each applicant needs to submit a document that may not exceed 30,000 words, excluding appendices (no limit on the length of the appendices), where applicants demonstrate their performance in each of the sub-criteria of the award. The applicant may decide not to include confidential information in the submission, and may instead refer to it and make it available to the assessors later during the site visit.

Assessment

- Each applicant is evaluated by two assessors who will necessarily be EFQM certified. An assessor may not be assigned to the same applicant for more than one cycle. All assessors have to sign a non-disclosure agreement, in addition to asserting, in writing, that they do not have any relationship with the applicant that may prevent them from making an unbiased judgment.
- The assessment is based on both the submitted document and the site visit.
- The site visit takes an average of three days, during which the assessors ensure the accuracy of the information included in the submission. The assessors can request to interview any person they choose and can have access to any document they wish to see. However, they are not allowed to take any documents, other than the submission, outside the organization.
- Based on the information collected from the submission and the site visit, the assessors write a report where they provide an executive summary of their assessment, including the major strengths and areas for improvement for the organization. The core of the report includes the

strengths and areas for improvement for each of the sub-criteria of the award. The assessors also complete the scorebook, where they give a score for each sub-criterion and criterion in addition to a global score for the organization. The scoring is necessarily based on the RADAR (Results, Approach, Deployment, Assessment and Review) assessment tool.

- The assessors defend their assessment in front of the Award Council, whose members are responsible for evaluating the assessment and ensuring accuracy, truthfulness, consistency and harmony.
- The Award Council may review an assessment more than once and may decide to redo the assessment (totally or partially) if there is evidence of major problems that may bias the final decision.

Awarding

- A final review is undertaken for all organizations whose score is around 5% lower than the highest score. The Award Council can call for a showdown between the assessors of these organizations or can even conduct a (partial or total) re-assessment in order to maximize fairness and minimize bias.
- The members of the Award Council that make the final decision are only the ones who have participated in all final review sessions (with no exceptions).
- The score of the final review is definite and is the one that determines the winner.
- The Governing Body holds an Award Ceremony at the end of each cycle. The date for this ceremony can vary from year to year (depending on the availability of the people who will attend it) but may not take place later than June.

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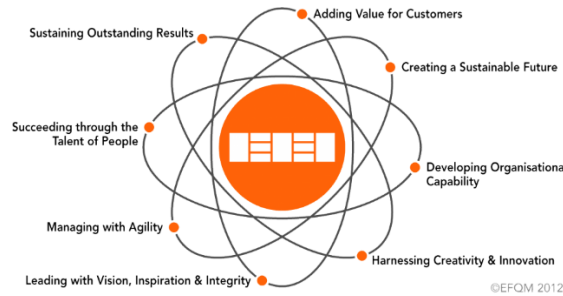
Appendix:

European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) Excellence Model

The **EFQM Excellence Model** (EFQM 2013) allows people to understand the cause-and-effect relationships between what their organization does and the results it achieves. The model comprises a set of three integrated components: the eight fundamental concepts of excellence, the nine criteria and the assessment by RADAR logic.

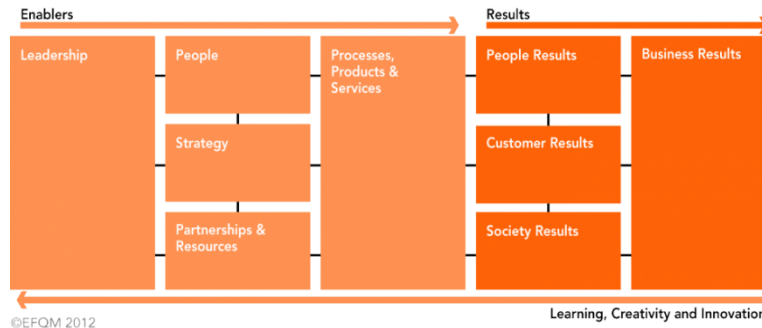
The Eight Fundamental Concepts of Excellence

These are the underlying principles that constitute the essential foundation of achieving sustainable excellence for any organization.



The Nine Criteria of the Model

These provide a framework for understanding which levers we need to pull in order to achieve the results we want. The model is a cause-and-effect diagram.



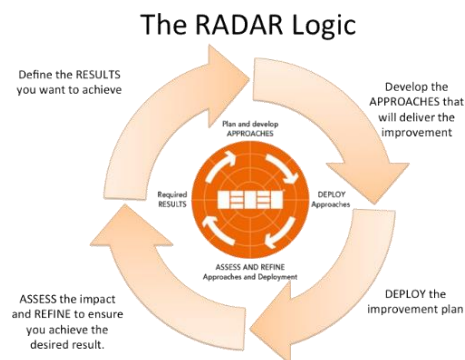
The nine criteria are broken into 32 sub-criteria:

1. Leadership
 - a. Leaders develop the mission, vision, values and ethics, and act as role models.
 - b. Leaders define, monitor, review and drive the improvement of the organization’s management system and performance.
 - c. Leaders engage with external stakeholders.
 - d. Leaders reinforce a culture of excellence with the organization’s people.
 - e. Leaders ensure that the organization is flexible and manages change effectively.
2. Strategy
 - a. Strategy is based on understanding the needs and expectations of both the stakeholders and the external environment.
 - b. Strategy is based on understanding internal performance and capabilities.
 - c. Strategy and supporting policies are developed, reviewed and updated.
 - d. Strategy and supporting policies are communicated, implemented and monitored.
3. People

- a. People’s plans support the organization’s strategy.
 - b. People’s knowledge and capabilities are developed.
 - c. People are aligned, involved and empowered.
 - d. People communicate effectively throughout the organization.
 - e. People are rewarded, acknowledged and cared for.
4. Partnerships and Resources
- a. Partners and suppliers are managed for sustainable benefit.
 - b. Finances are managed to secure sustained success.
 - c. Buildings, equipment, materials and natural resources are managed in a sustainable way.
 - d. Technology is managed to support the delivery of strategy.
 - e. Information and knowledge are managed to support effective decision making and to build the organization’s capabilities.
5. Processes, Products and Services
- a. Processes are designed and managed to optimize stakeholder values.
 - b. Products and services are developed to create optimum value for customers.
 - c. Products and services are effectively promoted and marketed.
 - d. Products and services are produced, delivered and managed.
 - e. Customer relationships are managed and enhanced.
6. Customer Results
- a. Perceptions
 - b. Performance indicators
7. People Results
- a. Perceptions
 - b. Performance indicators
8. Society Results
- a. Perceptions
 - b. Performance indicators
9. Business Results
- a. Business outcomes
 - b. Business performance indicators

The Assessment by RADAR logic

As assessment is essential within the philosophy of EFQM (what gets measured get improved), the EFQM excellence model uses the RADAR logic as a dynamic assessment framework and a powerful management tool that provides a structured approach to questioning the performance of an organization.



When assessing the enablers, assessors look at the approaches adopted, how they have been deployed and how the organization assesses and refines their efficiency and effectiveness over time. The assessors also make sure that the improvements are being implemented as a result of measurement and learning (closing the loop). When assessing the results, assessors first look

at their relevance to the organization's strategy and how useful they are in reviewing progress against these key objectives. The assessors then look at the performance of the results themselves.

