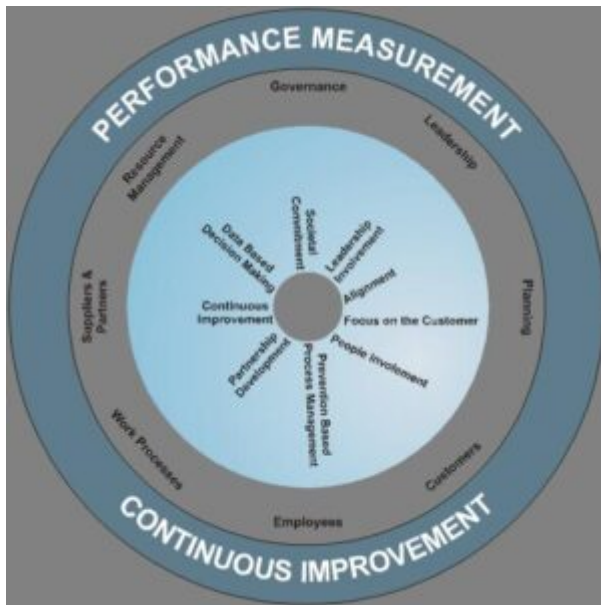


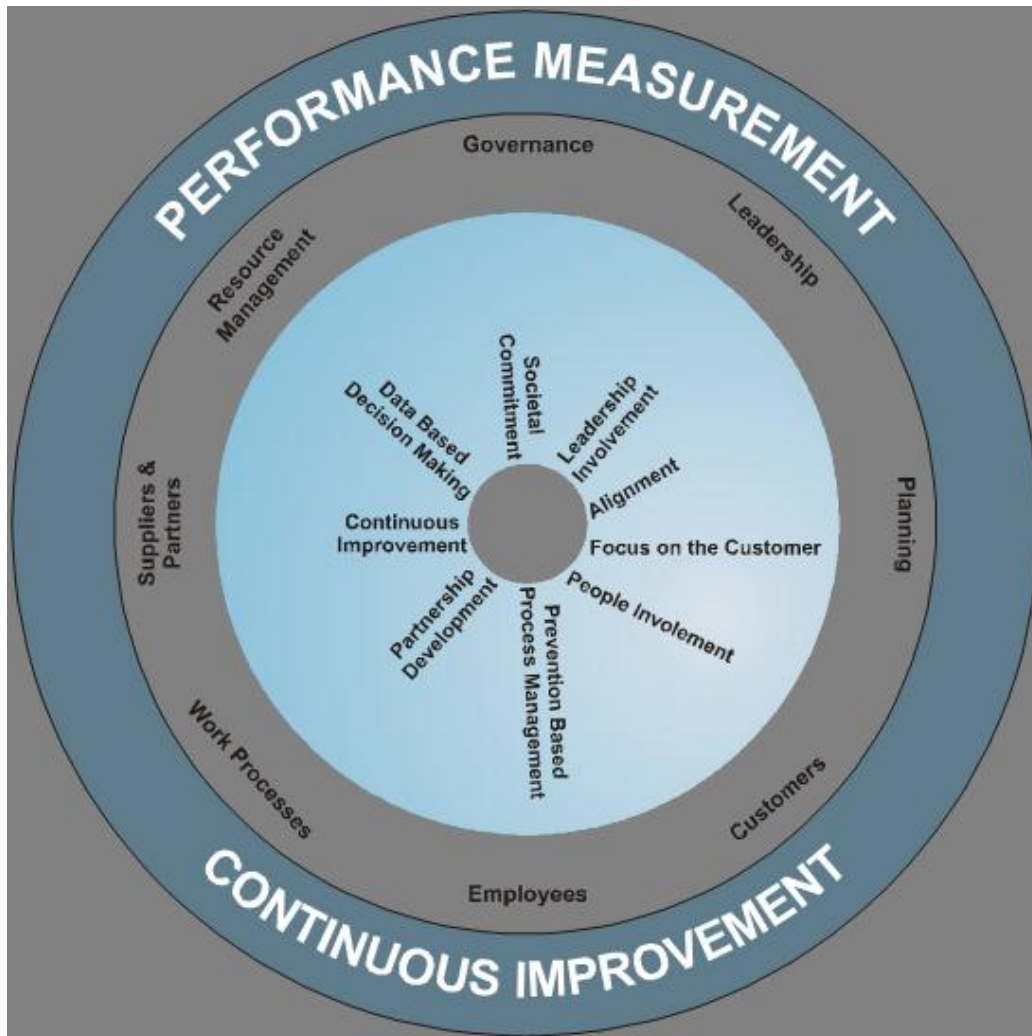
Organizational Excellence Framework and Health & Safety



By Barbara Semeniuk, BSc CRSP

Dawn Ringrose, a fellow consultant of the management profession and a brilliant thinker, has examined the organizational excellence frameworks of the quality professions in Australia, Canada, Europe and the US. With her over 20 years' experience as a management consultant with some very heavy hitters in this field and the help of quality assurance consultant volunteers, she has synthesized an incredible system that will propel any organization to excellence in the areas of governance, leadership, planning, customers, workers as a resource, work processes, suppliers and partners, and resource management. By using her model, any company can assess itself and determine what areas it's strong in, where the opportunities for improvement lie and the action steps that will have to be taken to obtain organizational nirvana.

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK



Source: Dawn Ringrose & Associates

World class companies have several things in common. For example, they focus on prevention-based process management, that is, they routinely ask what can we learn from our failures and how do we prevent similar failures from happening again.

Leading companies also strive to continuously improve, using what they learn to help them reduce waste and operating inefficiencies, such as redundancies, extra inventories and waste incidents. Becoming more efficient will help companies become lean and mean and enhance their competitiveness, all without increasing their market share.

They also use “real time” data gathering to measure or assess their alignment and, like an excellence seeking missile, make adjustments until they reach their target metrics.

Organizations don’t operate in a vacuum, however. So a company’s commitment toward society in general, such as being environmentally conscious, contributing to worthy causes and being a diligent and ethical company, are also hallmarks of a world class organization.

Let me give you an example. I did an audit of a company that was suffering from organizational blindness. This company had a process that exposed workers to highly stacked and unstable trays of bread, which could topple and seriously hurt them. It was my contention that senior management was aware of this hazard

because the workers for seven years had tried to tell them about it and were stone walled at every turn. In desperation, the workers told me, the auditor, and I took pictures of the stacked trays and included it in my audit report, which went to the Director of Health and Safety.

The Western Regional Director of Health and Safety, who reported to the Director of Safety, was upset that workers had reported this hazard to me. She went after the poor supervisor who let me take the picture. Her actions upset me greatly because the whole point of auditing is continuous improvement, not blame fixing. I explained to her that this attitude was a sign of organizational blindness because senior management knew about the hazard but weren't taking any action to address it.

This company had a high incident rate. (Gee, I wonder why?) It was into blame fixing, not preventative process management, and didn't foster worker participation. In addition, senior management's commitment to safety and that of the Director of Safety and Western Regional Director were simply lip service. If the company wanted to learn from this situation, it could've used the opportunity to make the workplace safer. In short, this company wasn't a world class organization. It had organizational myopia and liked it that way.

It's my belief, based on over 20 years of health and safety experience, that it's only a matter of time before a serious incident occurs at this company. And when it does, it'll be pinned on the workers involved. Senior management will likely abdicate their responsibility and never acknowledge that their failure to engage, communicate and partner with their workforce caused this incident to happen.

In contrast, consider a common oil and gas service company. The owners fostered worker participation and rewarded workers on how many near miss reports they submitted. And the owners treated workers like family. The workers responded by reporting any uncontrolled health and safety hazards, which could then be corrected before they caused property damage, injuries or fatalities. Although this company works in a much more hazardous environment with much more serious potential consequences, it has a lower incident rate than the company discussed above because it follows a model of organizational excellence.

So how to achieve organizational excellence? Ringrose and her team have created a universal path to excellence. Following her model will enable your company to excel and become a world class organization.

Both senior management and workers must be actively involved in the assessment process. The company should be consistent in its direction, understanding that an organization is like a living being with a system of interrelated work processes aligned in the strategic direction in which it wishes to go.

To quote Alvin Toffler, who was involved in "Future Shock," "You have to think about the big things while doing the small things so that all the small things go in the right direction."

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