

Quality in Education and Training

Professor Alan Brown
School of Management
Edith Cowan University
Perth, Australia

The education and training sector

Education providers (public & private)

- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary

Training providers (public & private)

- External short course providers
- Vocational training eg technical, apprenticeships
- In house training

Regulatory organisations

*may be both regulator and provider eg Ministry of Ed

Quality issues in this sector

- Output expectations
- Short term/long term outcomes
- Process expectations
- Service quality
- Value for money (public spending)
- Accountability
- Governance
- Reputation and image

Addressing these issues

- External approach
 - Regulation
 - Accreditation
- Internal approach
 - Quality strategy
 - Quality activities
- Mixed approach

External approaches

Regulation

Government Departments/Ministry

- May also be the employer eg EDWA, TAFE
- Sets standards, may set curricula
- Ministry approval of programs
- QA checks
- Self regulation with audits eg AUQA

External approaches

Accreditation

- By independent third parties
- For registered training providers eg RTO
- For universities eg EQUIS, AACSB
- ISO 9000

Internal approaches

Whole of organisation quality strategy

- TQM, Six Sigma, etc
- Adopting a quality culture
- Use of an Excellence/Quality framework
- Self-assessment/evaluation

Internal approaches

Part of organisation quality activities

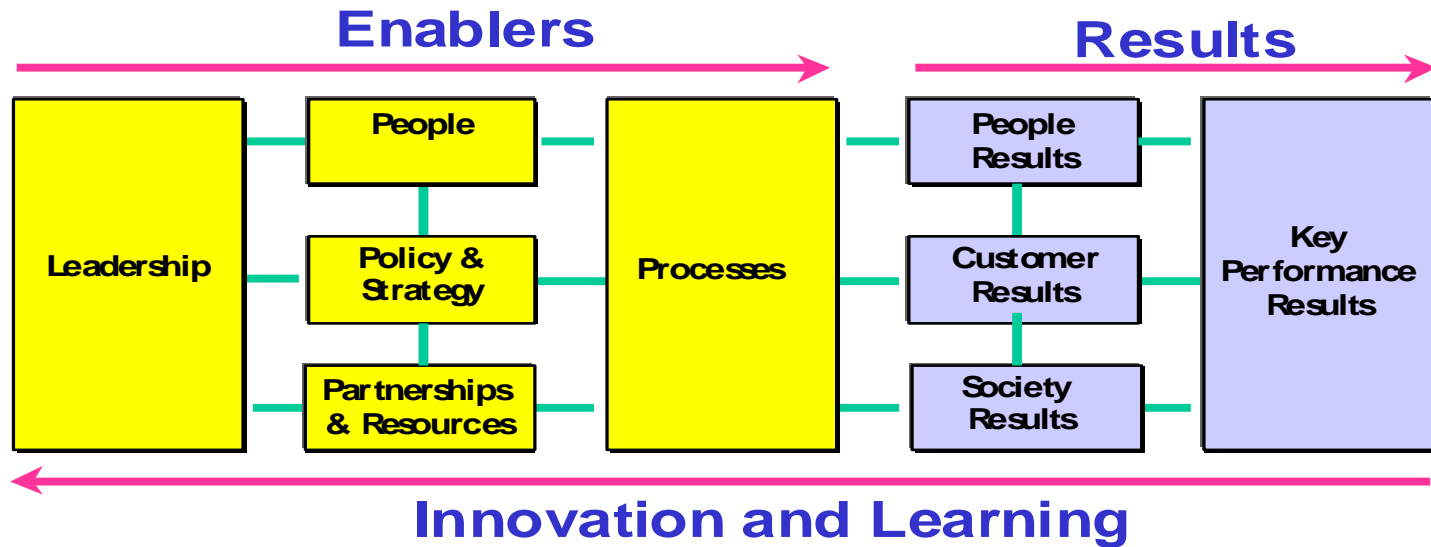
- Within parts of the organisation
- Process improvement
- Customer satisfaction measures
- Monitoring performance
- Teamwork
- Individual improvement

Examples

- Individual schools, universities
- Government promotion eg Scotland, SQ
- AUQA – Australian universities
- Government strategies
- EFQM/Sheffield project
- Administrative departments

Using excellence/quality frameworks

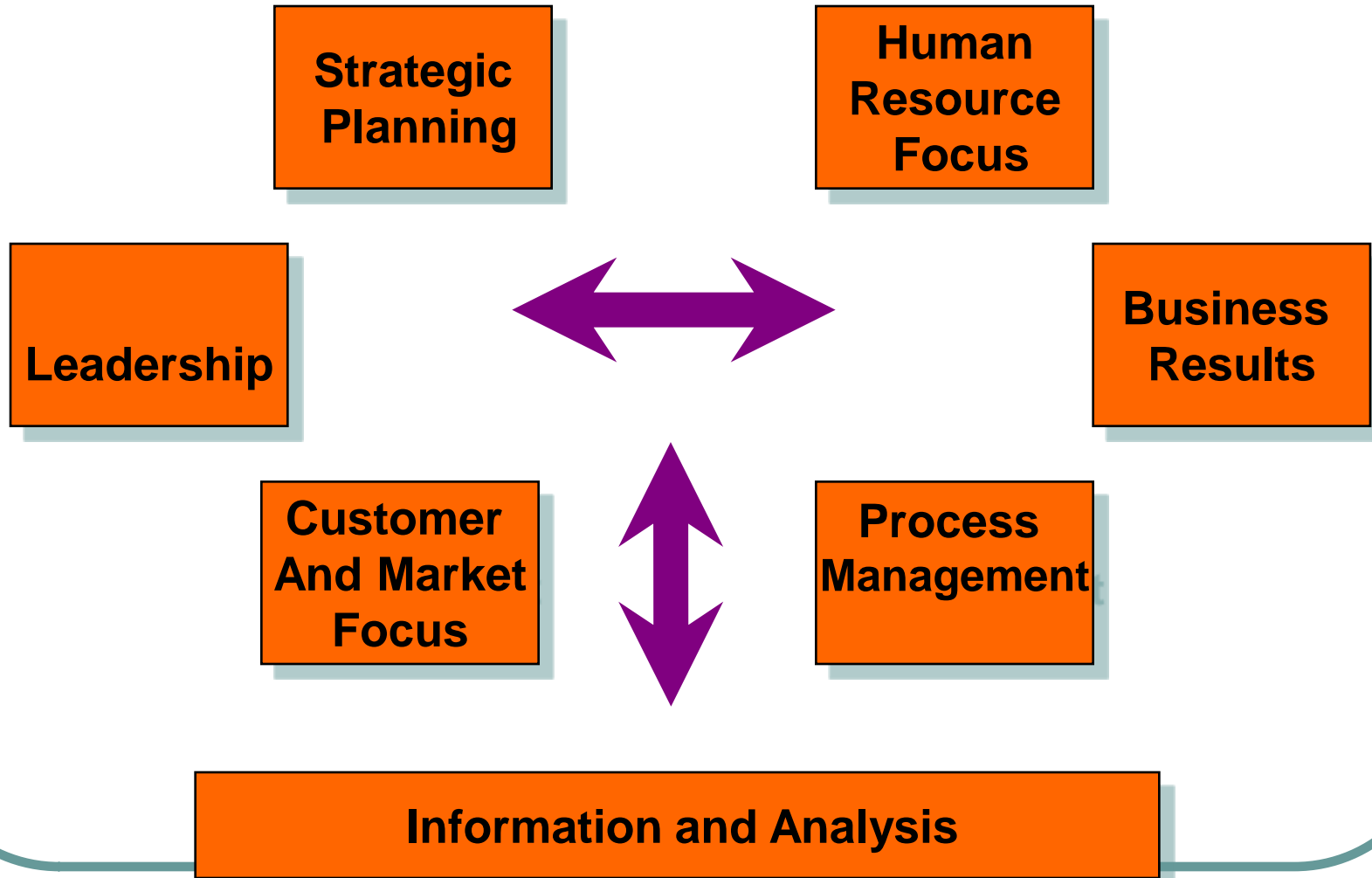
EFQM Framework



Baldrige Framework

- Leadership
- Strategic Planning
- Customer and market focus
- Information and analysis
- HR development and management
- Process management
- Business results

Baldrige Award



Leadership

- Leadership in individual educational institutions
- Leadership in the Ministry
- A mindset of CI/QM
- Promote and support a quality culture
- Competent, credible and respected
- At all organisational levels
- Teaching and research leadership

People and HRM

- Approaches to managing people
- Professional education levels
- Empowerment
- Education and training opportunities
- Training in quality cultures and improvement mechanisms
- Generational differences recognised
- Work-life balance

Strategy and Planning

- Know your market(s)
- Organisational structure and systems - autonomy – centralised
- Recognition of multiple stakeholders
- As a driver throughout the organisation
- Operational plans, measures

Customer and Market Focus

- Who are the customers?
- What are their expectations
- Can everyone's expectations be met?
- Customer relationship management
- Who decides what is taught?
- Who decides what methods are used?

Customers

Multiple with varied expectations

- Students
- Parents
- Community
- Employees – teachers, trainers, lecturers
- Employees – administrative staff
- Educational advisors/curriculum/bureaucrats
- Business
- Government funders, regulators

Implications

- Short term
- Long term

What interests them?

- Curriculum (content)
- Delivery (teaching/presentation)
- Learning facilitation
- Generic skills
- Job satisfaction/professional autonomy
- Attending to special needs
- Facilities
- Reputation and image
- Opportunities after graduation
- Administrative processes

Processes

Provision of services

- Key processes
- Education – longer term
- Training – shorter term
- Teaching/training performance
- Addressing special needs
- Autonomy of professionals

CI/QM processes

Partnerships and Resources

- With local communities
- Businesses

Information and Analysis

- Use of for decision making
- Measuring performance and results
- Throughout the organisation
- Listening to customers
- Listening to employees
- Monitoring market trends

Results

- People
 - satisfaction of employees
- Financial
 - meet budget requirements
- Customers
 - meet/exceed expectations
- Society
 - benefits may be longer term – human capital
 - educational achievements

Indicators

- Teaching quality
- Relevant programs
- Research output
- Administrative support
- Accessibility and flexibility
- Facilities
- Employability of graduates
- Job satisfaction/turnover

Levels of application of quality

- Ministry/Department
- Sections in the bureaucracy eg departments
- Individual enterprises eg schools, universities
- Individuals eg professionals, clerical

What can be done?

- Focus on service quality
- Strategic approaches using a framework such as EFQM/Baldrige/Excellence/Quality
- Learning from others eg benchmarking
- Specific activities eg process improvement
- Assess customer needs and expectations
- Employee involvement
- Ensuring professional autonomy
- Reduce bureaucracy/non value adding work
- Engaging with the community

How can it be done?

- Organisational approach – framework, culture
- Selected project approach
- Teams and tools eg cross sectional
- Customer surveys, complaints, feedback
- Process mapping/flow charts
- Benchmarking
- Eliminate non value adding work

Quality Traps

- Over-emphasizing strategy (not operations/front line issues)
- Administratively driven change without front line support eg OBE
- Quality constipation (processes/systems/documentation)
- Non value adding activity creep
- Transient management/leadership
- Political intervention/agendas (eg outsourcing)
- CEOs without background in industry (credibility, understanding, empathy)
- Too much time training
- Over managing professionals