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The implementation of the “EFQM Excellence Model” paving the way towards excellence

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The scope of this paper is to understand what the EFQM Excellence Model is and why it has more success than other strategic framework and also what benefits it brings from a managerial point of view.

The paper starts with a description of the fundamentals that the model presents as the basis of the path towards excellence and how it is divided into two sections: the first one consists of five enablers and the second one consists of four results. Furthermore the model contains an explanation of how companies are evaluated through the Radar Logic which is a frame that sees two different ways of judgment respectively for the enablers and results section.

Afterwards it goes through a theoretical part that seeks to explain what is known about the EFQM Excellence Model, what other researchers have found and how we can consider it part of Total Quality Management (TQM). In addition there is an insight about how excellence is born with a brief explanation of other approaches that are called Business Excellence Models (BEM). In particular the paper focused on the 4P Model, the MBNQA Model (very popular in USA) and the Deming Prize Model.

The main characteristics and the main differences are analysed to figure out how TQM and BEM and then EFQM Excellence Model brought innovation in this field. Afterwards some personal considerations seek to explain the basics of TQM and EFQM highlighting some topics such as “quality and excellence” the difference between “to manage and to lead”, the meaning of “innovation” and how “ambidexterity” can be consider a benefit brought by this model.

The paper goes through, afterwards, an analysis of secondary data telling some success stories of companies from different sectors that apply the EFQM Model and the benefits that it has brought to them. In particular the stories are about the Stravropool State Agrarian University in Russia, the Sanitas Hospitales in Spain, BMW in Regensburg (Germany), Nulifer Municipality in Turkey, the Glasgow Housing Association in Scotland and Ricoh in Belgium.

Some primary data follow up with some interviews to four managers that work every day with the EFQM Model because they apply it inside the company they work for or because they work in
management consulting groups. These interviews have the scope to present advantages and disadvantages of the model and how the model is generally perceived.

The last chapter, in the end, is about a case study based on a four month experience at the Regional Service Center of Verona of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK). After an explanation of what that particular section of GSK does, some interviews were carried out to the members that worked on the EFQM document submission 2015 once again to understand how the model is perceived and understood at the different management levels. The interviews, both for other companies’ managers and GSK managers and the leadership team consisted of 15 questions. For other companies’ managers the interviews were conducted by phone and for GSK people were conducted face to face. The interviews analysed personal perceptions, pros and cons, the interpretation of the fundamentals of excellence and the meaning of innovation. Furthermore the Governmental affairs director explains how GSK wants to found EFQM Italy: an association based on the same concepts of the EFQM that can involve all the Italian companies that apply EFQM Excellence Model building a successful and helpful network.

The paper has been concluded answering the research question and so saying that the most important benefit of EFQM Excellence Model is the possibility that it helps managers to have a complete vision of the company, the chance of benchmarking with competitors or other sections of the same company and the opportunity to develop the daily job thanks to a framework which can be followed. At the same time the biggest limitation is that sometimes the model appears too complicated and difficult to interpret.

As further development it has been suggested the activity of collaboration and more precisely of Co-creation between the companies and the European Foundatation for Quality Management to build some sub-models to eliminate the uncertainty due to the fact that the model is built for every kind of company. For example: GSK could build with EFQM a sub-model that can be the guide for every pharmaceutical company that wants to apply the EFQM Excellence Model. This aspect is very connected to the need-pull innovation concept explained in the last lines since it derives from a difficulty perceived by the interviewed managers.
INTRODUCTION

EFQM Excellence Model is a framework that is part of Total Quality Management theory and it has gained a lot of success in the last 20 years with the companies that want to achieve excellence. During the years the model has been modified and adapted due to the continuous development of the economics and corporate techniques.

Generally speaking the main characteristic of EFQM Excellence Model is that it embraces all sectors of a company without giving precise rules for achieving excellence but just a guide to follow and it has had a lot of success because it has resulted more complete compared with other models.

In the following pages I want to analyse my research question: what explains the success and diffusion of EFQM Excellence Model, what are the benefits that it has brought to the companies that have applied it and what are the limitations and so what developments of the model can be suggested?

The methodology used to answer this consists of several chapters: starting with chapter 1 a detailed description of the model and of all the different parts the model is divided in, the paper goes through chapter 2 with a deep theoretical analysis about what has been said by researchers in the literature about EFQM and how it is collocated inside total quality management theory and so also a comparison between similar models highlighting pros and cons, advantages and disadvantages.

To have a practical point of view I collected secondary data in chapter 3 taking as examples successful stories and best practices highlighted directly by the European Foundation for Quality Management describing why some companies are considered excellent and what the main benefits they receive by applying the model are.

Furthermore in chapter 4 I show some primary data that I collected interviewing four Italian managers from four different companies. The interviews consisted of 15 questions and were conducted by phone since the managers were based in different city of the State. Each interview
lasted between 15 and 20 minutes and it was very useful in understanding different points of view of the model.

The last chapter is about my experience at GlaxoSmithKlein as Operational Excellence Support where I worked on the EFQM document submission 2015. After an explanation of what the section where I worked does and how it applies the model I explained how managers at different levels and with different interests inside the company perceive the model, what the advantages and disadvantages are, how the model can be improved and so on. The interview was the same as I had done for the previous chapter but in this case I used it just as a guide focusing my attention on the field the manager was expert in.

After having highlighted the different points of view the chapter ends up with a brief explanation of EFQM Italy: a project that GlaxoSmithKline Italy wants to develop among the best Italian companies.

The conclusions of my job are about the answers to my research question but at the same time about some limitations of the model and about how, in my opinion, it can be developed and improved mentioning some theoretical concepts that the foundation has not considered yet.
1. What is the EFQM Excellence Model?

EFQM is a not-for-profit foundation, established to support sustainable economic development. The EFQM Excellence Model is a framework that has been used to drive sustainable organisational development for over 20 years. It can be applied to any organisation, regardless of size or sector. It is based on observation and experience from leading companies on what has made them successful and what they need to do to remain competitive in future. (EFQM, What we do)

The foundation is member based and these members may come from a diverse range of countries, sectors and industries but they share one goal - the pursuit of excellence. The network is made up of Partners who can support organisations, throughout and beyond Europe, in the local language. At the moment there are 30000 supported companies and these are helped in developing and growing.

The EFQM Excellence Model provides a platform to share experiences and learn from others. The desire to share, learn and innovate is what drives the economies forward. What was considered "best practice" yesterday rapidly enters the mainstream and becomes common practice today. To stay ahead, organisations need to adapt faster than ever introducing a proven practice from one sector to another.

1.1 The need for a model

EFQM is a not for profit membership foundation and for the past twenty years it has tried to explain how its members could implement their strategies. EFQM brings together organisations striving for Sustainable Excellence.

Regardless of sector, size, structure or maturity, organisations need to establish an appropriate management framework to be successful. The EFQM Excellence Model is a practical, non prescriptive framework that enables organisations to:

- assess where they are on the path to excellence; helping them to understand their key strengths, and potential gaps in relation to their stated Vision and Mission;
- provide a common vocabulary and way of thinking about the organisation that facilitates the effective communication of ideas, both within and outside the organisation;
- Integrate existing and planned initiatives, removing duplication and identifying gaps;
- Provide a basic structure for the organisation’s management system.

The holistic view presented by EFQM Excellence Model can be used to determine how these different methods fit together and complement each other. The Model can therefore be used in conjunction with any number of these tools, based on the needs and functions of the organisation, as an overarching framework for developing sustainable excellence (EFQM, 2013).

The EFQM was formed to recognise and promote sustainable success and to provide guidance to those seeking to achieve it. This is realised through a set of three integral components: The Fundamental Concepts of Excellence, The EFQM Excellence Model and the RADAR logic.

Using these three integrated components has helped organisations of all sizes and from all sectors to compare themselves with the attributes, qualities and achievements of sustainable organisations. They can use them to develop a culture of excellence, bring consistency to their management style, access good practices, drive innovation and improve their results.

Used appropriately, the EFQM Excellence Model, with the associated RADAR Logic and Fundamental Concepts, ensures that all the management practices used by an organisation form a coherent system that is continually improved and delivers the intended strategy for the organisation.

**1.1.1 FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF EXCELLENCE**

The Fundamental Concepts of Excellence underlie the principles, which are the essential foundation of achieving sustainable excellence for any organisation. They can be used as the basis to describe the attributes of an excellent organisational culture. They also serve as a common language for senior management.

Eight are, according to EFQM (2013), the Fundamental Concepts of excellence (Figure 1):

- Adding Value for Customers;
- Sustaining outstanding results;
- Leading with Vision, Inspiration & Integrity;
- Managing with agility;
- Succeeding through the talent of People;
- Harnessing Creativity & Innovation;
- Developing organisational capabilities;
- Creating a Sustainable Future

Figure 1

Adding Value for Customers

Excellent organisations know that customers are their primary reason for being and strive to innovate and create value for them by understanding and anticipating their needs and expectations.

They know who their different customer groups are, respond to and anticipate their different needs and expectations; they build and maintain a dialogue with all their customers, based on openness and transparency. They strive to innovate and create value for their customers and
ensure their people have the necessary tools, competencies, information and empowerment to be able to maximise the customer experience.

Continually monitor and review the experiences and perceptions of customers and respond quickly and effectively to any feedback.

They also involve customers in the development of new and innovative products, services and experiences.

Excellent organisations add value for customers also comparing their performances with relevant benchmarks and understanding their strengths in order to maximise the value itself.

**Sustaining outstanding Results**

Excellent organisation sustains excellent results and these results over the years in line with a long and short term needs of their stakeholders and in line with their operational contest.

So organizations are asked to respect the needs and expectations of their stakeholders and take them as inputs for the development of the strategy.

They should also comprehend key results to realize the mission and analyze the progresses through the vision.

To fix new goals, organisations have to clearly know all their performances, their possibilities and they always have to consider their competitors’ situation; evaluating and understanding the obtained results is the basis to create better performance for the future.

EFQM (2013) highlights that these organizations obtain high levels of trust from their stakeholders because they adopt efficient mechanisms to understand future scenarios and they manage strategic, operational and financial risks.

It’s also very important to guarantee a financial transparency to everyone and to ensure their leaders receive accurate and sufficient information so they can be supported in their job and in their daily decisions.
Leading with Vision, Inspiration & Integrity

This fundamental is about having leaders who shape the future and make it happen, acting as role models for its Values and Ethics.

Basically, excellent organisations have leaders who set and communicate a clear direction and strategic focus. They unite their people in sharing and achieving the organisation’s core purpose and objectives.

Leaders should understand the key business drivers, they balance the needs of the organisation and its stakeholders in planning for the achievement of present and future objectives.

They also demonstrate their ability to make sound and timely decisions, based on available information, previous experience and consideration of the impact of their decisions. They are flexible reviewing, adapting and realigning the direction of their organisation when necessary, inspiring trust at all times.

They recognise that sustainable advantage is dependent on their ability to learn quickly and respond rapidly with new ways of working.

Excellent leaders inspire people and create a culture of involvement, ownership, empowerment, improvement and accountability at all levels and, furthermore, they promote a culture which supports the generation and development of new ideas and new ways of thinking to encourage innovation and organisational development, always with transparency, ethics and responsibility towards their stakeholders.

Managing with Agility

EFQM (2013) defines excellent organisation as realities able to identify and answer to opportunities and risks.

In practice they use mechanisms to identify external changes and they translate them into opportunities, they use their strategy in applying processes, projects and organisational structures assuring that changes can become rapidly part of the value chain.
Managing with agility also means having proper performance indicators and measures to evaluate efficiency of processes. Furthermore performances data should be used to decide in which direction innovation and creativity should go.

Changes are, in excellent organizations, well managed thank to a good processes structure and a good governance. The organisational structure has to be flexible and able to adapt rapidly to better reach the goals. In the end excellent organisations manage their technological portfolio with agility to make better processes and projects.

**Succeeding through the talent of People**

Valuing people and creating a culture of empowerment for the balanced achievement of organisational and personal goals.

Practically they understand the skills and competencies required to achieve the Mission, Vision and strategic goals and they create culture where people can contribute to their own, and the organisation’s on-going success, realising their full potential in a spirit of true partnership. (EFQM, 2013)

Excellent organisations also align personal and team objectives with the organisation’s strategic goals and ensure their people are empowered to maximise their contribution, they adopt approaches that ensure a responsible work for their people, ensure and embrace the diversity of their people and share with them their vision, values and ethics.

They define the required levels of people performance and encourage their people to be the creators and ambassadors of the organisation’s on-going success.

**Harnessing Creativity & Innovation**

Excellent organisations generate increased value and levels of performance through continual and systematic innovation by harnessing the creativity of their stakeholders.
They establish and manage networks to identify opportunities for innovation from signals within the internal and external environment. They set clear goals and objectives for innovation and refine their strategy in line with innovation achievements.

Excellent organisations can create and generate innovation and ideas establishing approaches to engage people, partners, customers and society and they recognise that innovation can be applied to products, processes, marketing, organizational structures and business models.

It’s important to create a culture of entrepreneurship to enable innovation across all the aspects of the organisation.

Innovation can be used in a way that goes well beyond technical change and reveals new ways of offering value to customers, new ways of working and new ways of building on partnerships, resources and competencies; furthermore organisations use innovation to enhance their reputation and image. (EFQM, 2013)

**Developing organisational capabilities**

EFQM (2013) highlights that changes are to be managed with efficiency by excellent organisations. They in fact should analyze and keep under control the trends of their performances, their goals and their capabilities.

To reach their objective they should also be able to develop an successful organisational culture that emphasises its attention on getting teams to collaborate more efficiently, on working with partners and on building on appropriate networks to build the possibility of finding new opportunities for the future.

To do all this, also the financial resources have to be taken under observation to be sure they can be available for the organisation development support.
Creating a Sustainable Future

Excellent organisations embed within their culture an ethical mindset, clear Vision and the highest standards of organisational behaviour, all of which enable them to strive for economic, social and ecological sustainability.

Defining and communicating a core purpose that provides the basis for their overall Vision, Ethics and Values is to secure the organisation’s future.

They understand their key competencies to create a sustainable future, they consider three key values, People, Planet and Profit, trying to find a balance between them. Furthermore the empowerment of their stakeholders is essentials in guaranteeing the future of the company. In the end they should manage the resources thinking about future needs, product life cycles and the health and security of the surrounding environment.

1.1.2 The EFQM Excellence Model

![EFQM Excellence Model Diagram](image)

Figure 2

The EFQM Excellence Model is a non-prescriptive frame work based on nine criteria. Five of these are Enablers and four are Results. The Enabler section covers what an organization does and how it does it. The Result section covers what an organization achieves. The model can be read as Results are caused by enablers and Enablers are improved using feedback from Results.
The arrows (Figure 2) emphasise the dynamic nature of the model, showing learning, creativity and innovation 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 organizations and should be considered in the course of an assessment.

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

ENABLERS

The first enabler that we find on the model is **Leadership**: EFQM (2013) suggests that excellent organizations have leaders who shape the future and make it happen, acting as role models for its values and ethics and inspiring trust at all times. They are flexible, enabling the organization to anticipate and react in a timely manner to ensure the ongoing success of the organization. According to Sadeh et al. (2013) leadership acts as the engine for an organization and drives strategies to implement vision and mission by managing people, resources and processes.

This criterion is divided in five suggested points: the first one sees the leaders involved in developing the Mission, Vision, values and ethics and acting as role models. To do this they have to set and communicate a clear direction and strategic focus, define a core purpose that provides the basis for their overall Vision, Values, ethics and corporate behavior. Furthermore they act following social responsibility and behaving ethically, both internally and externally. Leaders of excellent organizations should develop a shared leadership culture for the organization itself and review and improve the effectiveness of personal leadership behaviors.

The second point is about defining, monitoring, reviewing and driving the improvement of the organization’s management system and performance. Leaders use a balanced set of results to review their progress, providing a view of long and short-term priorities for the key stakeholders,
with clearly defined “cause and effect” relationships. They develop and improve future performance and provide sustainable benefits to stakeholders and furthermore they make decisions on the bases of reliable information and use all available knowledge to interpret performances. They understand and develop capabilities, deliver high levels of stakeholder confidence by ensuring risks are identified and appropriately managed across all their processes.

As third suggestion the model says that Leaders engage with external stakeholders and in practice they know exactly who their stakeholders are, how to establish approaches to engage partners, identify strategic and operational partnerships, use innovation to develop the organization’s reputation and image and attract new customers, partners and talent.

Leaders also have another important role in an organization which is to reinforce a culture of excellence with the organisation’s people. Inspiring people and creating a culture of involvement, promoting a culture which supports the generation and development of new ideas and new ways of thinking to encourage innovation, supporting people throughout the organization to achieve the plans, targets and objectives, promoting and encouraging equal opportunities and diversity is what is asked of excellent leaders to satisfy this point.

In conclusion of the Leadership criterion, the EFQM model suggests that leaders should ensure that the organization is flexible and manages changes effectively. This means that leaders of excellent organizations are asked to understand the internal and external drivers of organizational change, demonstrate their ability making sound and timely decisions, are flexible, involve and seek the commitment of all relevant stakeholders, demonstrate their ability to maintain sustainable advantage through their capability to learn quickly and respond rapidly with new ways of working and they also allocate resources to provide for long-term needs rather than just short-term profitability and, where relevant, become and remain competitive.

The following enabler presented by the model is called strategy. Excellent organizations implement their Mission and Vision by developing a stakeholder focused strategy. Policies, plans, objectives and processes are developed and deployed to deliver the strategy (EFQM 2010).

Sadeh et al. (2013) highlight that implementing effective strategies involves creating partnerships, planning, resources, establishing process measurement systems, and modifying organizational
structures with explicit attention being paid to quality issues. In fact, effective strategies should assign the orientation of people’s efforts, and employees should be aligned with the organisation’s strategic directions (Samson & Terziovski 2009).

In this case, the model drives the organizations through four different suggestions. Strategy is based on understanding the needs and expectations of both the stakeholders and the external environment, they need to understand and anticipate the long and short-term impact of changes to relevant political, legal, regulatory and compliance requirements. Furthermore excellent organizations identify, understand and anticipate opportunities and threats, based on feedback from stakeholders and other external information and analyses.

The second point of strategy criterion is based on understanding internal performances and capabilities. In practice organizations that apply this model analyse operational performance trends, core competences and outcomes to understand current and potential organizational capabilities. They also analyse data and information regarding both existing and potential partners’ core competencies and capabilities to understand how they complement the organisation’s capabilities and to determine the impact of new technologies and business models on the performance of the organizations. They also compare their performances with relevant benchmarks to understand their relative strengths and areas for improvement.

Furthermore the strategy and supporting policies are developed, reviewed and updated to achieve the Mission and Vision of the company and the core competencies have to be used to generate benefit for all stakeholders, including the wider society. To understand future scenarios, excellent organizations adopt effective mechanisms and manage strategic risks. Part of this point is also the capability to understand the key business drivers: indeed they balance the needs of the organization and its stakeholders in planning for the achievement of present and future objectives.

The last point of this criterion is about the communication and implementation of the strategy and of the supporting policies excellent organizations define the required outcomes and related performance indicators and establish targets based on comparisons of their performance with other organizations and the Mission and Vision. They also deploy strategy in a systematic manner.
to achieve the desired set of results, balancing short and long term objectives. They maintain and align an organizational structure and a framework of key processes to deliver their strategy in a way that adds real value for their stakeholders, achieving the optimum balance of efficiency and effectiveness. The strategy has to be communicated to the stakeholders in an appropriate way and all the goals have to be set clearly and so the objective for innovation in a way that let the company to stay in line with innovation achievement.

The third enabler that plays a very important role in the model is People. EFQM (2013) says organisations value their people and create a culture that allows the mutually beneficial achievement of organizational and personal goals. They develop the capabilities of their people and promote fairness and equality. Reporting what has been said by Tari et al. (2007), Sadeh et al (2013) say that evidence shows that once empowered, people are clear about the purpose of their work and given appropriate freedom they will find the best way to achieve it. The employees are those who perform the processes, therefore, people are the factors that are able to act upon such processes in order to improve quality.

In particular, implementation of the people management programme such as skill training for employees and participation of staff in continuous activities leads to better products and processes.

In fact, EFQM suggests that excellent organizations care for, communicate, reward and recognize, in a way that motivates people, builds commitment and enables them to use their skill and knowledge for the benefit of the organization. Excellent organizations should have clearly defined the people performance levels required to achieve the strategic goals and align people plans with their strategy, the organizational structure, new technologies and key processes.

Doing this, involving employees, managing well the career development and the recruitment and using people surveys and other forms of employee feedback, the organization can support the strategy through people plans.

Also people’s knowledge and capabilities are important to be developed in an excellent organization in fact understanding the skills and the competencies is fundamental in achieving the Mission, the Vision and the strategic goals. People that are part of an excellent organisational have
to be trained following their skills and development plans and the individual and team objectives must be aligned. Furthermore people need the necessary tools, competencies, information and empowerment to be able to maximize their contribution.

People need to be involved in what the company does, in the mission and vision; they have be educated to become ambassadors of the values of the company and the organization should involve their people in continually reviewing, improving and optimizing the effectiveness and efficiency of their processes.

The organization has to understand the communication needs and expectations of their people developing communication strategies, policies, plans and channels. It’s very important to ensure that people understand and can demonstrate their contribution to the organisation’s ongoing success.

Furthermore encouraging the sharing of information, knowledge and best practices, achieving a dialogue throughout the organization is what make this point essential and relevant.

In the end People have to be rewarded, recognized and cared for with an alignment of remuneration, benefits, redeployment, redundancy and other terms of employment. An excellent organization ensures and embraces the diversity of their people and guarantees a healthy working environment encouraging their people to participate in activities that contribute to wider society.

**Partnerships and Resources** together form the fourth enabler. EFQM (2013) says that it’s important to plan and manage external partnerships, suppliers and internal resources in order to support strategy and policies and the effective operation of processes. Organisations have to ensure that they effectively manage their environmental and societal impact.

According to Sadeh et al. (2013) the involvement of suppliers and other external partners support strategy because as Kaynak (2013) highlights good suppliers affect processes giving to excellent companies, excellent materials.

To satisfy this criterion, the model suggests excellent organizations have to manage partners and suppliers to achieve a sustainable benefit. Mutual trust, respect, openness, long term partnerships are the basis of this point.
Furthermore they have to manage properly and in a sustainable way not only the finances developing strategies, designing planning, evaluating investments and so on but also buildings, equipment, materials and natural resources, developing and implementing strategies to have everything under control.

In addition they also should adopt and implement appropriate policies and approaches to minimize their local and global environmental impact, including setting challenging goals for meeting and exceeding legal standards and requirements.

Technology has to be managed to support the delivery of strategy and to do this, excellent organizations have to develop a strategy and supporting policies for managing the technology portfolio that supports the organisation’s overall strategy itself and they have to use technology to improve their daily work and to support innovation and creativity.

Information and knowledge have to be managed too, to support effective decision making and to build the organisation’s capability. Innovation and transformation of information in data are good tools for developing the general knowledge and so the capabilities and performances.

The last enabler presented by the model is about Processes, Products and Services. Excellent organizations design, manage and improve processes, products and services to generate increasing value for customers and other stakeholders (EFQM 2013).

Talking about processes, companies need to define and develop their processes and analyze, categorize and prioritize their end to end processes as part of the overall management system and adopt appropriate approaches to effectively manage them. It’s also very important that they turn new ideas into reality through innovation-enabling processes that fit the nature and importance of the changes they will make (EFQM 2003).

Additionally process management includes the application of environmental systems, which affects the achievement of society and also affects employees since they are those who perform most of the processes in the organization (Eskildsen, Kristensen & Juhl, 2000).
Regarding Products and Services (EFQM 2013) it is relevant to highlight that they are developed to create optimum value for customers. Excellent organizations should use market research, surveys and other forms of feedback to anticipate and identify improvements aimed at enhancing the product and service portfolio. Additionally to do this it’s necessary to understand and anticipate the impact of new technologies on products and services.

Moreover Products and Services have to be effectively marketed and promoted with a clear and defined value proposition, and marketing strategies have to be developed to effectively promote their products and services to target customers and user groups. After a good promotion, products and services need to be produced, delivered and managed to meet or exceed customer needs expectation.

Products have to be managed throughout their entire life cycle, including reusing and recycling where appropriate, considering any impact on public health, safety and the environment.

The logical consequence of these points is that due to a good action with the products and services that the company offers there will also be a benefit to the relationship with customers that needs to be managed and enhanced continually building a dialogue, being transparent and available to give all the information they need.

RESULTS

The first result chapter that has to be analysed in the model is called **Customer Results**.

What is excellent organizations asked to according to EFQM (2013), is to develop and agree a set of performance indicators and related outcomes to determine the successful deployment of their strategy and supporting policies, based on the needs and expectations of their strategy and of their customers. Furthermore they should set clear targets for Key Results based on the needs and expectations of their customers, in line with their chosen strategy and demonstrate positive or sustained customer results over at least three years.

To apply this model it’s necessary to understand the underlying reasons and drivers of observed trends and the impact these results will have on other performance indicators and related outcomes. They should try to anticipate future performance and results and understand how the
Key Results they achieve compare to similar organizations and use this data, where relevant, for target setting. In the end they need to segment results to understand the experience, needs and expectations of specific customer groups.

Each customer chapter is divided in “perceptions” and “performance indicators”. Regarding Customer Results Perceptions an organization may obtain information through surveys, focus group, vendor ratings, compliments and complaints. These perceptions should give a clear understanding of the effectiveness, from the customer’s perspective, of the deployment and execution of the organization’s customer strategy and supporting policies and processes. Performance Indicators on the other hand are the internal measures used by the organization in order to monitor, understand, predict and improve the performance of the organization and to predict their impact on the perceptions of its external customers.

These indicators should give a clear understanding of the efficiency and effectiveness of the deployment and execution of the organization’s customer strategy and supporting policies and processes. Some examples of measures that a company might focus on are: Reputation, image, product and service value and delivery, customer service, relationship, support and possible compliments and complaints, customer loyalty and engagement, end external recognition.

People Results are analysed right after the Customer’s ones. This criterion says that excellent organisations should develop and agree a set of performance indicators and related outcomes to determine the successful deployment of their strategy and supporting policies, based on the needs and expectations of their people.

They should also set clear targets for Key Results based on the needs and expectations of their people, in line with chosen strategy (EFQM 2013)

In addition it’s important to anticipate future performance and results and understand the Key results comparing these to other similar organisations and setting relevant and challenging targets. Depending on the purpose of the organisation, this criterion might focus on: satisfaction, involvement, leadership and management, working conditions, engagement, target setting, career development and internal communication.
**Society Results** are those results that, if well achieved, let the organisation develop and agree a set of performance indicators and related outcomes useful in determining the successful deployment of their societal and ecological strategy and policies based on the needs and expectations of the relevant external stakeholders.

Also in this chapter is important to build the future of the organisation understanding in advance the future results and the performances (EFQM 2010; 2013).

In this case excellent organisations should segment results to understand the experience, needs, and expectations of specific stakeholders within Society.

Society's perceptions of the organisation may be obtained from a number of sources, including surveys, reports, press articles, public meetings, NGOs, public representatives and governmental authorities. These perceptions give a clear understanding of the effectiveness, from society’s perspective of the deployment and execution of the organisation’s societal and environmental strategy and supporting policies and processes. Through the performance indicators that are internal measures used by the organisation in order to monitor, understand, predict and improve the performances and to predict on the perceptions of society, organisations may evaluate the environmental impact, the image and reputation, the general societal impact, the workplace impact and health and safety aspect of their performances.

The last chapter of the EFQM excellence model is dedicated to **Key Results**.

These are about developing and agreeing a set of key financial and non financial results to determine the successful deployment of their strategy, based on the needs and expectation of their key stakeholders. Also in this case, showing benchmarks, targets, trends and future hypothesis is the basis to demonstrate the success of the organisation’s deployment of their strategy. Regarding Key Results we cannot talk about perceptions but we talk about Key Strategic Outcomes. Those which are usually investigated are: financial outcomes, performances against budget, volume of key products and key processes. On the other hand the performance indicators that are usually used to analyse the outcomes are the financial performance indicators, project costs, process performance indicators, partners and suppliers performances and technology, information and knowledge.
1.1.3 RADAR Logic

The RADAR logic (Figure 3) is a dynamic assessment framework and powerful management tool that provides a structured approach to questioning the performance of an organisation.

At the highest level, RADAR logic states that an organisation needs to determine the Results and plan and develop an integrated set of sound approaches to deliver the required results both now and in the future. In addition this logic says that organisations should deploy the approaches in a systematic way to ensure implementation and assess and refine the deployed approaches based on monitoring and analysis of the results achieved and ongoing learning activities.

The enabler matrix (Appendix 1) is used to support the analysis of the approaches within the five Enabler criteria: Leadership, Strategy, People, Partnerships&Resources, Processes Products and Services. The results matrix (Appendix 2) is used to support the analysis of the results within the four Results Criteria: Customer Results, People Results, Society Results and Key Results.

The elements useful for analysing the enablers are:
• **Approach**: this explains what an organisation plans to do and the reasons for it. A sound approach has a clear rational that focuses on the organisation’s present and future needs; it is delivered through well-defined processes, and has a clear focus on the needs of the stakeholders and of the approaches used. In addition, the approaches will be integrated and linked to other approaches where appropriate.

• **Deployment**: this covers what an organisation does to deploy the approach. In an excellent organisation the approach will be implemented in relevant areas in a systematic way. Systematic implementation is well planned and is introduced in a manner suitable for the approach and the organisation. An ability to manage changes to approaches in an appropriate time-frame will exist.

• **Assessment and Refinement**: this covers what an organisation does to assess and refine both the approach and the deployment of the approach. In an excellent organisation the approach and the deployment of it will be subject to regular measurement of efficiency and effectiveness. Learning activities will be undertaken, practices will exist to bring creativity to bear in generating ideas for new or changed approaches. The output from measurement, learning and creativity will be used to identify, prioritise, plan and implement improvement and innovation.

On the other hand, the analysis of the Results is based on:

• **Relevance and Usability**: the result data should be comprehensive, timely, reliable, accurate, appropriately segmented and consistent with strategy and the needs and expectations of relevant stakeholders. Relationships between relevant Results and their impact on one other should be understood and Key Results should be identified and prioritised.

• **Performance Outcomes**: in an excellent organisation, results will show positive trends and/or sustained good performance. Targets will be set for Key Results and will be appropriate and met or exceeded. Also for Key Results, performance will be compared externally and the comparisons will be favourable, particularly against best in sector and/or world class. Understanding of the relationships between Key Enablers and Key Results will provide confidence that positive performance will be sustained in the future.
2. The collocation of EFQM inside TQM theory

2.1 What is TQM?

According to Galgano (2008) Total Quality Management (TQM) is an organizational model adopted by all companies that want to be leaders and it represents an important change in managing quality. Total Quality Management was born first in Japan and it has been diffused in the US in the '50s and it means that all the company has to be in its mission. This requires the optimization of every single resource and every effort without any wastefulness.

TQM has also been defined by Bou-Llusar et al. (2008) as an approach to management that embraces both social and technical dimensions aimed at achieving excellent results, which needs to be put into practice through a specific framework.

Later, 8 principles have been defined to give a more precise definition of “quality Management”:

Customer orientation

Leadership;

Personnel involvement;

Processes orientation;

Systemic approach to management;

Improvement through customer relationship, innovation and processes control;

Decision based on sales analyses, marketing research, customers’ feedback;

Strong relationship with suppliers.

Furthermore Total Quality Management doesn’t analyze how much “doing quality” costs but also how much “not doing quality” costs in terms of problems that a company could have if it doesn’t care about quality. Galgano (2008) says that today every company builds a competitive advantage based on a global and coherent approach that involves every aspect of the company and so a strategy based on Total Quality has the satisfaction of all the interested parties (clients, suppliers,
stakeholders) as a goal. In this way the company doesn’t produce just a product or service but it produces Quality. Furthermore talking about Total Quality also means that all the people that work for the company have to feel free to ask whatever they need and they should think about their work as something that brings interest to the company without any internal competition.

2.2 The birth of Excellence

There are several approaches that have been presented during the years to respond to the highly competitive external environment. According to Dahlgaard et al (2013) enterprises continuously search for new effective approaches to enhancing their management capabilities. Among various approaches such as Business Process Reengineering (BPR), Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), Organizational Change Management (OCM) etc two are the most popular ones: Total Quality Management (TQM) and Business Excellence Models (BEM).

In this category the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) also has to be mentioned because it is a tool that supports the strategic management of a company and allows the mission and the strategy to be translated into a set of performance measures (Kaplan and Norton, 1992).

Dahlgaard et al. (2013) highlight that BEM has been in many cases developed or supported by national bodies as a basis for award programs and for the adaption of the principles and methods of TQM and Business Excellence. Today, more than 80 national and state/regional awards base their frameworks upon the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) criteria or the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)/ European Excellence Award criteria (Mann, 2011).

Some further research has shown that implementing TQM/BEM, organizations can obtain significant benefits including both increased financial profit and non-financial outcomes (Dahlgaard et al, 2013). That means that investing in Excellence as a core of business strategy pays, and furthermore excellence strategies contribute to business performance through increased sales and also through reduced cost and process efficiency.

At the same time research by Powell (1995) and Fisher et al (2001) shows that the use of BEM does not always guarantee success. The reason is that there is a wide range of barriers which may explain the difficulty of applying these kind of model. Among others, some of the main barriers are
the lack of top management commitment, limited resources, fear of change, work overload, lack of comprehensive quality improvement education and lack of staff involvement (Corbett & Angell, 2011). At the end Dahlgaard and Park (2008) pointed out that one of the invisible barriers is how BEMs are perceived and understood by the users because people’s perceptions and understanding guide the behavior in the context of using such models.

Dahlgaard et al. (2013) wanted to investigate on the possible weaknesses on BEM.

First of all one potential limitation of existing BEMs is related to the poor performance of past MBNQA winners such as Cadillac, Federal Express, Wallace and Motorola; so companies started asking themselves about the values of these awards.

The article points out that even if the use of BEMs can produce both financial and non financial benefits to an organization it is evident that a National Quality Award cannot be a guarantee for long-term success. Furthermore the potential weaknesses related to the operations of self-assessment in relation to award application include too sophisticated assessment criteria, excessive paperwork, cumbersome procedures, lack of infrastructure, excessive bureaucracy, time consumption, and a lack of focus (Main, 1991).

According with Dahlgaard et al (2013) it is important to focus the attention on the most common reported limitations and weaknesses related to the operation of self assessment which is the starting point of the application of excellence models since it let the company understand more deeply what the model is, how to apply it and the starting level of preparation of the company itself.

The first discussion point is that the existing BEMs are essentially non prescriptive framework designs mainly for assessment of award applications and hence they do not provide specific guidelines for management control purposes including the application of management tools and techniques. Companies have to find out their own ways to do simple and regular self-assessments which are not so resource demanding as award application assessments. They also are required to discover new ways to involve their employees in the regular assessments. One such way is a questionnaire approach where employees are invited to assess selected key performance
indicators (potential areas to address) related to each criterion as well as their perceived importance.

The second discussion point, according to the authors, is about the BEMs’ lack of persuasion that can be a limit for Total Employee Involvement which is one of the most critical success factors in the pursuit of Business Excellence. The structure and language of existing BEM invites for “expert involvement” instead. Regarding this aspect the research done by Jackson (2004) and Capman (2000) shows that cooperation and teamwork are necessary ingredients for successful BEM initiatives. The reason is the complexity of processes that places them, beyond the control of any individual and thus the only efficient way to take process improvements is through effective teamwork which relies on the premise that people are willing and able to support any effort in which they are expected and trusted to participate.

The third and last discussion point analyzes that despite having a holistic perspective at its conceptual level the existing models lack guidance for integration at the operational level. This third aspect is strictly linked with what has been said by the EFQM Excellence Model that defines itself as a practical, non-prescriptive framework that enables organizations to: Integrate existing and planned initiatives, removing duplications and identifying gaps.

2.3 THE “4P” EXCELLENCE MODEL

This model has been created as an improvement with the aim of providing an integrated approach between various and often conflicting aspects such as those intangible and tangible, subjective and objective, rational and irrational, personal and organizational, as there is no BEM model which embraces those different elements of organizational realities.

The 4P model (represented in the figure 4A) provides a recommended structure or sustainable strategy for achieving innovation excellence (Dahlgaard and Dahlgaard-Park, 2011). According to the model, building quality or excellence into the 4P is a precondition for Organizational Excellence (OE): People, Partnerships, Processes, Products.
Figure 4B shows that the model is as “enabler-result model” with five criteria where the first fours are so-called enablers or critical facts for the results (products and services). The four enablers comprise a system of four interrelated components, where the first three enablers may be called the Management system, and the fourth enabler, the process component, develops, produces and delivers products and services to the market in accordance with the company’s strategies and plans.
According to Dahlgaard et al. (2013) Business excellence models should always be flexible so that companies can adapt such models to new needs and challenges. Flexibility, in this field has to be intended as the capacity to be a model that can adapt to any kind of company: the key performance measures, the processes, the services, and the leadership have to be described as something that any organization can recognize inside their reality or as something that can be introduced or involved.

The flexibility of the 4P model has been tested several times on some whole companies, or a department or a key manufacturing process and in all these applications the challenge was to adapt the 4P to the actual context so that relevant results and key performance indicators could be included in the model and later measured by using traditional measurement combined with employees perceived measurement scores collected by using the questionnaire.

### 2.4 The evolution of BEM

Dahlgaard et al. (2013) explain another response to the limitations of the existing BEMs which is a new overall business excellence framework (BEF). This has a three-dimensional design which complements existing BEM helping to integrate appropriate management tools/techniques and the right organizational culture. (Figure 5)
The applied BEM and Management tools are placed in the left and the right halves of the inner circle, respectively, indicating on the one hand that they serve as two independent functions in management control applications, and on the other hand, that the two functions should be integrated as one entity in a circle. The dotted line in the circle means that the two functions are not only coming together to become one but also a step further to become interdependent of each other.

The third dimension placed in the outer circle indicates that in order to be successful in the journey towards BE a “desirable organizational culture” should be cultivated. The authors here want to emphasize that the “desirable organizational culture” has to be identified and defined not only by the top management team but by all members in the organization (Dahlgaard & Dahlgaard-Park, 1999, 2004) and should be communicated, deployed, practiced, checked and reflected like any other strategic process initiated by top management.

The desirable culture has to be intended, in my opinion, as a culture that make work job place a pleasant environment. The model wants to help organizations on building a place that on one hand has excellent performances and on the other hand is excellent itself for every member of the company. From the top management to the personnel the company has to be perceived as a place where everybody feels happy, satisfied, and rewarded. If it happens, and if this culture and way of thinking is well diffused, the excellent performances are the right consequences: this is why, in my opinion the organizational culture has been put in the outer circle together with “organizational characteristics”. These together are the two elements that, if present and embedded, can help the organization in satisfying the elements in the inner circle and so on its path towards excellence.

2.5 The most well known BEMs: MBNQA, Deming Prize, EFQM Excellence Model

As already said above, the use of BEM has two purposes: on one hand there is the fact of guiding the organization towards Business Excellence and on the other hand there is the action of conducting assessment of the performances. Business excellence doesn’t regard only financial results, or customer satisfaction or personnel satisfaction, it is a mix of elements that sees the development of the company as a step that influences another step. More precisely I perceive
business excellence as a long journey through a sustainable and at the same time successful organizational development. BEMs highlight that companies focus simultaneously on customers, on people, on how to make a profit but with respect. Furthermore some of the models take into consideration that the impact on society and also how to allocate the resources and the services that are available to the organization have to be considered. So the measurement of excellence is done by the results that companies achieve respecting and considering all these aspects that characterize BEMs together.

Among all, Dahlgaard et al (2013) highlight the three most well known BEMs that are MBNQA, Deming Prize and EFQM Excellence Model.

The Deming Prize is, according to Evans, James R, William M (1993) a quality award known globally that recognizes both individuals for their contributions to the field of TQM and businesses that have successfully implemented TQM itself. This model is the oldest one having being established in 1951 in Japan.

MBNQA, as the official website clearly highlights, educates organizations in performance excellence and is awarded for recognizing American organizations in all sectors of the economy: business, health care, education, non-profit. It is the only formal recognition of the performance excellence of both public and private U.S. organizations given by the President of the United States and it is administrated by Baldrige Performance Excellence.

The name is to honor and remember Malcom Baldrige who served as US Secretary of Commerce during the Reagan administration, from 1981 until Baldrige’s 1987 accidentally death.

EFQM, even if it has a different form, has a similar mission to MBNQA with the difference that it was born to be a reference for European companies, in fact, it was established in Brussels.

Leaving apart the Deming Prize I want to focus on a comparison between MBNQA and EFQM these being the most popular at the moment in the US and in Europe respectively. I am taking as my main reference a paper written by J.Carlos Bou-Llусar, Ana B. Escrig-Tena, Vicente Roca-Puig, Immaculada Beltrán-Martin (2008).
Models like MBNQA and EFQM are used as a guide to TQM implementation by a large number of organizations. Nevertheless there is a paucity of empirical research confirming whether these models clearly reflect the main premises of TQM.

Since the 1990s, most firms have used the models underpinning quality awards as a framework for implementing TQM initiatives and many researchers have considered quality models as operational frameworks for TQM.

While there is some evidence that confirms that MBNQA and its criteria capture TQM core concepts, it is still unknown if EFQM does. (Carlos Bou-Llusar et al., 2008)

For this reason Carlos Bou-Llusar et al. (2008) want to investigate if the EFQM Excellence Model takes into account the basic TQM assumptions. The way that they adopted to understand it is analyzing the internal structure of quality awards models to see if it is possible to assess the application of TQM.

There is a general agreement regarding the assumptions included in the TQM concept, which can be summarized in three main points.

First of all the core concepts of TQM can be classified into two broad categories or dimensions: social or soft TQM, and technical or hard TQM. The social issues are centered on human resource management and emphasize leadership, teamwork, training, and employee involvement. The technical issues reflect an orientation towards improving production methods and operations and seek to establish working cases and procedures to make possible the constant improvement of goods and services to customers.

Second of all the management of soft or hard TQM issues cannot be performed in isolation. Social and technical dimensions should be interrelated and mutually support on other. Reflecting the holistic character of TQM initiatives, this holistic character is also extended to the expected results of a TQM initiative, as a balance of primary and secondary stakeholders’ interests should be considered when the firm defines TQM practices.

In the end, the third point regards the suggestion made by the literature which says the optimal management of TQM core concepts will lead to better organizational performance, as studies such
as Powell (1995) and others have verified. The basic theoretical foundation for this relationship is based on the assumption that TQM provides superior value to the customer by identifying their expressed and latent needs, responsiveness to changing markets, as well as through improving the efficiency of the processes that produce the product or service. TQM embraces so many different aspects that give customers a clear vision of the considered company and, in case, of its competitors that can result as alternatives to customers themselves.

Now the question is: does the EFQM Excellence Model have the attributes and the factors to be considered as part of Total Quality Management Theory?

J. Carlos Bou et al (2008) conducted a focused analysis on the characteristics of the model that I am considering.

As already said in the first chapter, the EFQM Excellence Model was created in 1991 by the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) as a framework against which applicants for the European Quality Award are judged, and to recognize organizational excellence in European companies. Nowadays EFQM brings together more than 700 members located in many countries across the world. It is made up of nine elements grouped under five enabler criteria and four result criteria.

The enablers represent the way the organization operates and the results concentrate on achievements relating to organizational stakeholders (EFQM, 2003). Each criterion has several sub-criteria and each one of these is described with some guidance points that exemplify what the organization has to do in order to develop the criteria.

According to Westlund (2001) in the European context, the EFQM Excellence Model is considered to constitute a valid representation of TQM and so it is important to investigate the presence of an evident distinction between technical and social TQM issues and the holistic interpretation of it.

Nbitz and Klazinga (1999) say that the EFQM Model embraces processes, structures and means that the organization can use it to manage quality. In order to analyze if EFQM represents separately the social and technical factors of TQM, they classify the enabler criteria into categories to capture the multidimensionality of the TQM construct. In this regard, following the categorization proposed by Rahman (2004) the enabler side of the model is organized by following
the distinction between the “social” and “technical” aspects of TQM. Moreover Brown (2002) says that the enablers “people” and “leadership” are social aspects while “processes products and services” (that in 2002 were just called “processes”) and “partnerships and resources” comprise technical aspects. The last enabler (strategy) guides, in his opinion, the management of the remaining criteria and contains items that relate to both soft and hard issues.

Strategy is a crucial element of the model because it helps to keep under control the organization’s efforts to follow the mission and so the vision that it has and furthermore the strategy should be kept in line with the values that the company wants to preserve. In addition a good strategy lets the company take into account the elements that characterize the market and sector in which it operates.

The model structure also reflects the holistic character of the TQM initiatives and consider the interrelationships in both the enabler and the result criteria. According with Bou-Llusar et al. (2008) enablers excellence is interpreted in this study as the overall approach that firms should adopt when they implement EFQM, and this is reflected in the level achieved by the firm in both the social and technical dimensions, together with strategy criteria. So, this means that a change that affects one criterion affects the others too and viceversa. This is a clear image of the interdependence between all the components of the model.

Likewise we can have a similar thought about the results chapters. In fact an outstanding achieved result contribute to outcomes on others and so interrelationship is expected to exist as well.

According to the description by Bou-Llusar et al. (2008) the results collect tangible and economic terms together with less tangible measures, such as customer perceptions or employee motivation level.

About these measures it’s evident that studying the EFQM Excellence Model we can see that for each result chapter (customer, people, society and key results) there are tools based on perceptions and tools based on economical factors. I would like to bring the attention to a couple of examples. Talking about customer results the model suggests as indicative measure what can be called “customer survey”. This evaluates the satisfaction in a subjective way: each single customer can evaluate his relationship with the company answering some questions about how he
feels have been treated, about the perceived quality of the products and/or services. From the company’s point of view this survey can be a great opportunity to know what their customers feel and how they evaluate the company’s work but at the same time it also needs some data that can give it a better understanding on how they should work to develop the performances in the right direction. An example can be keeping under attention the capacity that the company has to satisfy customers’ needs on time and with quality. To do this, the model suggests always having a target that has to be reached and a benchmark to compare with.

Another example that in my opinion can be considered similar and very useful is an analysis on the people result chapter. It’s of course important to evaluate the capacity and the ability of the personnel in working respecting dates, quality rules, customer needs and so on, and this can again be measured with monthly or annually exams on the targets that the company has. On the other hand, how to know if all the employees are happy about their work place and about their managers? Once again a survey can be helpful to understand it. In fact it’s not a secret that a good performance depends also on the feelings that people inside the company have.

Furthermore it is very important that everything in the company is connected. For example: a good performance can depend surely by the job done by people but it’s important that the strategy, the mission and vision of the company are perfectly understood by everyone in the company.

Returning on how the model is divided in enablers and results, later on I will explain with the support of some literature how they are linked together and how they influence each other.

At the moment I just want to demonstrate that this link exists and since this is a requirement to be able to define EFQM Excellence Model a framework of TQM I will briefly explain why we can say that all the factors are linked together.

First of all it’s important to say that the five enablers are required to explain what the company does, how it does it, with which strategy, and what is its goal. Understanding that, it’s evident that results are strictly connected to enablers because results explain the output of the set enablers. For example if a goal is wrongly set and wrongly explained in the enablers, it’s very difficult that the result will be excellent. More precisely, let’s imagine that a company, has in its strategy
(enabler n°2) the goal to improve customer satisfaction (result n°1). To do it the company sets, as described in section n° 5 (processes), how it wants to reach the goal. If the process is not well thought and clear to the all company it’s very difficult that result will be achieved.

This means that each different aspect of the model influences one or more of the other elements. Saying that, and assuming that everything is true and there are no limitations about interrelationships between the elements, and furthermore the empirical validation of the proposed model will enable any organization to examine the extent to which the TQM dimensions (social and technical) are included in the EFQM Excellence model, we can say that EFQM effectively reflects the main TQM assumptions and could be considered as an operational framework for TQM.

The arrows in the image that shows all the components of the model want to show exactly how this framework is made up of a flow of connected steps. (Figure 6)

2.6 Has the MBNQA Model the same characteristics?

Similar studies to understand the relationship between the theory of TQM and MBNQA have been conducted (Figure 7). Pannirselvam and Ferguson (2001) found that it reflects the relationships between the various elements needed by managers to improve organizational performance and
proposed that organizations need to broaden their focus from quality control techniques and product design processes to a multifaceted view of TQM.

Lee et al. (2003) on the other side, found that organizational success depends on adopting both primary (strategic planning, customers and market focus) and supportive (human resources and process management) quality programs. They also noticed that links are required between leadership and quality systems, and between quality information and analysis and quality systems. Furthermore, links have been found between leadership and human resources management and also between customer/market focus and performances.

In conclusion, a positive influence on enablers and results criteria is also supported by most of the studies that have analyzed the MBNQA model.

![Baldrige Award Model](image)

**Figure 7**

### 2.7 Further considerations about the links between the different EFQM criteria

As anticipated before, I want to focus more on how the different enablers and results are connected and interrelated in EFQM Excellence model. Sadeh et al. (2013)
According to Sadeh et al. (2013) TQM theory holds that leaders can organize and synergise people’s activities to achieve the common goal of the organization in which employees can become fully involved in obtaining organizational objectives.

In addition, leaders can provide training for people in the use of quality principles and tools. Managers also lead the process indirectly through using their power to facilitate the allocation of necessary resources and supporting TQM activities. Further, for the same purpose, leaders should maintain a relationship with suppliers, and establish clear and appropriate standards for them.

This means that Leadership positively influences strategy, people and also partnerships and resources.

Talking now about strategy Sadeth and al. (2013) say that effective strategies should assign the orientation of people’s efforts and employees should be aligned with the organisation’s strategic directions. Also, the logic TQM indicates that the management of partnerships and resources is defined as a part of company strategy.

Furthermore, customer-oriented strategies can lead the efforts of the organization in managing, designing and improving processes in a manner that fully satisfies the clients.

Following the author’s idea we can say that people, partnership and resources and processes are all criteria positively influenced by the strategy enabler.

When the authors talk about people criterion they describe it as something that influences processes and people results so once again it is evident that inside EFQM there is not only correlation between the enablers but also between enablers and results.

In particular implementation of people management programme such as skill training for employees and participation of staff in continuous activities lead to better products and processes. Excellent organizations also motivate their people and promote their commitment to devoting all their abilities and knowledge to the organisation’s benefit by caring for, communicating, rewarding and recognizing them. Such activities enhance the level of employees.

Partnership and resources influence, on the other hand, processes. In fact the production of good products necessitates qualified suppliers and high-quality purchased materials and parts as the
main source of process variability. This means that competent suppliers and premium materials affect process management (Kaynak, 2003).

The last enabler, processes products and services, influences customer results, people results and society results. Process management indeed is expected to influence the achievements of all organizational stakeholders including clients, staff and society (Sedeh et al. 2013).

The authors, according to Madan (2010), highlight that customer results are related to the achievements of an organization in satisfying its external customers, where the priority of the external customers’ satisfaction is emphasized. TQM is based on the idea of customer satisfaction. Customer satisfaction has long been recognized as one of the critical success factors in today’s competitive business environment as it affects companies’ results. So we can say that customer results are strictly connected with key results.

People results regard the satisfaction, the motivation and the good preparation of employees in a way that let them do their tasks and duties more yieldingly which not leads to achieving better customer results but also ends in obtaining more performance results.

There is evidence, according with Chang, Chiub, Chen (2010) that there are links between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction. One of the key ideas behind TQM is that the employee empowerment can help in improving the performances through a good collaboration among the different organizational work units. This means that people results positively influence both customer results and key results.

Key result on the other hand influence society results because society results reflect the achievements of a company that is related to the environment of the area in which it is. In fact achieving good results with respect to community can improve the perceptions that society has of the organization itself. This is a great help for ending with outstanding results, once again, for the company.

In the end we can say that achieving excellent performances through a good strategy is the main goal of a company and the final results may be positive both in the financial and non-financial fields.
2.8 The innovation brought by the EFQM

EFQM introduced in Europe something that there was not there before: a similar model to MBNQA which was already diffused in the US. In a business world that is always bigger and more competitive, companies started to feel the need to have a valid tool that could give the possibility to evaluate the performances in a holistic way and the EFQM Excellence Model answered this question it being not only a quality model about the final product but also a tool that allows us to consider the links between every aspect of the organization, from the relationship between the management and people, to the customer satisfaction, to the strategy in line with the mission and vision, to the economical results, and the perceptions felt by society.

All this is guided by elements called enablers that let the company understand if what is done is effectively something useful to achieve the final results or not.

So we can talk about something innovative. Innovation is, according to Tidd and Bessant (2013), about change and this can take several forms. The four biggest categories are: Product Innovation that is about changes in things (products and services) which an organization offers. The second category is Process Innovation which is about the way in which products and services are created and delivered. The third category is called Position Innovation and it’s about changes in the context in which the products/services are introduced and in the end the fourth category is Paradigm Innovation where changes in the underlying mental models frame what the organization does.

There is also another distinction that is needed to be done in fact innovation can be incremental or radical (Figure 8).
Innovation is called incremental if it introduces something new but still in line with something already existing, let’s say an improvement of a product or service or process and so on.

It is called, on the other hand, radical innovation when we consider the introduction of a product, service or process that didn’t exist before, if it is totally different from what is already known.

Thinking about some examples, a new version of established car model is to be considered incremental innovation but when Toyota introduced the car model called Prius which is hybrid engines it was a radical innovation. That particular technology wasn’t already been introduced by anybody else. (Tidd and Bessant, 2013).

EFQM adapts perfectly to the definition of innovation that Tidd and Bessant (2013) give when they want to summarize all the concepts that innovation includes:

Learning and Adaptation are essential in the inherently uncertain future, thus innovation is an imperative.
Innovation is about interaction of Technology, Market and Organization.

Innovation can be linked to a generic process which all enterprises have to find their way through.

Routines are learned patterns of bahaviour which become embodied in structures and procedures over time. As such they are hard to copy and highly firm-specific.

Innovation management is the search for effective routines, in other words, it is about managing the learning process towards more effective routines to deal with the challenges of the innovation.

They say also that innovation management is not a matter of doing one or two things well, but about good all-round performance. There are no simple bullets but a set of learned behaviours. In particular they highlight four characteristics of Successful Innovation:

- Successful innovation is strategy based
- It depends on effective internal and external linkages
- It requires effective enabling to make change happen
- It Happens only within a supporting organizational context.

The EFQM excellence model perfectly adapts to this definition in fact it is based on learning and adaptation. The model itself has changed a bit during the years and each company that wants to apply it has to learn it and adapt it starting with a self assessment and going on with document submissions every two or three years.

Furthermore EFQM is also innovative because it is about the interaction of different fields and it is applicable to every kind of enterprise, public and private. It has to be embedded to become a routine, it is not a model that can be simply applied but it has to be perfectly understood and integrated inside the company giving the possibility to always afford new challenges.

Without a solid strategy the model has no sense to exist, it implicates internal and external linkages, from people to customer and even society. And furthermore a very important aspect that is usually considered a great advantage is a indirect external link: the possibility of benchmarking with other companies that run through excellence.
In the end it sees enabling mechanisms that allow companies to achieve the results and so also the needed changes supported by a structured organizational context.

One other innovation introduced by the model is that it doesn’t just suggest how to achieve quality: it talks about excellence which is something more complete, deeper and new.

I would like to conclude this chapter talking about how we can consider ambidexterity linked to TQM and so to EFQM Excellence Model.

According to Luzon and Pasola (2011) ambidexterity is a metaphor which is used to highlight organizations that are capable of exploitation (activities and learning through a specific search, a fine tuning and improvement of what already exists) and exploration (learning through completely new processes, planned experimentation and play) or, in other words, being aligned with current activities and being efficient enough to meet the demands while, simultaneously, adapting to and anticipating future change.

In short, it implies achieving opposite objectives: efficiency versus flexibility, stability, versus adaptation, short term profits as opposed to long-term growth.

As already said EFQM is a model that companies apply to certify their system and their guide quality management approach and it’s the most advanced model in terms of depth and breadth of the practical treatment of TQM principles.

According to the authors, the synergy between TQM principles, their influence on ambidexterity and depth of applying TQM principles themselves means that these factors are key elements to bear in mind for those organizations that wish to maximize the potential of TQM in order to foster ambidexterity.

Lastly highlighting the models for the application of TQM, which have become almost essential for firms wanting to introduce these programs and obtain the benefits of certification, may play an important in the connection between the introduction of QM and ambidexterity.

The EFQM Excellence Model has a more advanced approach to TQM than other models that have less wide-reaching application of the more galvanizing organic elements of suitable platform for the generation of ambidexterity. For example, another model very common in Europe is the ISO
9000 but it just identifies a series of norms and guidelines that define the required aspects that have to be respected to conduct processes, to develop efficiency in product realization and to satisfy the customer by a company.

This chapter was about the theoretical studies that have been conducted during the years that analyze what differs EFQM from other model, what are the main aspects of Total Quality Management, how these models can be considered in line with this theory and what are some of the benefits that applying EFQM Model can bring to the organizations that want to achieve excellent results.

2.9 TQM Summary

After a careful study on the literature about TQM I can summarize it as a strategic framework with the aim of installing and making permanent a climate in which an organization continuously improves its ability to deliver high quality products and services to customers being sure that all their needs and expectations are satisfied. TQM embraces different aspects of the companies saying that all these have to be connected between themselves starting from customers and personnel satisfaction going through innovation, processes, sales, leadership and strategy. Quality is defined as the perfect compromise between all these aspects and, more precisely it’s only with the right attention to everything that companies can be defined as excellent.

TQM and other Excellence Business models are always more used by companies that want to achieve excellence. Excellence has to be taken as a mix of elements that companies need to focus on, for example: customer satisfaction, people satisfaction, processes, strategy, leadership, financial tools and so on. All these aspects have to be considered together because to be excellent in just one of these doesn’t guarantee the overall excellence.

It has been demonstrated that EFQM is one of the models that respects all the TQM criteria and so it can be considered part of it. EFQM embraces five criteria called enablers that have as output for results. This award model want to give suggestions to companies to achieve excellence, it is non-prescriptive and adaptable to any kind of organization.
EFQM is the most diffused model in Europe but it’s just an example about how TQM can be a framework that can help organizations in measuring their performances and evaluate their path through excellence.

In conclusion we can say that TQM is more than just a quality model because it involves the company at every single step and evaluate its excellence not only in terms of the final product but also of all the processes that a company goes through. It guides organizations along the path of development that is needed to be always competitive and innovative to achieve the vision in line with the mission and strategy respecting the values the environment and creating a sustainable future.

2.10 TQM Considerations

To conclude this chapter I would like to write something about what I perceived studying TQM and EFQM Excellence Model. In particular I would like to focus my attention on important concepts that, in my opinion, are present in the model and in the foundation but not sufficiently expressed. I would like to explain my interpretation and to give some definitions of the concepts of quality and excellence, the difference between “to manage” and “to lead” and the term of strategy (and vision). Furthermore I would like to explain from a personal point of view the reason why the model can be considered innovative and why ambidexterity can be considered a benefit brought by the model to companies.

Starting with the concept of quality it can be defined as something subjective but also objective. It is subjective because it concerns the perception that can be noticed and something can be found “good” based on personal taste, needs and preferences. At the same time quality can also be objective if we consider some standards or targets. For example a consumer can prefer a product instead of another because he just likes it, but there are some guides that suggest companies how to do it and furthermore there are some rules and lows that have to be followed to produce a quality product. Let’s think about food or medicines where there are very serious controls before a company can sell and commercialize them.

There is another point of view seen by an intangible and abstract vision: let’s think, for example, about the quality that can be seen in an office. People can consider a good environment and a
quality place when they are empowered and when there is no competition between them but trust and help.

TQM leaves apart the subjective point of view and analyzes quality based on standards and suggestions. More precisely it says how a company should treat customers, employees, society and how to build a successful and sustainable future. The difficult part, in my opinion is to understand the quality/excellence models. These in fact embrace many topics but at the same time they are quite general since they have to be adaptable to any kind of organization. This means that even though the model wants to transmit objective ways of measuring quality, once again, the balance between objectivity and subjectivity is really important because the objectivity of the concepts has to be interpreted by the company.

This is in fact what distinguishes quality from excellence. In my opinion excellence is the development of quality and so the result of the good interpretation of quality models, the capacity of putting together all the fundamentals of a company, from customers needs understanding to the delivery of the product. In other words, in my opinion, we have excellence when objective quality meets subjective quality.

Talking again about the personnel satisfaction, EFQM Excellence Model suggests that doing a periodic questionnaire is a good tool to evaluate the level of it and it suggests also to fix a target but at the same time it doesn’t say what the target is that has to be achieved and not even the kind of questions that have to be asked. This is to explain how the model presents an objective way to evaluate quality but the company has to interpret it in a subjective way modelling it and deciding how to apply this tool. Furthermore in this case personnel is asked to answer with its personal ideas so even though the tool was presented as something objective, the answers will be subjective. The company will be able to consider itself excellent when on one hand applies a quality objective tool and on the other hand will receive quality answers. So objective quality will meet subjective quality.

Another aspect that I would like to discuss is the difference that, in my opinion, there is between “to manage” and “to lead”. TQM and also EFQM often talk about leadership so I would like to focus my attention on the meaning of it. Managing something is to me something less than leading. It is about guiding, suggesting, being in certain way powerful.
A leader, on the other hand is, let’s say, an evolution of a manager himself, he is someone that guides people empowering them, making them feel part of the same team and comfortable with their job and with the environment. Furthermore a leader give space to the personnel to express ideas eventual complaints and also suggestions for developing the company.

To lead is managing with the consciousness that the company is made up of people and these people are the main strength of the organization. A good manager can be called a leader when he’s able to transmit the culture of quality and he has the capacity to make people work with enthusiasm and passion. Working with these characteristics is the most important ingredient to guarantee quality and with right amount of time also excellence.

Also strongly connected to this topic is the concept of strategy. Quality management indeed deeply focuses on the concept of strategy. In my opinion strategy is not only something that should be shared among the management team but it needs to be communicated at all the levels inside the company. This is very important to give to everybody a precise idea of what they are working for and to make it clear that everybody’s job is part of a bigger plan and of a bigger goal. To express the strategy in a useful and clear way the mission of the company has to be known by all the employees and so also the values that characterize the everyday work. Once these points are successfully discussed the management should explain what they see for the future of the organization and, in other words, the corporate vision. If this happens, once again the personnel can feel more involved in the corporate life and they can work with the willingness to achieve the same results their managers want.

Another aspect that has been discussed talking about TQM is the innovation that these models, and in particular EFQM, bring to the company.

Is EFQM model something new? If so which kind of innovation is it?

To answer this question the first thing I would do is to exclude the innovation categories that for sure don’t regard this model: product innovation and position innovation.

The two remaining categories are Process Innovation and Paradigm Innovation. Process innovation means the implementation of a new or significant improvement in the way of producing and/or delivering a product or service including significant changes in techniques,
equipment, software and so on. Paradigm innovation involves the mental change of a company. That means that by applying a model or just a new way of thinking, the organization can change its way of working.

EFQM is, in my opinion, a good mix between these two kind of innovation categories. The model indeed proposes a framework that takes inspiration from the TQM theory but without saying exactly what a company has to do or not. It wants to be a guide to ensure a continuous and successful growth. It suggests how the organization should behave and what it should be focused on.

So the framework of the model is not a precise process to follow to achieve outstanding results but is a suggestion about how the organization should change its process to achieve their goals.

I think that the model can be considered both a process innovation and a paradigm innovation because on one hand it changes the process in which people work and on the other hand the same people have to change their way of thinking to be more open to improvement and to interiorize the model.

In conclusion I would like to say how, in my opinion the model can bring benefits to companies in terms of ambidexterity. Being very wide and embracing all the fields of an organization it allows focus on many aspects at the same time thinking about, for example, exploration, exploitation, new product development, and so on. This capacity to focus the attention on more than one thing at the same time is exactly what ambidexterity is.

In the next chapter I will go on writing more deeply about the results and the benefits from a managerial point of view that EFQM brought to some companies that the Foundation itself calls successful stories. In the end a chapter will follow about my own experience at GlaxoSmithKline that is submitting for the third time in these months the document that describes its enablers and results.
3. The success of EFQM Excellence Model

3.1 How EFQM awards Excellence: some success stories

As the European Foundation for Quality Management often highlights, the model is applicable by industries that work in different sectors and without any limit of dimension. So we can find Universities, companies that work in energy and utilities, healthcare, IT & Technology, manufacturing, materials, NGO associations, public administration, retail, services and also transport and logistics.

The Radar Logic explained in the first chapter, gives as a result an evaluation of the document submitted by each company that wants to participate to the “competition” and to have a feedback from EFQM assessors. More precisely a company can receive from one to five stars. Companies that achieve higher results can be awarded a so called prize winner.

There are eight prize winners that coincide with the eight fundamentals explained in the first chapter. This means that a company is particularly good in one of the aspects that EFQM Excellence Model consider as basis of excellence.

The company that achieves the highest result and demonstrates to be the most excellent company of those that participate to the year competition gets the EFQM Award that nominates it as the best European company.

To better explain what prize winners are and that it doesn’t matter in which sector the company works in, I want to report some examples.

Stravropol State Agrarian University (SSAU) is a Russian school that in 2013 got the prize winner in “Harnessing Creativity and Innovation”. SSAU is the leading Russian center of education, science and culture, realizing training, scientific-research and consulting-methodological activity.

It has had a long story since it was founded in 1930 and in the opinion of the assessor that evaluated their submission it has demonstrated a consistent and strong commitment implementing a culture of excellence in all areas, with strong leadership and involvement of academic and administrative staff and students.
Furthermore it demonstrated good results in many of the EFQM model fields such as customer results, people results, society results and, compared with its competitors it is the first in class.

The rector Vladimir Trukhachev declares to the Foundation: “by participating in the EFQM Excellence Awards, we have formed a culture of “the thirst for knowledge”, through which we have learned to see opportunities rather than obstacles, to determine the critical points of the required improvements and to set ambitious goals and achieve them” (EFQM, Success Stories).

In Spain, the “Sanitas Hospitales” won the “taking care of the customer” prize winner thanks to the dedication of its people by creating an organization where the Mission is to take care of the clients, to ensure their well-being and at the same time keeping in mind the vision of “profitable Growth”. Sanitas Hospitales is part of a group that also includes Sanitas Insurance, Sanitas Residential and Sanitas Healthcare Services.

Sanitas Hospitales is responsible for managing the hospital infrastructure within the group and has demonstrated a positive trend since 2007 regarding customer perception and people perception through a survey and moreover it has achieved good financial results and a good investment approach that will guarantee good achievements also in the future. The fact that it reached the targets set for certification in ISO 14001, ISO 9001 and UNE 170001 is a great confirmation of the entity’s quality.

The general manager said that the great advantage of working with this excellence model is that it allows the organization to have a good understanding of all the aspects of the company, from leadership to results. (EFQM, Success Stories)

In 2013 the BMW subsidiary based in Regensburg (Germany) was judged as a good example of company that “manages with agility”. The general manager of the Regensburg plant found that the most important advantage of the model is that it allows the company to receive useful, helpful and valuable suggestions about not only about their strengths but especially about its potentials. He says indeed: “we use it in the strategy and target process to decide about ‘doing the right things’”.

This specific BMW site has approximately 9000 employees and it produces BMW 1 Series, 3 series, and Z4. It has been identified by the assessors that each individual customer’s requirements is
always fulfilled on time and in accordance with the highest quality standards. In addition to the high flexibility and mastery of the large offer of variants, the outstanding efficiency of the site becomes apparent in the high level of launch expertise.

They won the prize because of their production flexibility without excessive costs, good performances compared with their benchmarks, employees showed satisfaction and in addition their financial results have improved during the last few years.

One of the assessors said that the BMW Plant manager developed and deployed an inspiring vision for the site itself, focusing not upon cost cutting but instead upon putting Associates at the center of the business to drive all improvement activity. This approach has resulted in high levels of Associated engagement and improvement (EFQM, Success Stories).

A very interesting case of excellence in “succeeding through the Talent of People” is represented by Nilufer Municipality in Turkey. It is a great example of how a public administration can successfully apply the EFQM Excellence Model. Here its application brought the suggestion on focusing more on value-added services with the aim of creating a brighter future for the city and its organization.

Nilufer is called the city of Green, Sports, Health, Science, Culture and Art and according to Annemie Simkens, assessor EFQM, people in Nilufer are very proud of their municipality thanks to the focus on the citizen and progressive mind-set. It is clear that internal policies and management approaches are enabling this motivation. The city also demonstrated good results and positive trends on budget realization through effectiveness and efficiency improvements.

In Scotland and more precisely in Glasgow there is the Glasgow Housing Association which is a not for profit organization and a registered charity. GHA provides service to many thousands people across the city owning and managing 41000 rented properties and they received the recognition by the EFQM for being excellent in “leading with vision, inspiration and integrity” (EFQM, Success Stories).

The Quality Assurance Manager Paddy McLaughlin found the model very useful because it helped to identify priorities for improvement during the organization’s journey and its structured approach ensured whether the solutions they used to apply were appropriate or not.
During the assessment they demonstrated that leadership skills were comprehensively embedded in the wider leadership team and furthermore they demonstrated a very good relationship with all their stakeholders. There was a high satisfaction among customers and employees, costs have been reduced during the years, society perception has shown a positive trend in the last years and in the end they gave evidence of a good strategy that allows them to have outstanding performances in problems solving.

As a last example I would like to talk about the winning prize received by Ricoh Belgium, subsidiary of Ricoh Europe, in sustaining outstanding results. Ricoh Belgium is responsible for the marketing, sales and servicing of Ricoh products (cameras, printers, electric tools etc.) in Belgium and Luxembourg. It has 715 employees and generates annually 170 million Euros. They have a market share of 35% in their core market.

Ricoh Belgium CEO, Eric Gryson, said to EFQM that the model helped them in finding the right direction for successful growth and that they are achieving outstanding results because of everyone’s dedication to the company.

Ricoh Belgium is amongst the top performing sales companies in Ricoh Europe and it has sustained their financial performance both in terms of turnover and profit, throughout the financial crisis by competing on service, rather than price. For example between 2009 and 2010 the turnover increased by 11% and profit by 25%.

In the customer results chapter they demonstrated that the stated customer intention to repurchase has increased from 65% in 2008 to 75% in 2011 and thanks to this, they secured their position as market leader.

In addition part of their success and growth is due to mergers and acquisitions, achieving an exemplary integration of the people, with the management team generating a pleasant atmosphere.

Alexis Willems, assessment team leader defines Ricoh Belgium as an agile and responsive company that by providing the customer with a different experience, an integrated suite of products and services that meet business needs, have increased customer loyalty, despite the crisis (EFQM, Success Stories).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>PRIZE WINNER</th>
<th>BENEFIT</th>
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<tr>
<td>Stravropol State Agraria University (Russia)</td>
<td>Harnessing Creativity and Innovation</td>
<td>Culture of “thirst for knowledge”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanitas Hospitales (Spain)</td>
<td>Taking care of customers</td>
<td>Good understanding</td>
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<td>BMW (Regensburg)</td>
<td>Managing with agility</td>
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<td>Nilufer Munisipality (Turkey)</td>
<td>Succeeding through the Talent of People</td>
<td>Creating a brighter future for the city</td>
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<td>Glasgow Housing Association (Scotland)</td>
<td>Leading with Vision, Inspiration and Integrity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ricoh (Belgium)</td>
<td>Sustaining outstanding results</td>
<td>Finding the right direction for a successful growth</td>
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3.2. How the EFQM Excellence Model is generally perceived: some evidence

To have different points of view I had the chance to interview some Italian managers, expert with the EFQM Excellent model (Appendix 3A). I’ve been able to get in contact with Corrado Squarzon, Italo Benedini, Giovanni Andrea Iapichino and Mariano Cilenti. The interviews consisted of 15 questions and were conducted by phone since the managers were based in different cities of the State. Each interview lasted around 15-20 and the topics of it were about their knowledge about the EFQM Excellence Model, advantages and disadvantages, benefits, personal thoughts, possible limitations and developments.

Mr Squarzon founded a management consulting company called Eraclitus based in the north east of Italy in 2008. His position is the managing director and he told me that very often his job brought himself to explain what the EFQM Excellence Model is and to suggest its application to organizations that want to develop their performances.

He knew the existence of EFQM for the first time in 2008 and he really got in contact with it in 2010. Not being a manager that applies the model in the first person he couldn’t perfectly answer the question number 3 but at the same time he saw many companies that took a great advantage in terms of more attention to their processes, to the links between their actions, a deeper
understanding of how to reach the corporate vision by applying the corporate strategy in the right way.

Working on the EFQM Model with several companies he identified Pros and Cons. The most evident strength of the model is that it is holistic giving the chance to managers and entrepreneurs to have a complete vision of the way of working of the company. Furthermore it’s dynamic starting from the mission and looking to satisfy the vision throughout the strategy.

Mr Squarzon also highlighted some difficulties of the model and the first one he told me is about the necessity of being always up to date since the world in which we live and work is in a continuous change that forces the model to change as well. There are some points, such as processes, that evolve rapidly because of new techniques and modernity.

His job as consultant often presents to him the difficulty of presenting how many advantages the model would bring to a company. The path through excellence is long and difficult and people that want to achieve good results have to be very motivated and if they decide to apply the model they have to take into consideration they could be waiting some years before receiving a real advantage from it. It has to be considered as a long term investment which gives the company the opportunity to grow in all its fields: processes, leadership management, services, customer relationship management and so on.

Being a consultant, Mr Squarzon could not say to me which of the 8 fundamentals he felt closer to him but he answered my question saying that being the model on the same path of TQM and probably part of it, it should be an integration of all the aspects even though he can understand that on the basis of the specific job that a manager does inside the company, there could be different opinions and maybe not all the fundamentals are considered at the same level.

However in his opinion these aspects are not new, but EFQM helps to give them an order to follow the excellence. Excellence is something that has to be taught and developed. Mr Squarzon says it’s not something “switch on – switch off” but it’s a real path that could begin with self assessment, with some training, meetings and suggestions made by experts.
Talking about innovation he defines the EFQM Excellence Model as incremental of something already existing. On one hand there are all the theories explained by Total Quality Management, on the other hand there are the other models, similar to EFQM in some aspects.

For example he mentioned Lean Thinking which is very powerful if a company wants to understand how to reduce waste and how to be more economically efficient but it doesn’t talk about strategy as EFQM does. Another example he presented to me is called Six Sigma which excellent on the customer care and satisfaction but it is not integrated as the EFQM Model. So he thinks the EFQM Excellence Model as one that contains all the others giving managers the necessary consciousness to deal with the present connections between the criteria presented by the model and present inside every organization.

I had another very interesting interview with Mr Italo Benedini who has had a long experience with the EFQM Excellence Model because of his career.

He has been working for around nine years at Associazione Italiana Cultura Qualità (AICQ) which means Italian Association for Quality Culture. He was the responsible for EFQM activities promotion. AICQ has been partner of EFQM for 15 years with the goal of diffusing and developing the model all around Italy with training activities about excellence. Among his roles he was also responsible for the relationship with the Foundation to define and manage the EFQM awards.

He decided to leave AICQ in 2013 and after some months the association and the foundation broke their relationship. Before working there Mr Italo Benedini had worked for several years at Italtel, an important Italian telecommunication company where he had had the opportunity to apply the model in 1993. In this business he was company’s quality system responsible.

He got in contact with EFQM for the first time in 1993 when he was still working at Italtel, he participated in the course to become EFQM assessor in Brussels and right after he realized the self assessment for the company’s major BU.

It was very useful talking to him because he has experienced the model from two different points of view: from the one as manager that applied the model for the company he used to work for and from the one as consultant.
In fact when I asked him what were the differences between working applying the model and without he immediately wanted to make a distinction between AICQ and Italtel.

The application in Italtel, he says, was suggested by the general director but it was applied in a wrong way, too superficial and with the hope of having immediate results. So the first experience with the model was not positive for Mr Benedini who thinks, on the other hand, that it can be very useful if correctly applied.

AICQ doesn’t apply the model but suggests the application to promote the path through excellence. Mr Benedini finds that the model, compared with other more specific models, has the great advantage of having a complete vision on the organization. Nevertheless he also had bad experiences with the model at Italtel, he does not think that the model has great critical points. The only thing he wants to point out is that there could be a problem if we think that the model is the same for every kind of organization (public, private... big, small, etc). This aspect doesn’t constitute a problem for those organizations with high level of organizational maturity but it could generate some doubts to those small size companies that want to begin their path through excellence.

From his personal point of view the model can also bring advantages not only to companies but also to the single manager that uses it every day. Talking about himself he says: “Today my job consists of being a consultant about Excellence Models. I don’t have any doubt about the mental organization that working every day with this kind of model gave me. And this mentality helps in making it easier to give a useful contribution in these activities and, more than anything it helps me to do my following jobs better”.

Mr Benedini thinks that all the fundamentals have to be integrated but at the same time he learnt a lot about “adding value for customers” and in particular the importance of searching and finding together with the customer what he needs and what is the best way to achieve the fixed goals.

EFQM doesn’t add, in his opinion, particular conceptual news, the values on which the model is based were already, at least generally, known but the model gives a new vision that suggests keeping all these values together and linked. Only the coordination of these can bring an organization to excellence and the concept of excellence has not to be diffused in a general and
abstract way but it has to be taught in a concrete way, with examples, guidelines, good practice, positive and negative results.

Furthermore talking about innovation, Mr Benedini highlights that when we talk about EFQM, the concept of innovation has to be considered with the widest meaning possible. Indeed innovation is not only about products and techniques but it is also about processes, environment, society, commercial aspects of sales and marketing and so on. The model so, is innovative in the sense that it follows the innovation of all the aspects of a company. For this reason the innovation is considered by Mr Benedini more incremental than radical: it is in continuous development.

A further implementation for a deeper development of the model could be to give a more specific definition of innovation and of all the parts that compose it. This could be very useful for the future of those companies that are growing: to know better not only the model itself but also all the meaning mentioned in it. As he already said before, one of the most important aspects of the model is that, compared with other tools, it links together the criteria. It is actually necessary that those who decide to apply the model have a clear idea of everything they’re managing: this could be the real and original innovation of the EFQM Excellence Model.

Another important interpretation of the model has been given to me by Mr Giovanni Andrea Iapichino, one of the managers of Telecom Italia: one of the most important telecommunication companies of Italy.

He has been working there since 1989 and got in contact with EFQM in 2010 for the first time. The benefits identified by him are on two different levels: personal and corporate. From the personal point of view he said he learnt a lot about how to analyze all the aspect of a company and how to consider them overcoming the weaknesses and to keep “high” the strengths. From the corporate point of view, leaving apart the usefulness of the model itself Mr Iapichino says that it’s a great opportunity for the company to compare its work with benchmarks and to establish a strong and powerful network.

Of course, also for him the model is not perfect and as a disadvantage he highlights the fact that at the beginning the model can be difficult to understand and to interpret especially if it’s not properly explained by an EFQM expert. However, once understood, it let the company and the
managers have more consciousness about how to carry out each activity and that each activity is linked to another so it has to be well explained and managed. In practice, if something has no links probably it’s not strictly necessary for the company itself.

The importance of the eight fundamentals of understanding what excellence is, it is essential to him even though, generally speaking, his job brings him to consider more, at least on a daily basis, “Creating a Sustainable Future” and “Harnessing Creativity and Innovation”. All these aspects were already known by the manager of Telecom Italia but not considered in such an organized way and probably not linked to each other.

In fact he has definitely a clearer idea of the meaning of excellence too. He says that he understood that excellence is not only about the output or the final product but, on contrary, the output will be excellent if everything is well done: from the process, to relationships with employees and customers, to the leadership and strategy and so on.

Once understood that, he started to teach what excellence is with useful training and applying the RADAR logic to also evaluate other projects inside the company.

The EFQM Excellence Model is not only excellent, it is also innovative and Mr Iapichino defines its innovation as incremental because it simplified the processes, the structure, the way of measuring and most of all, in his opinion, it’s a lean model. The only thing that can be an obstacle is that, of course, it required a high competence level in the field that will be analyzed.

In conclusion he told me that something that could be improved is the language because it’s not always easy and so, it should be more “user-friendly”; especially because they started, in Telecom, to apply the model to just one of the divisions and they would like to extend it: with an easier language, it would be also easier to explain and communicate it among the personnel.

The last interview I had was with Mr Mariano Cilenti: Value Stream Manager of BOSCH Bari (Italy). He has been working there since 2000 and his job consists of coordinating all the production flow until the sale to client.

It was very inspiring to talk with him because in 2014 Bosch Bari won the EFQM Excellence Award classifying itself as the best performing company of Europe. Moreover the Italian subsidiary of the
German organization received three prize winners, specifically in: “creating a sustainable future”, “managing with agility”, and “succeeding through the talent of people”. Apparently the assessors have been very touched by the effort and involvement of every single employee of the site.

The path through excellence was very long, Mr Cilenti has discovered the EFQM in 2006 and year by year with the other managers of the company got in contact with it more deeply. In fact all the concepts explained by the model were not unknown by the interviewed manager but he told me that even though he doesn’t think it’s a difficult model to understand, he needed time to widely understand it and in particular he needed time, together with his colleagues, before transmitting the importance and the value of the model among all the employees.

The most important benefits identified by him are the help that the model gave the company to develop a 360° vision because of its modernity and excellence, the possibility to understand if everybody is working in the right direction and the chance to have a useful comparison analyzing their own performance and the benchmarks’ ones.

To have a complete vision in a logical way and at all the different levels is a great pro of the model that let the company understand if it’s reaching the targets and goals it has. However in his opinion a big difficulty is represented by the fact that using the model constantly requires a massive amount of time, resources and mindset effort. Personally he thinks that it is worth it because of the mental logic it gives to workers, the opportunity to expand the business network and last but not least the possibility to develop the concept of excellence.

In his own job at Bosch the fundamentals that mostly represent what excellence is, are: “succeeding through the talent of people”, “adding value for customers” and “creating a sustainable future”. These concepts were already considered by him and by the organization in general but with the help of the model and with some internal communication activities, is easier to transmit the sense of the model to all the employees. Excellence, he says, is something that you can reach if everybody works with the same passion and effort. The EFQM Excellence Model is not just a contest but it has to be a way of working.

It is innovative because its approach is definitely more complete than other models’ one and the most positive thing is due to the feedback that a company receives every time it submits the
document to participate in the evaluation. In fact Mr Cilenti doesn’t think Bosh Bari is perfect just because of the excellent result achieved in 2013, he said to me that they received a feedback from the foundation that highlighted anyway some weaknesses so their intension is to keep growing along this path trying to get better in what they can improve, trying to find a new strategy, new reflections and new challenges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGER</th>
<th>COMPANY</th>
<th>ADVANTAGES</th>
<th>DISADVANTAGES</th>
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<td>AICQ and Italtel</td>
<td>-Complete vision</td>
<td>-A very good level of internal organization is required</td>
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<td>TelecomItalia</td>
<td>-personal help</td>
<td>-Difficult to be interpreted</td>
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<td>Iapichino</td>
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<td>BOSCH BARI (Italy)</td>
<td>-360° vision</td>
<td>-Huge amount of resources</td>
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3.3 Some Reflections

Talking with these managers and consultants gave me a better understanding about how the model is perceived. We can say that, generally speaking, it is well perceived, and it is taken as a great opportunity to develop the performances, the idea of excellence, the links between internal and external activities of a company and a good chance to enlarge the own network thanks to benchmarks and the “contest” itself.
The model is in addition perceived as something very complete and innovative not for the topics it is about, they are not that new after all, but because of how they are presented and linked together. They are, indeed, shown as part of excellence.

Sometimes it is not easy to deeply understand the model and time is needed to apply it well. However everybody agrees with the utility of a framework like this to reach excellent results and to compete with other companies in a world where challenges and competition are a daily constant. The example of Italtel is a perfect one of the effort that needs to be applied to the model: it is not something that a company can do if there is no collaboration between the workers at all levels.

Anyway there is clear evidence that the potential of the model is very high and the link between the criteria, the innovation and the eight fundamentals are a good guide through development, growth and excellence. I personally find it very important that everybody thinks that the eight fundamental are to be considered in their entirety even though it is normal that, depending on the job that the individual does, one or two specific fundamentals of excellence can be perceived closer than others.

At this point, I would like to conclude my paper talking about my four months experience at GlaxoSmithKline where I worked for the EFQM submission document 2015.

4. Case study: how the model is treated at GSK

4.1 My contribute to the model

From January 2015 to May 2015 I worked as a collaborator at the Italian subsidiary of GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) and more precisely in the division called Regional Service Center of Verona (RSCV) for the submission of the EFQM Excellence Model document.

I used to work in a team of ten people that had different roles inside the office, my direct boss was the performance manager and project manager of the EFQM model, and furthermore there were two people from the quality control, the managing director of the division, the artwork director and one of his collaborators, a technical master two BU leads and one person responsible for new products optimization. I was the only one hired to dedicate all day to this project.
As we saw in the previous chapters the model embraces a lot of topics and wants to see the correlation between them so I found it very interesting and clever to form a team where each person could be useful for one or more section.

After some weeks of theoretical preparation on the model and on the company my role was to organize the job divided into results and enablers. The team members were supposed to help me in finding the right data so I could analyze the trends, to see if targets were reached, compare RSCV with RSCBC (Regional Service Center of Bernard Castle) and to monitor the project plan so that everything could finish on time.

In addition, since one of the main points is to involve the employees and so the internal communication, I helped the project manager to prepare two workshops where we explained what the model is and how EFQM defines Excellence. These activities have been very useful for the project because we received from a different point of view, some suggestions, ideas and perceptions.

It was not always easy to keep everything under control and to have all the necessary material on time since many of the team members were involved in other important projects. However, by the end of my experience we had at least a draft of the complete document that in the following months was formatted and sent to Brussels.

This experience was totally new to me, very challenging since GSK is a very big and complex reality and since I knew almost nothing about this model. It was very satisfying to work with very well prepared people and in a multinational company like GSK. Working with them I also realized that my studies about strategy, innovation, communication have been very useful for this job even if I was new in the organization.

4.2 What RSCV does and how it is collocated inside GSK

Regional Service Center of Verona is the artworks provider for packaging printed material for Pharma and Vaccines GlaxoSmithKline and GSK third parties. It also is part of Pack Arttwork Share Service (PASS) in GlaxoSmithKline Logistic organization.
GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) is a science-led global healthcare company that researches and develops a broad range of innovative products in three primary areas of Pharmaceuticals, Vaccines and Consumer Healthcare.

More precisely the Pharmaceutical business develops and makes medicines to treat a broad range of acute and chronic diseases. Our portfolio is made up of both patent-protected and off-patent protected.

Vaccine business is one of the largest in the world, producing paediatric and adult vaccines against a range of infectious diseases. In 2013, GSK distributed more than 860 million doses to 170 countries, of which over 80% were supplied to developing countries.

In the end GSK develops and markets a range of consumer healthcare products based on scientific innovation. GSK has brands in four main categories: Total Wellness, Oral care, Nutrition and Skin Health.

PASS is the packaging printed material artwork provider for Pharma, Vaccines and Consumer Healthcare both for GSK and GSK third party. It has nearly 400 associates (200 GSK and 200 low cost external provider) and it provides its services to several manufacturing sites, printer suppliers and commercial and regulatory organizations. In PASS organization there are three Regional Service centers. One of these is based in Verona and it’s mainly focused on the Pharma and Vaccines Business, another Regional Service Center is in Barnard Castle (UK) and it’s focused on Consumer Healthcare business and finally there is an outsource partner in India that provides PASS with scalability and flexibility to rapidly respond to business needs.

Furthermore the organization comprises of the PASS Creative Team that provides a design support for the product lifecycle.

RSCV is legally a department of GSK Manufacturing S.p.a. Unipersonale in Verona which is a subsidiary of GSK S.p.a. Italy and so, part of the GSK Group. Verona is globally recognized as a district and international center of Excellence in the graphic and printing industry, where almost 400 companies, having in total around 3500 employees, are registered at the chamber of Commerce. Furthermore there are five professional graphic schools and the most important one, San Zeno Graphic School, has had a partnership with RSCV since 2008.
For a pharmaceutical company, and more precisely, for each department of it excellence and the perfection of the products are the most important points. If the products are marketed with some “mistakes” many problems can appear for the company, not only for the image but also because the mission of GSK is people’s health and an error on the product itself or even in the packaging can be very dangerous.

Mission, values, vision and so strategy are important are recurrent themes in EFQM Excellence Model so before to analyse how the model is perceived by the management of RSCV I would like to focus on the policy of the department.

RSCV mission is to deliver a world class artwork management service to their customers, assuring business continuity and considering the quality and professional competency of our people as the foundation of their future.

On the other hand the vision is creating a best in class artwork capability for GSK and selected partners. These aspects are based on five important values:

- **Respect**: people and environment are really meaningful. Everyone’s contributions are added value.
- **Passion**: passion and enthusiasm drive the ambition to achieve excellence through continuous improvement.
- **Integrity**: everything is driven by ethics and disciplined behavior.
- **Care**: everyone’s engagement and commitment to their job on a day-to-day basis is fundamental for the company.
- **Responsiveness**: we promptly react and accomplish customers and stakeholders requirements and needs.

### 4.3 How the model is perceived by RSCV managers and leadership team

As I did with managers from other companies I interviewed the majority of the members that worked on EFQM Model at RSCV (Appendix 3A). It was very interesting because everybody had a very similar general opinion about the model even if some of them were quite new with this topic and not everybody could answer entirely all my questions. However I received feedbacks from
different point of view and different possible suggestions for the future about how the model can improve the company. In this case the interviews were conducted face to face and the questionnaire was used only as a guide. Being the managers all from the same company but with different roles, the conversation was more focused on the field the single manager was expert in. To conclude, a deeper questionnaire was giving to the Global Logistic Performance Manager who is also the EFQM Excellence Model Project Manager inside RSCV and very expert with this tool (Appendix 3A and 3B).

Managing Director

Let’s start with Mr Giampaolo Bonetti, RSCV managing director who has worked at GSK since 1984 and at RSCV since 2007 and already one year later, in 2008, he got in contact with EFQM and he worked on the first step of the path trough Excellence: the self assessment.

One of the biggest advantages that he noticed using the EFQM Excellence Model is the possibility to have a tool that embraces every single aspect of the organization and to have a clear vision of the direction of the company. Furthermore a difference that the model introduced a rationale use of Key Performance Indicators (KPI) and of targets that were not previously used.

I personally had the chance to work on some of them and one of the most important is the schedule adherence at different points of the job. This lets the management keep the performances under control, to see if the target is reached and, more than everything, to see the trends of the last few years. The managing director says that to know if the company has KPIs with a positive or negative trend is essential to understand what has to be reinforced, maintained or changed.

Of course the limit of the model is the fact that it requires a lot of resources in terms of time, people and money. On the other hand he understood how important staying close to the employees and empower them is. This is another important aspect of excellence that he defines, generally speaking, “creating a nice job place”. Now excellence has a deeper meaning to him, it’s not just something better than what is usually called “good” but it has a real structure, it is a path, it needs effort and time.
It’s essential that the meaning of excellence is communicated inside the department and so, trainings, workshops and involvement are necessary to reach successful goals. Furthermore another point of the model highlighted by Mr Bonetti is its innovative introduction of the need of benchmarking with other organizations. For Example RSCV always compares its performances with RSCBC because even though they produce different kind of artwork the structure of the department, the goals, and company they are part of, are the same.

For RSCV future he sees a continuous growth respecting and following the observations and the feedbacks by EFQM assessors even if it’s not always easy to follow such a complete framework. He thinks it would be necessary to have an easier form of the model especially when new people are involved in the project.

**New Business and Investments Development**

Another relevant point of view is the one from Mrs Cinzia Tomasello, responsible for new business and investments development. She has been working at GSK since 1998 and in PASS since 2013. In October 2013 she attended the course in Brussels to become an assessor. So even though she doesn’t have a very long experience on EFQM, she entered in this reality very seriously and deeply.

Due to this lack of experience she cannot highlight benefits brought by the model to the company but she told me how the EFQM Excellence Model changed her way of working and seeing excellence.

The most useful aspect she noticed is that EFQM Model can be a standard way of working that with time should become embedded within all the employees even though it requires a lot of effort to be properly communicated and to make it understood by everybody.

None of the aspects explained and suggested by EFQM were unknown but the holistic vision of the model made her understand that excellence is a mix of things, to be good at satisfying customers, for example, without being good at the relationship with employees doesn’t make you an excellent organization but to make this possible internal communication is essential. In fact she would suggest to RSCV to implement the training about this model and so more organizational commitment.
Mrs Tomasello thinks that the EFQM Excellence Model could be a great tool to help every organization that want to grow and expand and develop because of the difference that it has compared to other models. Indeed, the model is a framework that wants to be only a guide without forcing any company on what to decide to write or not. This means that also RSCV can adapt the model on its job and make it perfectly tailored on itself.

In addition she agreed with Mr Bonetti saying that with a continuous effort on overcoming the weaknesses identified by EFQM assessors is the only way to achieve Excellence.

**Quality Control Managers**

Mrs Valeria Berto with Mrs Paola Raggi are in charge of product quality, they have to guarantee a high level of it and to solve any kind of possible problem.

“Since we apply EFQM model” Mrs Berto says “we focus our attention on a level of quality from a competitive point of view both, more than before and more than other departments”. Mrs Raggi and Mrs Berto find the model very close to their daily job and in certain way an enlargement of it. In fact they usually talk about product quality but with EFQM their idea of quality develops in something bigger, in something that embraces all the company and so, once again there is evidence on how important is the fact that everything should be connected. Also from the quality managers point of view it’s not enough to focus just on the quality of the final product but it’s important to have attention on all the processes, the relationships, the strategy and so on.

**Business Units Leads**

To have an idea on how the model is perceived from a more “operative” point of view, I interviewed two more team members: Mrs Lia Gilioli and Mr Marco Zamboni.

They are BU leads for two different groups of workers. When an artwork pack change has to be done, the request arrives from the interested country to a group of people with the job title of Pack Change Analysts. This roles consists of analyzing if the change is possible and it is, they have to follow the entire work flow for the creation of the artwork. As soon as the request has been approved PCAs pass the job to the group of artworks operators who are well prepared people with a background in the most prestigious graphic school of the zone. Once the artwork has been
finished a group of “proof readers” (PR) check that everything is right and without any mistake. Once checked, the artwork is ready to be really produced and it goes to the market that asked for the new pack or for a change of it.

Mrs Gilioli and Mr Zamboni agree saying that for them the most important value transmitted by EFQM is “adding value for customer”. The importance of delivering products with no defects and on time is the basis to be considered the best in class. The EFQM Excellence Model gave them a new definition of excellence. Before knowing the model (both of them got in contact with it in 2010) excellence was only a tentative idea, something they wanted to achieve but without a real path to follow. Now thanks to the framework they see excellence as a real definition, as a process of several steps that actually involves all that is highlighted by the model.

To achieve good customer results they want to demonstrate the value of the office, the preparation of the personnel and to make clear the fact that the priority is to satisfy customers. They introduced with the help of performance manager many meetings (daily, weekly and monthly) where each possible problem is discussed and solved by a team. They say that a great advantage brought by the model is that working with a cohesive and enthusiastic team can make the different on the final result.

Before knowing the model, the structure of the office, the consciousness, the internal relationship between the employees and between the management and the employees was weaker. So they agree also on the fact that the model can be considered innovative because it points out all the processes of the company and you have to consider all of them even though because of your job you are more focused only on some of them.

Mrs Gilioli would suggest to the foundation to introduce a training for every company wanting to apply the model. The scope of this training should be to make the model more embedded to all the personnel of the company. She told me the model is complicated to understand, it requires time to be interiorized and then applied so it’s not easy to teach it to all the employees that have different backgrounds, different cultural levels and different roles inside the organization. The foundation could, in her opinion, find a way to build a structural training to make the model embedded at all levels.
Furthermore Mr Zamboni suggests a different, more intense, future use of the model in the organization. He thinks that the company focuses too much attention on it in the period in which they write the document for the submission. In that period they analyze the trends of the last years and make an evaluation about the current strategy. He also thinks that “distributing” the attention more equally between a submission and another can give more benefits to the company, having the results under control more constantly and having a preventive approach to eventual problems.

**Pass Creative Manager**

I had also the chance to talk with Mr Carlo Brunelli PASS Creative (PC) manager. He confirmed everything that his RSCV colleagues had said with particular attention on the importance of benchmarking activities.

Since PASS Creative is quite new to GSK he thinks it’s very important to the company to have a comparison with external graphic and design agencies. In this case indeed they don’t find a good benchmark inside GSK as RSCV does with RSCBC because there not similar realities in other GSK sites. Before PC creation the company required an external help from other companies specialized in design and, more in general, in packaging activities.

The activity of benchmarking promoted by EFQM brought some evidences about how to have supporting activities inside the organization itself is a benefit for the company. Leaving apart all the financial advantages like lower costs Mr Brunelli noticed that the customer satisfaction increases and in his opinion this is due to a higher communication within RSCV. Having an internal support team in the company whose main job is to create artwork for packaging for RSCV guarantees a higher level of attention between the employees and more communication. This aspect creates a better place to work, an easier way to exchange information, a more linear and faster work flow.

The innovation brought by the model is, to him, a sort of evolution of something that already existed in GSK but that could be improved by the EFQM model, analyzing all the aspects of the company and highlighting some problems, but he confirmed through the suggestion of doing benchmarks that the idea of introducing a new support team was good and successful.
Global Logistic Performance Manager and EFQM Excellence Model Project Manager

In the end, a deeper questionnaire was given to Mr Ernesto Zannelli, Global Logistic Performance Manager and EFQM Excellence Model Project Manager.

He answered all my questions with very much precision and depth because of his long experience with EFQM Excellence Model and being himself an assessor of the foundation.

He highlighted three main differences that he noticed at RSCV since the model has been taken as a framework. It increased consciousness of organization and processes, it balances the growth of different aspects of the organization and it introduces a wider integration among the different processes.

Moreover these aspects derive from a big pro of the model: the fact that it provides a feedback report that lets the company grow without implying to adopt any specific actions. It allows managers to adapt EFQM criteria to the company and this gives the opportunity to relate the company with other organizations, that, even if different, are based on the same evaluation aspects. However this high level of flexibility can also be a con because it’s not always easy to interpret how to apply the guide.

Him being the performance manager the fundamental that he feels more close to his job is “sustaining outstanding results” integrating strategic measures every time that is needed due to an organizational change or a different customer request and so on.

Before knowing the EFQM, the meaning of excellence was different to him, he used to consider the “fundamental of excellence” presented by the foundation but now he has the capacity to integrate these concepts and to drive other people towards a strategic path implementation.

Furthermore to educate people to the EFQM Model he doesn’t use only training, teamwork and coaching but also GEMBA, a Japanese way of problem solving based on listening, communicating and observing.

This model’s innovation is to Mr Zannelli, not in the model itself but on the fact that it is not in contrast with what was applied before in the organization like the lean Process and Six sigma concepts. The EFQM Excellence Model embraces all the concepts that before were represented by
different models and this gives the opportunity to grow towards excellence. Additionally, once again, the most perceived difference from previous models is that EFQM doesn’t provides processes to be followed so in his opinion the “process innovation” that the model introduces is about the fact that company can innovate its processes following just some guides and suggestions, not something imposed.

Throughout the meaning of “innovation” and “learning” EFQM drives companies in a better understanding of their ways to transform creativity in something that customers want and in something that is part of the organization itself. To create excellence, in fact, leadership is needed as so a strategy, a good use of resources, people, financial tools, partnerships, services and why not, also the society in which the company is collocated.

Mr Zannelli ended saying that they started in 2008 with the EFQM self assessment, in 2010 they reached five stars, in 2015 they hope to achieve again at least five stars and they have a great project for the future: to build a new foundation called EFQM Italy.

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<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
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<th>EFQM CONS</th>
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<td>RSCV Managing Director</td>
<td>-tool that embraces many aspects</td>
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<td>-use of KPIs and targets</td>
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<td>Lia Gilioli &amp; Marco Zamboni</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>-help in creating a</td>
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To know more about the future he suggested Italk to Mrs Anna Lisa Nicelli, Governmental Affairs Director.

### 4.4 EFQM Italy: the future for GSK and other companies based in Italy

The Governmental Affairs Director told me that EFQM Italy is still an idea, the process will be long and hard and it will require effort, time and determination but they are seriously intentioned to do it.

EFQM Italy wants to be a foundation or an association with a proper juridical form in line with the Italian law. The scope of it wants to be not only from the quality point of view, in fact to have the benefit of a model based on quality, process and performance control the EFQM Excellence Model could be enough. EFQM Italy, even though it will be founded on similar concepts of the EFQM model, wants to focus on the opportunity to build a strong and organized network that involves excellent Italian companies.

The objective of the EFQM Italy is to benefit from shared competencies, best practice and past experience and furthermore this new foundation wants to be a reputational element: whose part of EFQM Italy is excellent. So the network could also be considered a communication tool through other companies, other sectors and other kinds of networks.

The most probable companies that right now could be part of EFQM Italy are those companies that base their work on quality control, development, innovation and growth. Bosch Italy, GSK Italy, Telecom Italia are some of the names that we maybe will be found inside this new reality.
The EFQM Excellence model will be the basis for the excellence evaluation also for EFQM Italy but Mrs Nicelli says that they also want to define new criteria to have a deeper chance to measure the internal quality of the organizations, the success and reputation among the stakeholders (primarily customers and employees) and to have a common point to communicate the Italian quality and work abroad. This last fact will require also the participation of Economic and Finance Ministry.

In addition this new foundation could also present the opportunity to communicate the Italian excellence to Italian students and to involve them in projects, internships and other kinds of contracts.

In conclusion EFQM Italy could represent a way to distinguish excellent organization, teach what excellence is, communicate that in Italy there are excellent realities and involve new people and offer new jobs in a field that is not often properly considered: this is not just quality, this is excellence. The new model will be an element of differentiation through the external environment, an operational internal element for companies and a reputational element through other countries.

The real challenge is to find the right tool that can connote excellence and at the same time can be concrete and with the possibility to be measured.
CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

To conclude I would like to highlight how this study answers my initial research question. Firstly the literature and secondly the insight about success stories and managers’ interviews demonstrated that the EFQM excellence model is the most diffused, famous and successful framework amongst the biggest European companies.

This is due to its completeness, to its characteristic of embracing every single aspect of a company analyzing and suggesting the way to reach excellence. Furthermore everybody agrees with the fact that the most evident benefit that the model gives is a wide vision of the company itself so that managers and leaders can focus on their daily job without forgetting about the past and the future. The path towards excellence is long and requires effort and resources but at the same time the EFQM Excellence Model gives the companies the opportunity of benchmarking with other outstanding realities, understanding their strengths and weaknesses and developing the internal and external quality.

In addition an embedded application of the model can give a different, a more precise, mental approach to all workers and at all levels.

Even though the benefits are very relevant, the consciousness deeper and the idea of excellence clearer there are several limitations that have been highlighted by managers and leaders. The most serious one is, in my opinion, the fact that sometimes, especially at the beginning, the model can be a bit difficult to be interpreted and too general.

The Foundation says that one of the main characteristics and one of the main strengths of this framework is that it is applicable to every kind of company but probably it’s for this reason that the model can result difficult.

Thinking about a possible further development I would suggest to take into consideration a concept that between international companies is always more considered: collaboration and more precisely “co-creation”.

According to Tidd & Bessant (2013) there are many different kinds of collaboration such as, for example, joint ventures and alliances between firms: useful for reducing costs and risks, achieving
scale economics in production, promoting shared learning and reducing the time taken to develop and commercialize new products. Co-creation is a particular kind of collaboration that sees on one side the company and on the other the customers creating and evolving a product or a service together based on the possibilities of the company itself and the needs of the customers.

In the case of the EFQM Excellent Model I think that the Foundation and the companies that decide to apply it could co-operate to build different sub-models keeping, as base, the original one, but adding or specifying particularities. For example GSK could co-create a sub-model focused on the main characteristics of pharmaceutical companies so that other companies of the same sector would also be able to apply the EFQM Excellence model more easily. The same could be done by, for example, BMW for automotive firms and so also by universities, hospitals, NGOs and so on.

This evolvement of the model could be considered, in my opinion, innovation since it brings my attention to another aspect highlighted by the literature of Tidd and Bessant (2013) which is the difference between the innovation proposed by Knowledge push and the one by need pull.

One of the sources of innovation is, indeed, what can emerge from scientific research that can improve products, services and also processes. This is the knowledge push that is usually confirmed and stabilized by experiments and these kinds of changes don’t happen overnight but they can take decades.

According to Tidd and Bessant (2013) “knowledge push” creates an opportunity field which sets up possibilities for innovation but very often a bright idea or a single research are not enough for the success of the innovation itself. Sometimes we need to recognize that another key driver of innovation is “need” which can be considered as the complementary of knowledge push. Talking about “need” means taking into consideration and giving the necessary importance to the desires and wants of the customers.

Need pull innovation is particularly important at mature stages in industry or product life cycles when there is more than one offering to choose from. The EFQM Excellence Model has existed for more than 20 years and even though it is still the most chosen model between the biggest European companies because of its utility and completeness, to listen to the needs and so trying
to introduce a form of co-creation inside the foundation could be a further incremental innovation that would let it stay one step ahead of other similar models.

In a world characterized by continuous changes and continuous development, a model that helps the companies on to evaluate their level of excellence also considering all their needs, their difficulties and their willingness could guarantee a bright future for the foundation itself and for the industries that want to grow, expand and improve.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

The enablers matrix

The RADAR Assessment and Management Tool for ENABLERS:

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<td>- refinements have been embedded in the approach over time</td>
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<td>Integrated:</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- approach supports strategy</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>Some evidence</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Clear evidence</td>
<td>Comprehensive evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- approach is linked to other approaches as appropriate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL for Approach</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deployment:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- approach is implemented in relevant areas</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>Implemented in 1/4 of relevant areas</td>
<td>Implemented in 1/2 of relevant areas</td>
<td>Implemented in 3/4 of relevant areas</td>
<td>Implemented in all relevant areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Systematic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Approach is deployed in a timely, structured way and with ability to manage changes in the environment needed</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
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<td>Clear evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessment and Refinement:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- regular measurements of efficiency and effectiveness of the approach and its deployment are carried out</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>Some evidence</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Clear evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>- measures selected are appropriate</td>
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<td>Learning and Creativity:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- learning is used to identify internal and external good practices and improvement opportunities</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>Some evidence</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Clear evidence</td>
<td>Comprehensive evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Creativity is used to generate new or changed approaches</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improvement and Innovation:</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Output from measurement and learning is used to identify, prioritise, plan and implement improvements</td>
<td>No evidence</td>
<td>Some evidence</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Clear evidence</td>
<td>Comprehensive evidence</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Output from creativity is evaluated, prioritised and used</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL for Assessment and Refinement</td>
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<td>OVERALL TOTAL</td>
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### APPENDIX 2

The results matrix

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<tr>
<th>Relevance and Usability:</th>
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<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scope and Relevance:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The scope of the results presented:</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Addresses the needs and expectations of relevant stakeholders</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Is consistent with the strategy and policies of the organisation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The most important Key Results are identified and prioritised</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Relationships between relevant results are understood</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant not established or anecdotal information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results presented and relevance established for about 1% of the area involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results presented and relevance established for about 1/2 of the area involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results presented and relevance established for about 3/4 of the area involved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results presented and relevance established for all of the areas involved</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Integrity:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Results are timely, reliable and accurate</td>
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<tr>
<td>No evidence of integrity or anecdotal information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timely, reliable and accurate for about 1% results presented</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timely, reliable and accurate for about 1/4 results presented</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timely, reliable and accurate for about 1/2 results presented</td>
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<tr>
<td>Timely, reliable and accurate for about 1 % results presented</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Timely, reliable and accurate for all results presented</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Segmentation:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Results are appropriately segmented</td>
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<tr>
<td>No segmentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usable segmentation for about 1% of results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usable segmentation for about 1/4 of results</td>
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<td>Usable segmentation for about 1/2 of results</td>
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<tr>
<td>All results are usefully segmented</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL for Relevance and Usability:</strong></td>
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* Note the total here should not exceed the score given for scope and relevance

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance:</th>
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<th>50%</th>
<th>75%</th>
<th>100%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trends:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Trends are positive AND/OR there is sustained good performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Results or anecdotal information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive trends and/or sustained good performance for about 1% of results over at least 3 years</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive trends and/or sustained good performance for about 1/4 of Key Results</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive trends and/or sustained good performance for about 1/2 of Key Results</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive trends and/or sustained good performance for all results over at least 3 years</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Targets:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- Targets are set for the Key Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>No Targets or anecdotal information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriate and achieved for about 1% of Key Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set, appropriate and achieved for about 1/4 of Key Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set, appropriate and achieved for about 1/2 of Key Results</td>
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<tr>
<td>Set, appropriate and achieved for all Key Results</td>
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<td><strong>Comparisons:</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Causes:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>- The relationship between Results achieved and their Enablers is understood</td>
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<tr>
<td>No confidence on causes or anecdotal information</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enabling effect visible for about 1% of results and evidence that performance will be sustained</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling effect visible for about 1/4 of results and evidence that performance will be sustained</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enabling effect visible for about 1/2 of results and evidence that performance will be sustained</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enabling effect visible for all results and comprehensive evidence that performance will be sustained</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 3A

Interview guide for Managers:

1. How long have you been working at ......? (If from GSK: How long have you been working at PASS/RSCV)?

2. Could you please describe in a few words your role as leader/manager?

3. When did you get in contact with EFQM for the first time?

4. Are there some evident differences that you can identify from before the application of EFQM and now?

5. Can you Identify some Pros and Cons of the model?

6. From a managerial point of view, what are the main advantages that the model brought to your daily job?

7. Remembering the eight fundamentals, which is the one that you consider closer to your job and so to your way of working? Why?

8. Did you consider these aspects before knowing the EFQM model?

9. Has the EFQM changed your idea and your vision of excellence? Why?

10. How do you transmit the idea of Excellence to the people you work with?

11. In your opinion, what does process innovation mean and how EFQM can be considered innovative?

12. How would you define the kind of innovation brought by the model? Incremental or radical?

13. In your opinion, has this model gave to you the chance to improve your daily job?

14. Do you have any suggestions as to what needs to be added to the EFQM model, and why, in order to make it a better tool to support (process) innovation in your organization?

15. In your opinion, how this model can help you and the all company to grow up in the future? In other words: what is the main value that the EFQM brought to the company so to allow a successful growth?
APPENDIX 3B

Some more questions for GSK’s performance manager and EFQM Project Manager.

16. Could you please briefly explain how you got in contact EFQM?

17. Could you please explain your journey through the submissions you did? What has been changed and improved from the first submission until now?

18. What implications has had this model for the company? (strategy, organizational theory of capabilities, relationships with customers and employees...)

19. Before you apply the EFQM Excellence Model, how did you evaluate your performances?

20. What are the main advantages and disadvantages (if any) of the EFQM Model instead of previous used methods?

21. When we talk about EFQM Excellence Model we are talking about innovation. Could you explain what has changed inside RSCV due to it?

22. Do you agree with saying that “innovation” and “learning” are two underlying and core dimensions of the EFQM Excellence Model?

23. What are the future plans to develop the organization? How do you think EFQM can still be useful to achieve new successful results?