CENTRE FOR ORGANISATIONAL EXCELLENCE RESEARCH

COER NEWS
(October 2010)

A newsletter to inform you of COER's research findings and initiatives in organisational excellence, benchmarking, and performance improvement

Welcome to this issue of COER NEWS, the free newsletter produced by the Centre for Organisational Excellence Research, New Zealand.

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The Centre for Organisational Excellence Research describes the name of the group within which the following entities operate:

***COER, Massey University** is the RESEARCH arm and focuses on "Acquiring Knowledge". It administers doctoral research programmes in business excellence and benchmarking.*
***COER Limited** is the CONSULTANCY arm and focuses on "Applying Knowledge". It provides consultancy services in business excellence and benchmarking.*
***BPIR.com Limited** is the KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER arm and focuses on "Best Practice Sharing" through its website.*

Dr Robin Mann is the founder/director of the above entities.
COER Limited and BPIR.com Limited are independent of Massey University.

All parts of COER assist in disseminating COER's work through seminars, conference presentations, and a range of publications.

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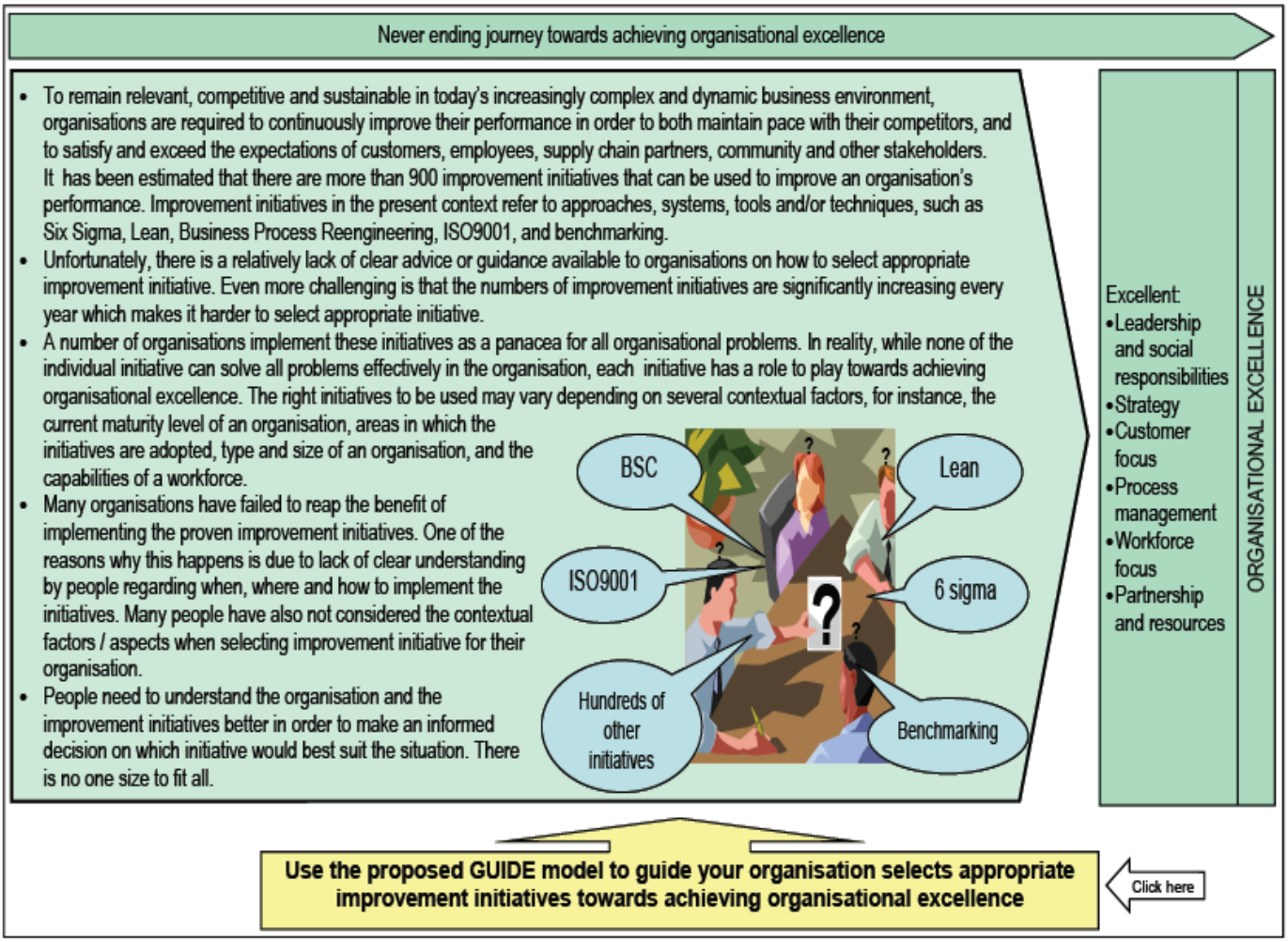
1. A GUIDE Model for Selecting Improvement Initiatives to Achieve Organisational Excellence.

It is easy to have a vision and a desire for organisational improvement and "world-class performance" but, in reality, how can this be achieved? How have organisations achieved world-class status? How do organisations select appropriate improvement initiatives to achieve organisational excellence? Is there a road-map that can be followed?

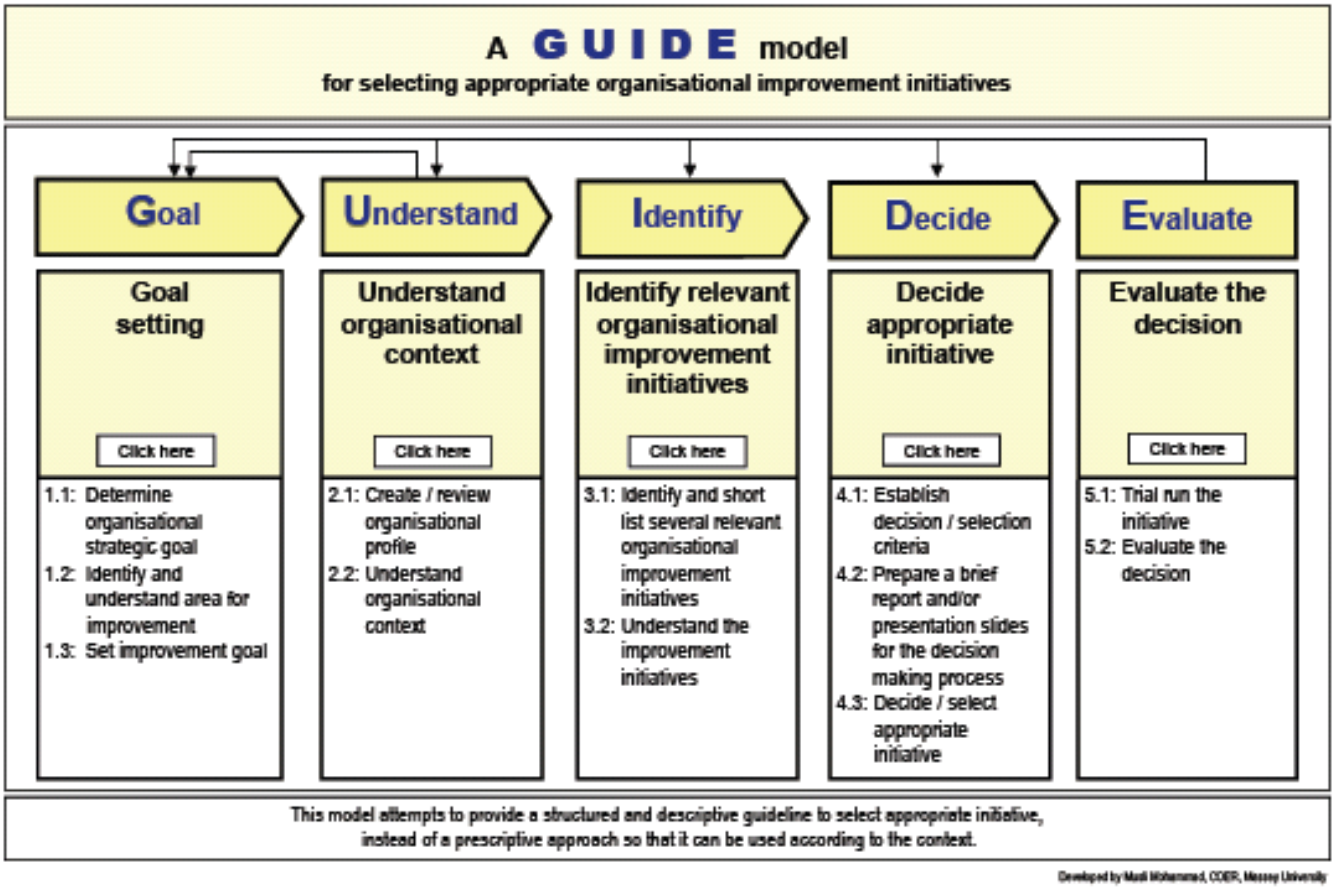
These are precisely the questions being researched by Musli Mohammad, a PhD Candidate at COER. His research method consists of studying world-class organisations (i.e. those that have won business excellence awards) and seeing if there is any commonality in the initiatives they have implemented or in how they have been implemented. While his research has primarily been based on studying organisations in New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia, he is interested in the views of anyone who may have insight on this.

His research has enabled him to identify some key steps and considerations that have been followed by successful organisations. This information has been captured in a GUIDE model, which can be used by organisations to determine *what to do next?*

The need for a GUIDE model is explained below:



The prototype GUIDE model is shown below:



For each of the five stages of GUIDE, there are instructions to help users to select the right initiative based on their particular circumstances.

The next step of the research is to validate and refine the GUIDE model, and this is where we would like your help. All practitioners, managers, executives, consultants and/or academicians who have been involved in the selection and/or implementation of organisational improvement initiatives are invited to participate.

Musli Mohammad at the 40th International Conference on Computers and Industrial Engineering. Musli was presenting a paper at that conference entitled "The right improvement initiative for the right situation: A contextual and systems approach". Japan, July 2010.

In return for providing you with the full GUIDE model, we would like your opinion on whether you think the model is useful or not, and how it might be improved. **For a copy of the model and questionnaire, please e-mail Musli Mohammad, PhD candidate, COER, at muslimailbox@gmail.com. Thank you!**

2. The Role of Organisational and National Culture in Business Improvement Initiatives.

In June, Jürgen P. Wagner, PhD Candidate, COER, won the Harry Boer Highly Commended Student Paper Award at the 17th International EurOMA conference for his paper *Beyond universalism: Continuous improvement in its socio-cultural context*.

Jürgen, on the right, receiving his certificate!

EurOMA is the annual conference of the European Operations Management Association and brings together scholars from around the world. This year's overarching theme was "Managing Operations in Service Economies" but the more than 300 presentations spanned a wide topical spectrum in Operations and Quality Management. In his paper, Jürgen presented a novel and innovative approach to investigate the simultaneous role of national and organisational culture for practices of continuous improvement in organisations. This is part of an international case-based PhD research study that is currently done in collaboration with, among other organisations, Toyota. The principle objectives were to better understand the mechanisms and conditions under which an organisational culture of continuous improvement can be created and maintained in different socio-cultural environments; in other words, unpacking quality culture.

So far the multiple-case research has revealed that a "quality culture" may take different shapes in different cultures, but be based on the same fundamental and mutually reinforcing factors. These are a conducive institutional environment; a corporate philosophy that is mandatory for everyone in the organisation; and, finally and possibly most importantly, organisational practices that are consistent with the employees' self-motives. These self-motives can be understood in the framework of the wider national culture in which the organisation is embedded.

A poster describing Jürgen's research:

The Problem

- A "Quality Culture" is often claimed to be at the heart of initiatives of continuous improvement such as Lean, Six Sigma or TQM.
- It is clear from past research that both national and organisational cultures, considered independently, have an impact on the characteristics and the effectiveness of continuous improvement in organisations.
- However, the *simultaneous* role of these two levels of cultures is far less well understood. To date, answers to questions like "Can a strong organisational culture override the effects of national culture?" remain tentative.
- This international research project uses a novel approach to investigate the conditions and mechanism of how a "Quality Culture" is established in different cultural environments.

The approach

- Is based on multiple, matched case studies in different cultural settings with otherwise comparable characteristics.
- Within each case study, it makes use of a sequence of interlinking steps to investigate the connection between the interpretations of continuous improvement practices through the employees and the organisational culture.
- Toyota is the main partner in this project. Toyota has been at the forefront of the development of continuous improvement for decades and Toyota's organisational culture can arguably be considered prototypical of a "Quality Culture".
- Despite design issues that were widely debated in the media recently, Toyota has shown an exceptional level of cooperation and openness in this independent research project.

1. In-depth case studies of matched workgroups

Figure 1: Multiple-case study concept

2. Sequence of interlinking methodological steps within each case

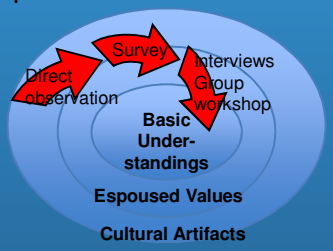


Figure 2: Illustration of research sequence using an 'onion' model of culture

3. Data sources

	Step 1: Questionnaire (census)	Step 2: Interviews and observations	Step 3: Group workshop
Research focus	Breadth ⟷ Depth		
Principal purpose	i) Gain a tentative understanding of the organisational culture and how it relates to the wider societal culture	i) Understand operational practices and where continuous improvement takes place ii) Identify emerging themes that can help characterise the organisational culture	i) Develop an understanding of the shared cultural assumptions of the organisational members, and how they relate to continuous improvement in the organisation.

Table 1: Principle purpose of different data sources

Expected Outcomes

- A better understanding of conditions and mechanisms of how a culture of continuous improvement can be embedded in different socio-cultural settings.
- An appreciation of the key aspects of continuous improvement practices that are universal irrespective of the investigated national cultures.
- Workable advice that can help organisations develop cultures of continuous improvement in both an international and domestic context.

For more information on this project, contact Jürgen 'Phil' Wagner, at J.P.Wagner@massey.ac.nz.

3. What Are the Triggers for Business Excellence?

In January 2010, Grant Regan joined COER's PhD team. Grant, who already has a PhD, wants to do another one! Grant describes himself as a life-long professional student and coach of Organizational Development (OD) and Effective Change Management Solutions. He currently conducts Organizational Development contracts for Zayed University's Institute for Community Engagement in Abu Dhabi.

Grant's research is to focus on the UAE, Singapore and Malaysia – researching the triggers of business excellence. Therefore, what triggers an organisation to follow the business excellence path? Is it due to the business environment in which an organisation works? Is it due to the drive of the CEO? Do government interventions influence organisations? Is it because an organisation has reached a crisis point?

Grant's research is very important for capacity building within regions or countries. If we understand the triggers, it may be possible to activate them and encourage more organisations to follow a business excellence path.

Grant sharing ideas with
Mohamed Al Sabbagh, Abu Dhabi Municipality

At the moment Grant is taking time to understand the business environment and culture of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) before focusing on the triggers. Here is an excerpt from one of Grant's recent research reports:

Decision-making excellence in the UAE has roots that are 5,000 years old, blended with a modern, rapidly growing world economic power that is affecting a fast-emerging, globally influential culture. The UAE has become a pivot point of the world, and not only culturally or as a "pit stop" for airlines and tourists. It is full of specialized pivotal conative triggers to track, and from which to learn. What is perhaps surprising to most foreigners is that the UAE wants to be the Arab Switzerland. As an example, it is slowly gaining and spreading its influence throughout the Middle East and North Africa; this is because of Abu Dhabi's new brand. Its new 2010 brand is simply the word "Respect". We need to pay attention to, and "respect and learn" the depth and power of this one word.

This important culture is far from simple. It has a unique blend of the decision sciences and decision arts from the combined desert Bedu, gulf pearl divers, oasis date farmers, and internationally orientated camel and dhow merchants, whose decision-making qualities and strategies incredibly still affect the exponentially and fast-changing UAE. Understanding this complex culture is our challenge.

To study the surprising depth and width of this decision-making culture, this research investigates not only the decisions of this ancient culture, since this affects decisions in 2010, but the fast-changing decision-making environment of the last five years. Most Emirati families recognize and feel this cultural depth daily. There is a 5,000 year falaj still in operation. Deep family traditions have changed little. Even the country's royalty dates back as far as British royalty. Blend this depth with leading-edge 2010 technology, and a businessman's personal dilemma of going from driving a donkey cart to driving a BMW 750i. It can be over whelming.

The purpose of this research is to seek replicable pearls of wisdom and next practice solutions from benchmarked corporate organizations of excellence. The results, while limited to the UAE and Malayan/Singapore models of excellence, will add to our global organizational excellence knowledge base. These solutions, in turn, will assist organizations as they strive toward higher levels of performance. Ultimately, these solutions should promote the continuing drive toward global standards of excellence and an uptake in excellence award applications.

This research has been designed to data drill much deeper than usual into the conative triggers that actually make excellence happen. The Middle East will be the prime focus, and South East Asia as a form of an experienced control or collective organizational excellence benchmark. The research will be accomplished via a data collection net matrix and the direct tracking of excellence patterns through observations of published documentation, interviews and virtual interviews.

The research is limited in scope and perspective. First, it is limited by geographic region and numbers, simply due to budget restrictions. However, further limited access to subjects and data is similar throughout the world, since trade secrets to quality uniqueness usually only appear when a corporation has already moved on to a new innovative springboard to excellence. But success does leave clues, and these clues can become springboards to new levels of excellence in other organizations. Pearls of excellence can also often be found in smaller packages like the UAE. Toyota and Google can still learn from the Facebook and Twitter upstarts of the world. Just like we all can. This research is to discover these pearls of wisdom and next practice solutions. It is learning from benchmarks, large or small, that make the next step to quality happen. This is our quest.

For more information on Grant's research or to correspond with your own thoughts, please e-mail him at Grant.Regan@zu.ac.ae.

4. PhD Opportunities in Best Practice and Business Excellence Research.

Are you interested in conducting research that will help organisations improve their performance? Research can be conducted in all facets of quality and organisational improvement. Examples of potential projects, as well as information on how to apply, can be found on the COER website www.coer.org.nz/research-opportunities.

The study fee for domestic and international students is only approximately NZ$5,000 per year at Massey University, provided you are prepared to live in New Zealand for the majority of the time you are studying. However, if you are an international student and wish to study whilst living in your own country, international fees will apply (approx NZ$27,000 per annum). PhD's at New Zealand universities are highly valued and comparable in status to PhDs at Australian and British Universities.

Massey University is New Zealand's largest University with over 35,000 students.

5. Eighty-Six Countries with National Quality/Business Excellence Awards.

Research conducted by COER Limited revealed that 86 countries have a National Quality/Business Excellence Award. Some of the interesting statistics are:

- 8 countries follow an exact copy of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence
- 31 follow an exact copy of the EFQM Excellence Model
- 9 follow a tailored version of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence
- 9 follow a tailored version of the EFQM Excellence Model
- 18 have unique models
- 12 have model based on a combination of other models
- 10 are unknown
- 9 countries have more than one model that is promoted.

This research was conducted on behalf of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) who administer the Baldrige National Quality Program. Judging from this research, business excellence is alive and well! **Full details of the awards are shown at www.BPIR.com in the Latest News section (Business Excellence category).**

6. The Impact of Business Excellence/Quality Awards: An International Study.

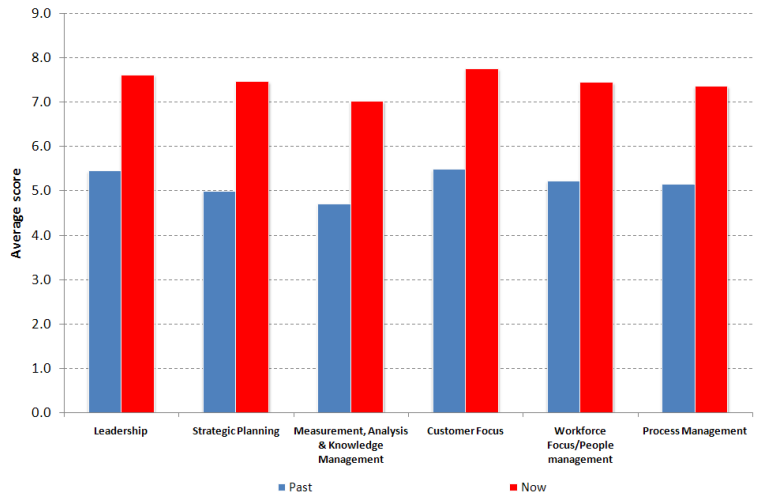
In April 2010, COER Limited completed a research project to identify the value and impact of business excellence frameworks in Asia (the research was commissioned by the Asian Productivity Organisation). The research aimed to identify the relevance of business excellence for long-term competitiveness and sustainability, and to determine what, if any, changes to the frameworks were required in terms of their design or application. In addition, the research aimed to explore how companies applied business excellence concepts and practices and the assistance they required on their journey to business excellence.

The research focused on five countries: India, Japan, Republic of China, Singapore and Thailand. Participant organisations were from the private sector and ranged from early adopters of business excellence to award winners. Research data was collected by means of a comprehensive on-line survey, discussion groups and interviews with award winners. In total, 74 companies completed the survey, 21 discussion groups were held, and 13 award winner interviews were undertaken.

Workshops in Thailand and India, and interview with TXC senior management in Taiwan.

Some of the responses to the survey questions are shown below:

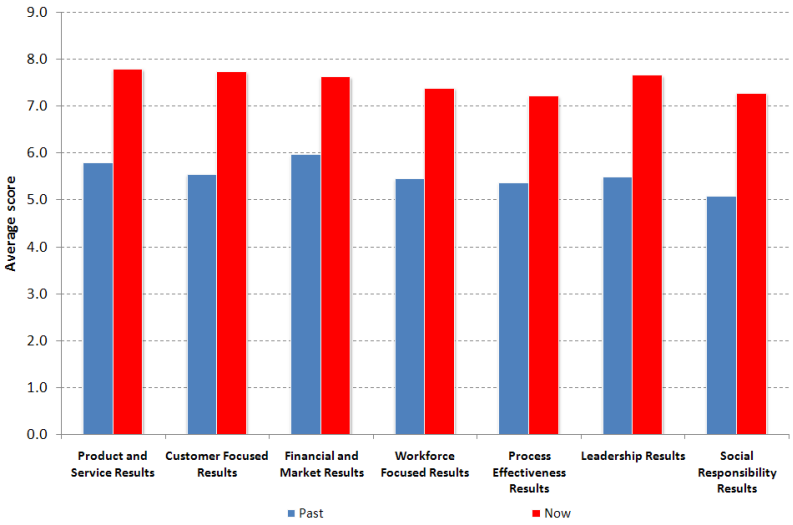
Graph 1 shows the performance of the surveyed organisations before they began their business excellence journey, and how they rate their performance today in comparison to the industry average for the *enablers* of business excellence. It shows for all the business enablers (management systems and processes) that their maturity/capability has improved. Prior to following a business excellence path most organisations reported their enablers were average in industry (blue bars) and after business excellence they were well above industry average (red bars).



Note: 0 = very poor, 2 = below average, 5 = average in industry, 8 = above average, 10 = world class.

Graph 1: Rating of practices, processes and systems in the "past" and "now" expressed as an average rating of responses (Responses = 69)

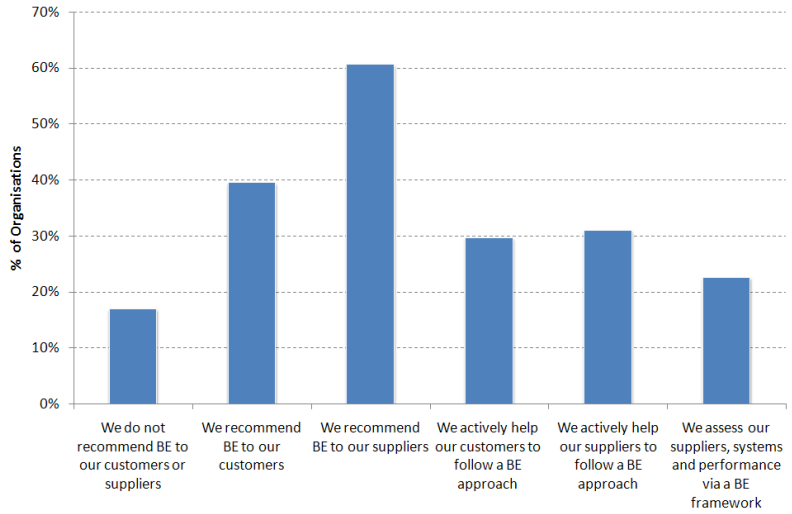
Graph 2 shows the performance of the surveyed organisations before they began their business excellence journey, and how they rate their performance today in comparison to industry average for *business results*. It shows for all the business results that performance is reported to have improved. Prior to following a business excellence path most organisations reported their performance was average in industry (blue bars) and after business excellence their performance was well above industry average (red bars).



Note: 0 = very poor, 2 = below average, 5 = average in industry, 8 = above average, 10 = world class.

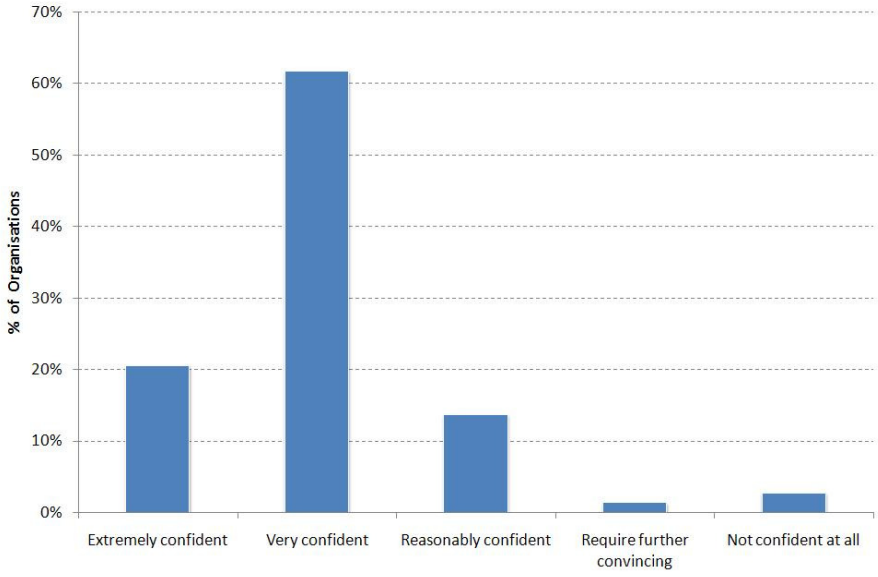
Graph 2: Rating of business results in the "past" and "now" expressed as an average rating of responses (Responses = 68)

Graph 3 shows the percentage of organisations that encourage their customers and suppliers to use a business excellence approach to improve the whole supply chain. The graph shows that organisations place greater emphasis on encouraging their suppliers to follow a business excellence path than their customers. However, for those organisations that actively assist their suppliers and customers to follow a business excellence path, their emphasis is equal with approximately 30% helping their suppliers/customers, and 20% undertaking business excellence assessments of their suppliers.



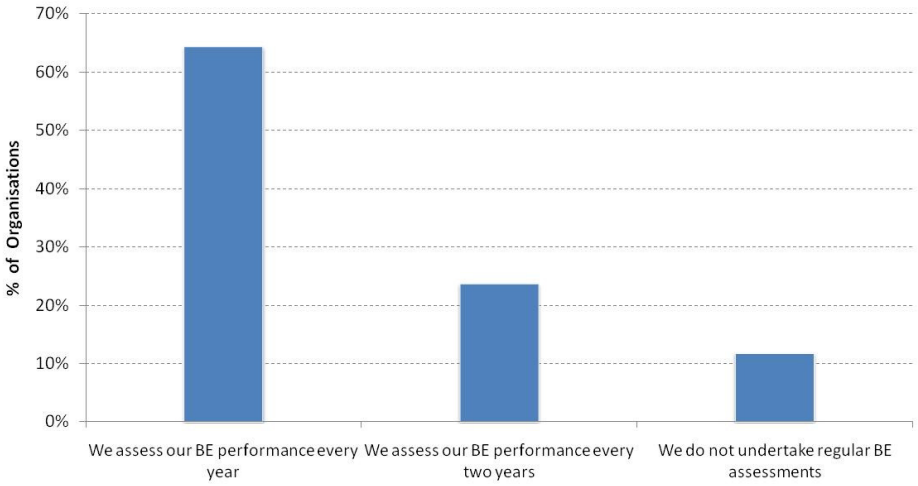
Graph 3: Recommending of business excellence to suppliers and customers expressed as a percentage of responses (Responses = 71)

Graph 4 shows the level of confidence the respondents had in the design of the business excellence framework used in their country, i.e. whether they consider it to be based on sound business principles. The graph shows that the majority of respondents (80%) are very confident or extremely confident with the design of the framework.



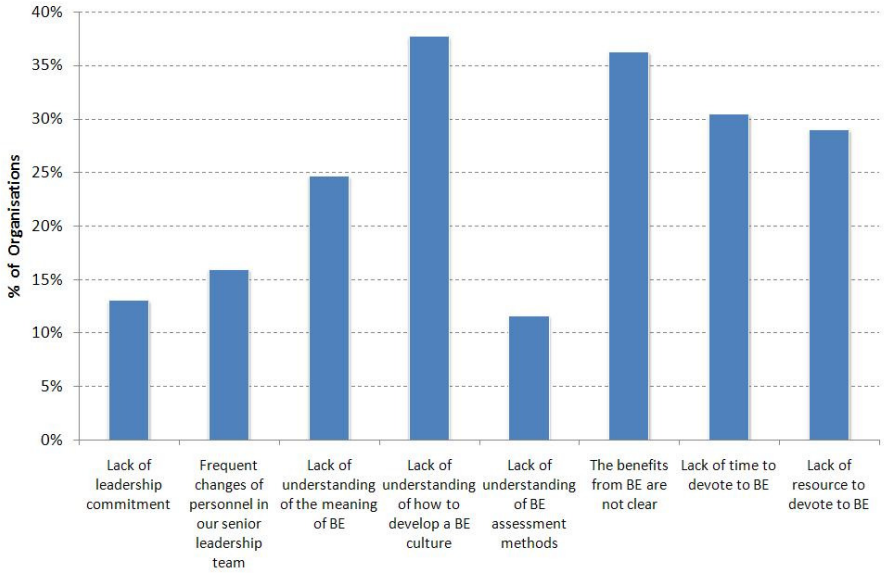
Graph 4: Level of confidence in design of the local business excellence framework expressed as a percentage of responses (Responses = 73)

Graph 5 shows how often the respondent organizations undertake business excellence assessments. The majority of respondents undertake regular assessments, with 64% undertaking assessments every year and 24% every two years. The remainder did not undertake regular assessments.



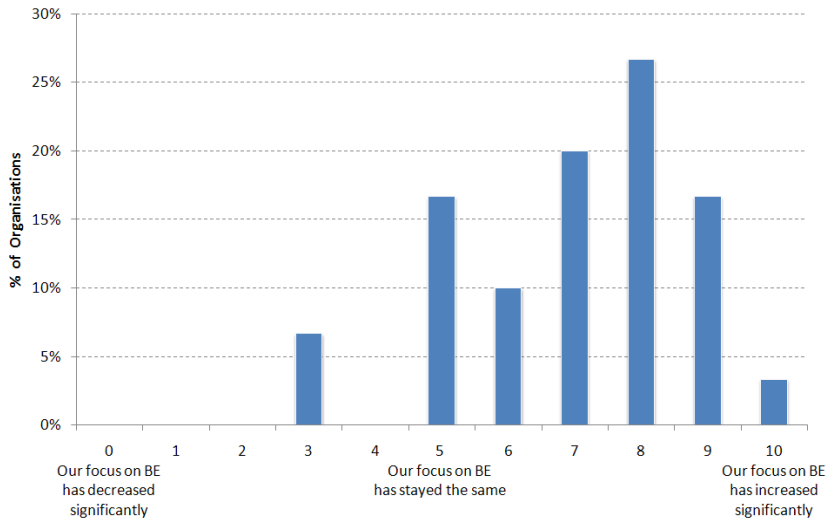
Graph 5: Company's business excellence approach in *frequency of assessment* expressed as a percentage of responses (Responses = 73)

As perceived by respondents, Graph 6 shows the main internal issues hindering the commitment to implement business excellence. It shows that many organisations (over 35%) do not understand how to develop a business excellence culture, with 25% saying there is a problem in understanding the meaning of business excellence. In addition, 35% say it is hard to obtain commitment as the benefits of business excellence are not clear.



Graph 6: Internal issues hindering the commitment to implement business excellence expressed as a percentage of responses (Responses = 69)

Graph 7 shows solely the responses of organisations that have won their national business excellence award (31 organisations). The majority of these organisations reported that their focus on business excellence increased after winning a national business excellence award.



Graph 7: Change in business excellence focus since winning last award expressed as a percentage of responses (Responses = 30)

The key findings from the research were:

- Companies reported that business excellence had a major impact on their competitiveness and performance.
- Companies indicated that the frameworks were relevant for long-term competitiveness and sustainability, and only minor changes to the design of the frameworks (if any) were needed.
- Time and effort should be put into making the frameworks simpler to understand; the value of the frameworks needs to be more clearly communicated.
- Companies want increased assistance with benchmarking and learning from best practices.
- While awards are important, they are for recognition and not the prime motivator for the majority of companies. The prime motivator is to "become world-class".

Once the research had been completed, the findings were analysed by member countries of the Asia Productivity Organisation (APO). A number of clear actions have been decided and will be implemented by the newly created Centre of Excellence (COE) for Business Excellence – operated by SPRING Singapore on behalf of the APO to serve all APO member countries. It is expected that these actions will lead to a greater understanding and focus on business excellence within the region.

One of the actions was to hold an annual Global Business Excellence Conference to share awareness and understanding of business excellence in Asia, and to encourage best practice sharing. In 2009, the first such conference had been held; there is now a commitment to hold one every year. The next conference will be held from **9/10 November 2010 in Singapore.** Further details are available at: **www.bpir.com/component/option,com_eventcal/Itemid,76/catid,/date,1289307600/eventid,402/task,event/.** The other actions resulting from the research will be presented at the conference.

7. Business Excellence Tools for Self-Assessment.

In the last 10 years, more than 300 organisations have undertaken at least one of COER's business excellence self-assessments. COER supports two types of self-assessment: BPES (the Benchmarking and Performance Excellence Self-Assessment) and ASSESSOR.

These tools assess performance in the following areas:

- leadership
- strategic planning
- customer and market focus
- measurement, analysis, and knowledge management
- human resources
- process management
- business results

For further information about COER's business excellence self-assessment tools, visit www.businessexcellencetools.com.

8. Professionalising the Application of Benchmarking.

Since January 2010, COER has given training on TRADE Best Practice Benchmarking in Abu Dhabi, Bahrain, Fiji, Kuwait, New Zealand, Singapore and the United Kingdom. The TRADE benchmarking methodology focuses on the exchange (or "trade") of information and best practices to improve the performance of processes, goods and services.

Training in Abu Dhabi, 7-8 June 2010

Participants in the UK with Dr Robin Mann, 21-22 April

An excerpt from the Fijian Productivity and Training Authority's Newsletter describes how the training was received in Fiji:

"The learning was phenomenal!" Short and succinct. But the words of Isoa Wainiqolo of the Higher Education Commission best sum up the evaluation of the Benchmarking TRADE Workshop that was held at Holiday Inn's Lali Room on Monday, 10th May — Tuesday, 11th May. Participants were introduced to the TRADE Methodology of Benchmarking, and learned about global benchmark practices that have proven successful for leading global organizations. The workshop was truly interactive, as there were a lot of group activities/group discussions, and participants had the privilege of accessing information from the facilitator's renowned benchmarking website for best practices and international benchmarks. Participants identified this as a very strong feature of the workshop.

"The course facilitators are experts in Benchmarking, and I have learned a lot from them. Materials covered were very relevant to my organisation in our desire to improve service delivery," commented another participant, Ms Mereoni Vuinakodu of the Ministry of Industry & Trade. Many participants spoke of the need to spread the workshop to three days to do justice to an important productivity and improvement tool needed by all organizations. Participants earned themselves a Bronze Level Certificate of Attainment, and will graduate to a Silver Level once they complete their improvement projects at work.

"Personally, I found a lot of satisfaction in seeing the Benchmarking Conference and TRADE Workshop take place," Productivity Officer, Benchmarking, Iliana Maiesia noted. "This is a milestone in our history, in the history of Fiji's productivity movement, and we ought to congratulate ourselves for having come this far, and the outstanding achievements that each member of every Community of Practice has celebrated over the past years since the inception and launch of Benchmarking in Fiji in 2006." Maiesia added.

Much of TRADE's success is due to its accompanying certification scheme that helps to ensure that the learning from the workshop is applied—and therefore remembered and not lost.

Certification levels:

The first level of "TRADE Trained" is recommended for all those that want to have a good understanding of benchmarking, and may be asked to participate in a benchmarking project and/or collect benchmarking information. The more advanced levels, i.e. "Proficiency" and "Mastery", are for those individuals likely to facilitate or oversee benchmarking projects. Ideally, organisations should have at least one person who becomes a benchmarking Master; this person can then facilitate multiple projects.

Benchmarking describes the process of learning from the experience of others, and applying this learning. Unfortunately, this is not widely understood, with many organisations believing that benchmarking is the same as comparing. Comparing is just one element of benchmarking. Benchmarks are comparisons but *benchmarking* consists of not only comparisons but also learning from others.

To do benchmarking well necessitates being a good researcher. However, not everyone has experience of doing research and so to address this the TRADE Best Practice Benchmarking methodology is highly prescriptive (but flexible) to ensure that all necessary research steps are followed. Therefore, the methodology itself, when followed, ensures that good research is conducted, enabling the benchmarking team to focus on the learning.

For further information on TRADE, and dates of future workshops, refer to www.coer.org.nz/trade.

9. What Will Benchmarking Be Like in 2030? The GBN Wants to Know Your Views.

In the last 20 years, since the pioneering work of Dr Robert Camp and Rank Xerox in benchmarking in the 1980s, there have been substantial changes in both how benchmarking is applied and in its popularity. To compete, organisations now recognise that they not only need competitive products and services, but also effective operational and support systems; all of this can be developed and improved though learning from the experience of others and not re-inventing the wheel. With the development of business excellence models has come an increased understanding of the role of benchmarking in organisational development, whilst the use of new technology, such as the Internet, enables organisations to quickly search for benchmarking partners and learn of best practices. These changes have led to benchmarking becoming one of the most popular and powerful improvement tools today. Most research studies in the last few years have positioned benchmarking as a top five tool in terms of popularity (e.g. GBN research, 2009, Bain and Co, 2009).

The GBN is now embarking on a project to consider what the next 20 years of benchmarking will be like. This project will take into account new technologies, social networking opportunities, as well as issues such as the global financial crises, and Megatrends like governance, political, social and environmental trends.

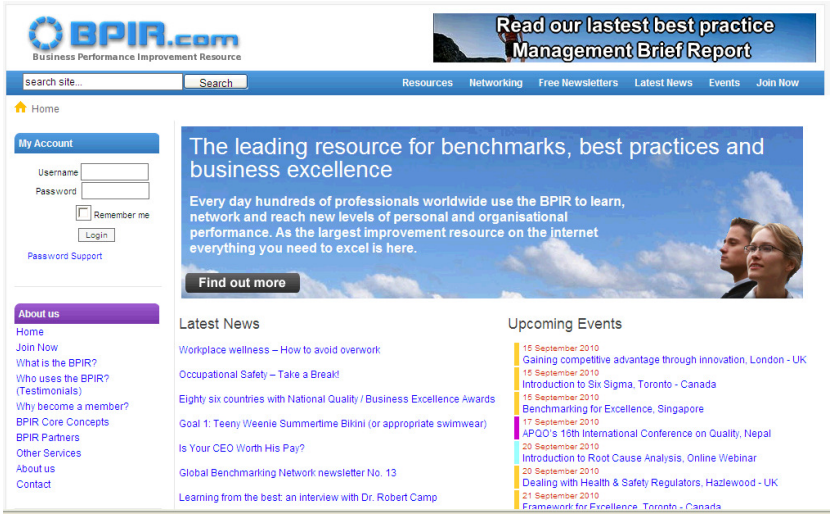
This project will answer the following questions: What will benchmarking look like in 2030 – and in between? What are the tools, methodologies and technologies that benchmarkers will use to help organisations and economies to improve their outcomes?

To find out more about the project and to participate (**and obtain a FREE Interim Report!**) visit www.bpir.com/component/option,com_mojo/Itemid,99/p,73.

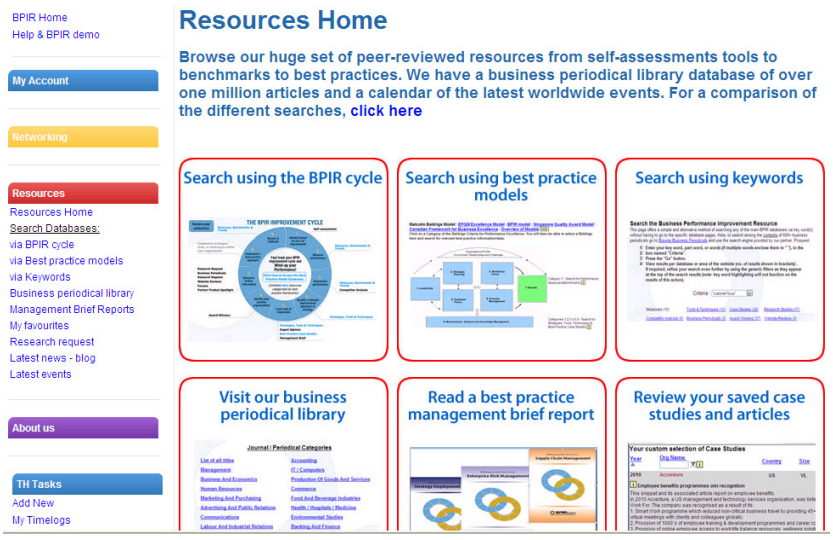
10. Finding Best Practices Faster…

Try out the new website! We think the new design is GRRRREEEAAT! After a long wait—and a lot of hard work—the www.BPIR.com has been redesigned, enabling you to find benchmarks and best practices more quickly.

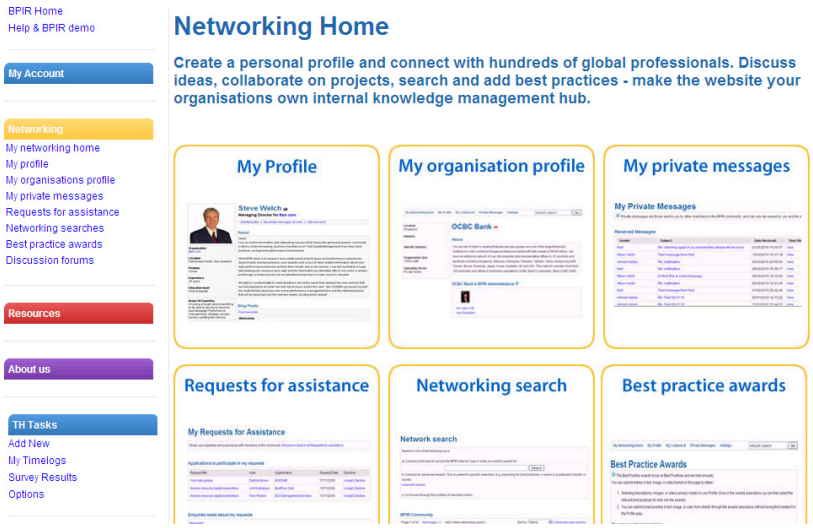
However, it is your opinion that matters, so let us know what you think! We welcome feedback on both the public site and the member's area. Send your opinion to Steve, at steve@bpir.com.



Screenshot 1: The new homepage



Screenshot 2: The new member's area showing the resource databases



Screenshot 3: The new member's area showing the networking services

11. Read the Latest News.

On the homepage of the BPIR we bring our readers interesting news... Visit the website to read these articles.

- Do you have a "Million Dollar Mindset"?
- The management consultancy scam
- Workplace wellness – How to avoid overwork
- Occupational Safety – Take a Break!
- Goal 1: Teeny Weenie Summertime Bikini (or appropriate swimwear)
- Is Your CEO Worth His Pay?
- Global Benchmarking Network newsletter No. 13
- Learning from the best: an interview with Dr. Robert Camp

12. Succession Planning, Business Outsourcing, and Employee Motivation.

The three topics below were the latest to be added to the BPIR.com Management Brief series. Free HTML copies of these can be found at www.bpir.com/management-briefs/index.php.

The next topic is Customer Complaint Resolution. This will be ready by October 1, 2010.

13. Benchmarking Support in the Middle East

As part of our continuous efforts to address our customers' needs COER/BPIR staff are travelling to various regions around the world.

For the next 2 months Ahmed Abbas will be available in the Middle East region.

Ahmed is responsible for collecting benchmarks within the BPIR.com website resource and assisting organisations with their benchmarking projects and training needs.

We have found that meeting our customers has helped our members to get the maximum benefit from the BPIR.com and helped us to develop new features and to address some organisation-specific issues. If you would like to know how BPIR can improve your business or are interested in attending a Benchmarking for Excellence workshop you can contact Ahmed at ahmed@bpir.com. Besides the traditional way of meeting he can also contact you by phone, Skype, AIM and also set up a group webinar to show you how to use the resource. *We are just a few clicks away!*

14. BPIR.com Limited's Growth Plans – Partner Search.

Since BPIR.com Limited spun out of Massey University, its reputation and membership have continued to grow. It now has more than 10,000 members worldwide, and product developments such as the new networking service have seen the website become a leader in providing benchmarking and networking services.

In the last few months BPIR.com Limited has:

- formed a partnership with the Australian Organisation for Quality to provide free BPIR.com membership to its South Australian members

- supported the Asian Productivity Quality Organisation by providing free access to the BPIR.com for the winners of their international business excellence award

- supported a number of conferences (such as the Fijian National Benchmarking Conference and Kuwait Quality Summit) by providing free access to all delegates to the BPIR.com for a limited period.

To fast-track product development and growth plans, BPIR.com Limited is requesting interest from:

- membership associations or government bodies who would like to offer BPIR services to their members and/or networks of organisations, and/or SMEs using a branded version of the BPIR service
- organisations that might be able to assist BPIR in meeting its growth plans through a joint-venture and/or adding other capabilities to BPIR.com Limited.

If you are interested in these opportunities, please contact Steve Welch, Managing Director, steve@bpir.com.

15. "Must Attend" Events.

Business Excellence Global Conference, November 9-10, Singapore

This is a truly unique event, supported by award winners and administrators of business excellence from around the world. If you wish to have a global perspective on how to become competitive, then this is the conference for you!

At the conference you will hear from:

- United Laboratories, Philippines (Philippines Quality Award Winner)
- Bumrungrad International Hospital, Thailand (Thailand Quality Class Winner)
- Bangkok Produce Merchandising, Thailand (Thailand Quality Class Winner)
- The Subordinate Courts of Singapore (Singapore Quality Award Winner)
- ST Engineering, Singapore (SQA with Special Commendation Award Winner)
- Leading Organisations from Australia, India & Europe.

For further information, go to
www.bpir.com/component/option,com_eventcal/Itemid,76/catid,/date,1289307600/eventid,402/task,event/
and register now!

5th International Benchmarking Conference, December 5-6, 2010, Kuwait

The Global Benchmarking Network's (GBN) Annual Benchmarking Conference brings together leading organisations and business professionals from around the globe. It provides an excellent platform for sharing and exchanging views, ideas, experiences and techniques involved in attaining higher performance levels in organisational operations. This is a unique opportunity to learn from some of the world's top speakers in the benchmarking field. This year, the conference includes a roundtable discussion on "What will Benchmarking look like in 2030 – and in between?"

The event is being held in Kuwait. It is being organised by a new GBN member, Gulf Lead Consultants. Dr Tariq Aldowaisan is the CEO of Gulf Lead Consultants and is playing a leading role in the Gulf region in shaping the future of quality. Some of his recent articles on designing and executing business surveys can be found here www.bpir.com/component/Itemid,190/option,com_mojo/cat,14/.

CALL FOR PAPERS! DEADLINE 15 OCTOBER 2010

There is still time to submit a paper on benchmarking for the conference. If interested, please refer to the instructions on the conference website, www.kuwaitbenchmarking.com.

The photo shows Ali Fahdlani of Jumeirah Group receiving the best paper award, Bahrain, 2009.

5th Annual Quality Conference, January 31-3 February, 2011, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

The theme of the 2011 Quality Conference in the Middle East is, 'TQM and Excellence: A Framework for Managing Governance and Corporate Social Responsibility'. The conference theme captures recent thinking that the Total Quality Management and Excellence movements have some meaningful contributions to make in resolving pressing issues of governance, sustainability and corporate social responsibility. The 5th Quality Conference (QC5) will provide a forum for researchers, practitioners and policy makers to address how quality management and excellence connect with governance, sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR).

Submission deadlines for papers is 30 October 2010. Visit http://congress.hbmeu.ac.ae/ for further information.

16. Forthcoming Events

For a full list of forthcoming events, visit the event calendar at www.bpir.com **- you can also add your own events!**

17. Past Conferences/Events.

Lecture tour of China with Dr Jim Harrington

Senior leaders of the Shanghai Association for Quality with Dr Jim Harrington and Dr Robin Mann

In September, Dr Robin Mann undertook a lecture tour of China with Dr James Harrington. The cities visited were Shanghai, Wuhan and Nanchang. Dr Mann presented on business excellence and benchmarking, whilst Dr Harrington presented on Streamlining Process Improvement. The tour was arranged by the Shanghai Association of Quality, thanks to SAQ President Xiaofen Tang, to celebrate China's Quality Month. It was impressive to witness not only the fast paced economic growth but also the increasing focus on quality management and social responsibility issues. We were surprised to find out that so many provinces have now embraced the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence and have an awards programme, with all feeding into the National Quality Award administered by the Chinese Association of Quality.

An explosion of best practices in India!

Over the past six months, the BestPrax Club, led by Suresh Lulla, has taken the sharing of best practices to a new level. Through self-assessments and site visits, the BestPrax Club "harvested" best practices from many leading organisations in India, and then held an event at which 16 organisations were given 10 minutes to share three best practices. **This meant that in total 48 practices were shared!** These were then judged, and seven organisations were selected as having the best practices (Castrol, Yes Bank, Birla White, Eureka Forbes, Tata Power, Hindustan Zinc and Aditya Birla Chemicals). These were then invited to present at another event at which the best practices were judged again. On the judging panel for the final event was Dr Robert Camp, Life-time Honorary President of the Global Benchmarking Network. The awards given were:

- Best Prax Deployment Award: Birla White
- Best Prax Award for Leadership Governance: Tata Power, Eureka Forbes
- Compass Awards: Aditya Birla, Castrol, Yes Bank, Hindustan Zinc,
- StarPrax Award: Hindustan Zinc.

A presentation by Castrol at the preliminary round, Dr Robert Camp speaking, and Hindustan Zinc winning the StarPrax Award.

18. Book Review.

Over the past year, there have been many good books written on business improvement. Dr Robin Mann reviews some of these:

Authentic Personal Branding – A New Blueprint for Building and Aligning a Powerful Leadership Brand, Dr. Hubert Rampersad, 2009. **www.total-performance-scorecard.com.** Hubert has a talent to apply business concepts to personal improvement. In this book, he shows us all how to build our own personal brand—and just as importantly—how to persuasively communicate this brand to the world.

FAST Action Solution Teams – How to save a million dollars in 2 days, Jim Harrington, 2010. **www.qualitydigest.com/inside/quality-insider-news/book-fast-action-solution-technique-fast.html.** Jim Harrington is still going strong at 82 years old, his mind and thinking is as sharp as ever and this is his reflected in his latest book. FAST Action Solution Teams is a straightforward book on how your organisation can pick off the low hanging fruit and put in solutions that will quickly reap major bottom-line returns. FAST Action Solution Teams refers to one or two-day study projects that define improvements that individuals performing the study can implement within the next 90 days.

Hoshin Kanri – The Strategic Approach to Continuous Improvement, David Hutchins, 2008. **www.hutchins.co.uk/bk_hoshin.aspx.** David has been a leader for many, many years in bringing tried and trusted techniques from the Far East to the awareness of the West. David's latest book focuses on Hoshin Kanri—a strategic approach that encompasses four key elements of business management, namely Vision, Policy Development, Policy Deployment and Policy Control. This approach, developed in Japan, and used by organisations such as Toyota, was initially popularised by Professor Kaoru Ishikawa. It is a powerful approach, as it particularly assists in strategy deployment, which is often a weakness in organisations.

Key Performance Indicators – Developing, Implementing, and Using Winning KPIs, David Parmenter, 2009. **dwww.davidparmenter.com**. I have known David for many years, and could not wait to read the second edition of his book. The book simplifies performance measurement and is highly practical. Its focus is on the correct selection and deployment of performance measures to ensure that all resources and effort are focused on achieving business strategy. In particular, it explains the right way to measure and not the wrong way. Too often, companies claim they have key performance indicators, and yet these are often lagging measures and measured infrequently… therefore, how can they be key?

This second edition includes a discussion of critical success factors, as well as new chapters that focus on implementations issues and 'how to sections' on finding your CSFs and brainstorming the performance

measures that report progress within the CSFs, Key Performance Indicators. The second edition will help you to identify and track your organization's KPIs to ensure continued and increased success.

No More Consultants – We Know More Than We Think. Geoff Parcell & Chris Collinson, 2009. **www.chriscollison.com**. This book describes interesting and practical ways to do internal benchmarking through self-assessments and the use of a "River Diagram". A River Diagram visually shows where there is the greatest opportunity for sharing practices and learning within an organisation. By using River Diagrams, the level of internal sharing can be mapped and increased, thus assisting an organisation to leverage off its internal experience, expertise and practices.

The Rudolph Factor: Finding the Bright Lights that Drive Innovation in Your Business, Cyndi Laurin and Craig Morningstar, 2009. **www.guidetogreatness.com.** The Rudolph Factor details the impressive turnaround of The Boeing Company, with real stories from the people at Boeing C-17 who contributed to its success. Rudolphs, explain the authors, are the 10 percent of any organisation's people who are the true agents of innovation - people who can shine the light exactly where a company needs to go. Since they tend to identify causes of problems (rather than symptoms), they generate sustainable solutions more quickly and efficiently than others. Because their thinking tends to be counter-intuitive, Rudolphs are typically considered outcasts or loose cannons until their talents are needed (often at the 11th hour of a crisis, at which point they often are hailed as heroes).

In finding these crucial individuals, nurturing them, and putting their ideas to work, your company can achieve consistently higher levels of innovation - and thrive in every economy. The Rudolph Factor shows managers how to spark bright ideas and capture greatness in others. Another great book from Cyndi!

Two books that are well worth considering, but I have not had the chance to review yet, are:

Global Competitiveness, Dr. Ajitabh, 2010. www.excelbooks.com/detail.aspx?iid=238. It includes an analysis of business excellence models and their use. For a perspective from India, this would be a good book to read.

Business Excellence Awards – Strategies for Winning, Sunil Thawani, 2010. www.qualitywaves.com/book.html. Covers everything you need to know about applying for a business excellence award and preparing for a site visit. The new version of this book will be launched on 12 October 2010.

19. Subscribe to COER News.

If you would like to receive future copies of this free newsletter and are not already on our e-mailing list, please send your contact details (including e-mail address) to Dr Robin Mann, COER, r.s.mann@massey.ac.nz or visit the BPIR.com homepage to register your subscription.

That is it for now. Thanks for spending time reading **COER NEWS**

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