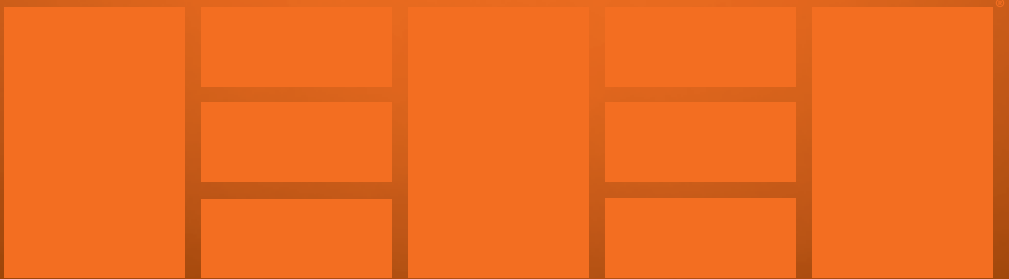


# DETERMINING EXCELLENCE



## Taking the first steps – a questionnaire approach



# EFQM SHARES WHAT WORKS

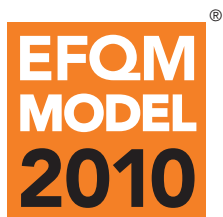
EFQM is a not for profit membership foundation. For the past twenty years we have shared what works between our member organisations as a way to help them implement their strategies. EFQM brings together organisations striving for Sustainable Excellence.

Through our network of members comprising private and public organisations of every size and sector, many active around the world, EFQM applies its know-how and extracts outstanding approaches by engaging with executives and front-line managers.

EFQM is the custodian of the EFQM Excellence model, a non-prescriptive framework that can be used to gain a holistic view of any organisation regardless of size, sector or maturity. Over the past 20 years, the EFQM Excellence Model has been a blueprint for EFQM members and organisations across and beyond Europe to develop a culture of excellence, access good practices, drive innovation and improve their results. Those organisations have become more attentive to the needs of their stakeholders. They have learned how to learn, innovate and improve their overall performance. Their leaders have increased their abilities to take informed decisions and to understand the drivers of their strategy. Many of those organisations have acted as role models for other organisations, winning management practices have been re-used and adapted through EFQM "sharing what works". This has led to a significant reduction of waste, increased economic efficiencies and improved societal relations.

EFQM is now actively helping to prepare a new generation of business leaders by offering training and development opportunities built on practice-based learning and exchange between organisations. Our exchanges are underpinned by shared tools for assessment, calibrated during two decades of use within companies and as the basis for discerning the EFQM Excellence Award, Europe's most prestigious award for organisations.

Look for the stamp to ensure you are using the present version of the EFQM Excellence Model.



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# Introduction

When you start a road trip, before starting your engine and deciding the route to be taken, you first need to know your current position. When you consider starting a journey towards Excellence, it is exactly the same: before selecting and implementing improvement actions, you first need to have a structured picture of your organisation in order to comprehend your current level of Excellence.

This Questionnaire has been designed to help any organisation determine its position against a framework of Excellence, boost start and select priorities. It is based on a tried and tested methodology for assessing organisations on a number of aspects that together define excellence in terms of the organisation's capability and achievements.

If you are at an early stage of your Excellence journey, this Questionnaire is the best supporting tool to conduct your first self-assessment: completing the Questionnaire will help your organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities. Furthermore, the Questionnaire

considers excellence in a wide sense and is not limited to considering the aspects of quality management systems.

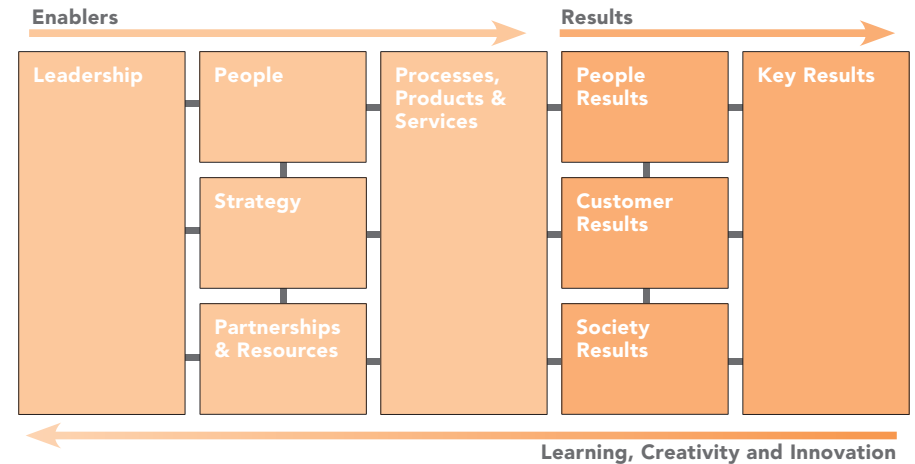
The Questionnaire consists of 49 equally weighted and balanced questions but it is realised that simply asking 49 questions can never provide the complete picture of an organisation's achievement and potential. It does, however, provide a useful starting point and indicator for subsequent activities

By assessing your organisation, it will allow you to identify the "Strengths" and the "areas for improvement" of your organisation and subsequently decide objectively where focus improvement efforts.

We wish you the best with the completion of this Questionnaire. EFQM and its national partner organisations stay at your entire disposal if you need any further support during your self-assessment initiative. For additional info about EFQM and its national partner organisation, visit our website: [www.efqm.org](http://www.efqm.org)

# About the EFQM Excellence Model

The Questionnaire is structured around the following nine aspects of Excellence. These nine aspects make up the criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model. This model was developed by the EFQM, and is now used by organisation in all European countries and in many other countries worldwide, as a tool for assessing an organisation maturity, improving its performance and gaining recognition.



The EFQM Excellence Model represented in the diagram above is a non-prescriptive framework based on nine criteria. Five of these are 'Enablers' and four are 'Results'. The 'Enabler' criteria cover what an organisation does. The 'Results' criteria cover what an organisation achieves and how it does it. 'Results' are caused by 'Enablers' and 'Enablers' are improved using feedback from 'Results'.

The arrows emphasise the dynamic nature of the Model, showing innovation and learning helping to improve the Enablers that in turn lead to improved Results.

Each of the nine criteria has a definition, which explains the high level meaning of that criterion.

To develop the high level meaning further each criterion is supported by a number of criterion parts. Criterion parts are statements that describe in further detail what, typically, can be seen in excellent organisations and should be considered in the course of an assessment.

Finally, below each criterion part are guidance points. Many of these guidance points are directly linked to the Fundamental Concepts mentioned earlier. Use of these guidance points is not mandatory nor are the lists exhaustive but are intended to further exemplify the meaning of the criterion part.

## Using the Questionnaire as part of an assessment

Completing the Questionnaire will:

- Help your organisation identify its current position and determine future directions and priorities.
- Allow comparisons with the achievements of other organisations.
- Encourage your organisation to monitor its progress on a regular basis.
- Assess whether all members of a management team have the same view of the organisation's achievements and weaknesses.
- Create a focus for agreeing improvement priorities.
- Ensure that the organisation is not over-stressed by too many improvement actions.

The Questionnaire can be completed in several ways :

- by an individual to help an understanding of the EFQM Excellence Model and to produce a personal assessment of the organisation.
- by individuals separately and then collated to determine both the average score and the areas of greatest divergence in opinion.

- as a group exercise where the organisation's Strengths and Areas for Improvement

Questionnaires can be one of the least resource intensive approaches to perform a self-assessment and can be completed very quickly, provided an existing and proven questionnaire is used. It is an excellent method for gathering information on the perceptions of people within an organisation.

Other techniques exist to form a more objective and comprehensive view of the organisation but should only be used when the gains outweigh the efforts; and are usually more appropriate for organisations that are further on in their journey to excellence

Questionnaires provide also a method for involving key members of the staff and creating awareness. To do this, it can be complemented with Assessment Workshops.

The following figure helps visualise how different Self-Assessment techniques address can be used. This can help you to decide if the questionnaire is the right approach for your organisation

Maturity ↑	<b>Advanced</b>	One or two day Assessment by one external expert		In depth assessment by a group of external assessors
	<b>On the way</b>	Workshop with management	Other combinations	
	<b>Starting the Journey</b>	Basic questionnaire circulated to Management	Customised Questionnaire to management	Customised questionnaire largely distributed to staff complemented by a workshop with Top management
		<b>Low effort</b>	<b>Medium effort</b>	<b>High effort</b>
		Efforts requested →		

## What to do after

The self-assessment process can be divided in the following main stages:

- Getting prepared to self-assessment
- Conducting self-assessment
- Communicating self-assessment outcomes
- Prioritising and selecting improvement actions (typically 3)
- Planning and realisation of improvement actions
- Follow-up of improvement actions

Such an improvement cycle can be supported by applying the Committed to Excellence programme

### Committed to excellence

To achieve sustainable success, the first step is to implement a structured approach to continuously improve the performance of your organisation. In order to support organisation with this initiative, EFQM has developed a programme name "Committed to Excellence".

The EFQMs Committed to Excellence programme is developed to introduce you and your organisation (or unit) to business excellence. This action-based learning project focuses on identifying, prioritising and implementing improvement projects, whilst involving your team.

This programme will allow your organisation to:

- Bring you constructive feedback from an experienced external validator
- Identify readily useable projects & action oriented feedback
- Actively engage your team to improve results
- Provide your people with appreciation for their work
- Offer you an international recognised certification
- Grant you specific progress projects
- Demonstrate to your stakeholders that you are a successful & trustworthy organisation

Any organisation or business unit can apply at any time, regardless of their location, size or sector.

The Committed to Excellence Programme is a simple & easy step forward for organisations or units who are just beginning to explore ways to improve their business approach. A typical profile of an applicant organisation looks as follows:

- They have experience of introducing improvement initiatives but change is managed ad-hoc, now interested in taking an organisation-wide perspective
- They measure their performance using mainly internal measures with little use of external comparisons as the basis for target setting
- They have little experience in the use of the EFQM Excellence Model & are now looking for a low risk way of testing the appropriateness for their organisation

### Stage 1: Self Assessment

The first stage involves you assessing your organisation against the 9 criteria of the EFQM Excellence Model so as to gain an understanding of your current performance. Based on this feedback you will define, prioritise and plan several actions to improve your performance.

### Stage 2: The Site Visit & Validation

6 to 9 months after the self-assessment, you will demonstrate the successful deployment of at least 3 improvement plans. Therefore, an independent, experienced and external validator/ assessor will come to your premises and provide you with constructive feedback on your performance against the improvement actions. Successful organisations will then receive the EFQM Committed to Excellence Certificate.

## Further readings

To help organisations to continuously improve and achieve higher levels of performance, EFQM assesses their performance, provides them with networking and mutual learning experience, offers education and learning opportunities, recognises their achievements and supports their implementation of best in class tools and practices.

All of this is achieved through the use and application of the EFQM model and the underpinning Fundamental Concepts.

### Our Offerings

#### EFQM Assessment

EFQM customised assessments provides you with an external perspective to understand where you are today and how you can improve. A unique feature of EFQM assessments is that it gives you a clear indication of which actions drive results. Through EFQM qualified teams of experienced assessors and/or managers from peer organisations, we present you with external feedback & recommendations that will assist you in effectively implementing strategies and instilling a culture of excellence.

#### EFQM Recognition

EFQM recognition schemes are much than just recognition. They create a desire for your employees to learn, improve and drive an organisation towards sustainable success. The strength of EFQM recognition lies in the simple and motivating process which provides you with a blueprint to improve results in a sustainable way, while providing international appreciation and acknowledgment.

EFQM works in partnership with many national organisations within and beyond Europe and licenses a number of organisations to deliver training courses related to the EFQM Excellence Model. Please refer to our website, [www.efqm.org](http://www.efqm.org), to find out how to contact our partners or to participate in the EFQM activities described above.

#### EFQM Training

EFQM Trainings are driven by a common need from our members to learn assessment and leadership skills. Through our 20 years of experience and together with our members and partners, we have the knowledge and expertise to create and deliver high level trainings and real-life assignments to develop tomorrow's leaders.

#### EFQM Sharing

EFQM offers unique sharing opportunities to its members. We help you to leverage new sources of learning by creating the conditions for collaborative exchange across and outside the organisation. Our members value the experience of their peers, and the insights offered in the spirit of mutual improvement. EFQM maintains trust by safeguarding confidentiality and applying its expertise to the selection of organisations that can learn from one another.

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