



## **Learning Excellence, A Survival Guide in Troublesome Times**

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### **Building Sustainable Communities Of Performance**

#### **Hans-Werner Franz**

The fundamental objective of this presentation consists in building a bridge of arguments and sympathy from the learning organisation treasure of thinking to the only official model of management for the development of converting whole organisations in learning and improving bodies.

Stewardship is the fourth stage in the life cycle of communities of practice (according to Wenger). Widening this stage to include the whole organisation and perpetuating it means building communities of performance as I call them. Achieving this could be defined as the fundamental task of management. How to achieve this is a challenging question. The EFQM Excellence Model provides a viable path of learning and community building to address the sustainable quality of organisations in pursuing their material and economic purposes. It goes far beyond ordinary quality management asking for comprehensive management quality. The EFQM Excellence Model includes the whole strategic and operational framework of an organisation and is directed towards transforming the whole organisation into a learning and self-improving body. It is not the result of control in the sense of checking on people but the result of control in the meaning of managing to do what is required to be done in order to achieve an established objective.

Organisational learning cannot be successful without the will and capacity of the learners to accept and actively position themselves in varying perspectives onto the common learning object. This is the way to relate themselves to their environment and to cope with changing and challenging realities. EFQM is not the outcome of an engineering process functional logic as we still can perceive it in the ISO 9000 model. It is a systemic model aiming at continuous change through learning and improvement from measuring performance against the consciously perceived needs and expectations of an organisation's stakeholders, self-set targets and benchmarks provided by the best competitors. These five stakeholders are the various types of customers, the investors of capital, time or ideas, the partners providing information and knowledge, machines and materials, the workforce whose expertise and enthusiasm is needed, and the natural and social/societal environment asking to obey laws, respect values and strive for good practice contributions.

The main engine moving and keeping this learning and self-improvement process alive is self-assessment against an established catalogue of guiding criteria and questions, using RADAR as a perfect translation tool of qualitative measuring and assessment into quantifiable performance.

Although there cannot be any doubt that models are brought to life by people with varying practices and degrees of responsibility, it can be said that learning organisation models like EFQM provide a clear stakeholder focus and keep organisations from pursuing unbalanced shareholder approaches and unlimited self-interest which was (and is) the basis of the present financial and economic crisis we are suffering.

### **Optimism, Pessimism And Realism – Has Learning Lost Its Way?**

#### **Józefa Fawcett**

It is often reported that it is cheaper to train than recruit capable people into the organisation however, there are more fundamental aspects to this than just a robust recruitment strategy. The role and function of learning and development should hit the bottom line, reduce labour turnover and enable individuals to change, which in turn helps the organisation learn how to learn – that gives it the competitive edge.

To do this organisations need to move away from efficiency towards effectiveness. Human capital and its development shows results which in turn need to appear on the balance sheet. Learning needs to be about quality and the journey towards excellence and continuous development through the workforce. The realism comes from tangible return on training investment. Optimism comes from new ways to learn and undertaking

learning for learning's sake, which is a waste because it does not meet identified needs at either the individual or organisational level. Pessimism comes from the ongoing recession, training cut backs, reduction in staffing numbers and the loss of valuable organisational memory.

Neither of these strategies work.

Realism is the only sustainable way through the creation of innovative strategies that ensure people are given the opportunities to develop so ensuring the future for the organisation.

This presentation discusses the reasons behind each of these assertions and helps participants to explore a realistic way forward.

### **Demystifying Virtual Communities of Practice: A Case Study of IBM**

**Ayse Kok**

The purpose of this proposed research study is to empirically explore the nature of virtual communities of practice (CoP) in a global organisation within the context of its International Corporate Volunteer (ICV) Program. This study investigates whether and how the use of virtual CoP evolves and becomes embedded within this organisation. Following the logic of inductive research, a qualitative case study will be proposed here, to gain insight on the extent to which virtual CoPs can be utilized. For this purpose, a global business organisation that established a partnership with a Canadian non-profit organisation and implements a corporate volunteer program is proposed. Although previous studies confirmed the important role that the quality of dialogue plays in the cultivation of effective communities of practice this study shows that despite the quality of exchanges, virtual CoP are not necessarily utilized due to some alternative channels of communication.

### **Excellence in Public Administration - EFQM Aside of Turnover and Profit**

**Christian Hausmann**

EFQM is well known throughout all industries and trades. The RADAR logic is a importance base for companies to grow not only in turnover and profit but also in customer satisfaction or brand awareness. To establish EFQM in public administration needs other factors especially to convince the employees and other stakeholders to start the way of excellence. Since there is not profit or turnover to be made, what are the factors which can be changed and measured and what are the factors to motivate the people including the government to do so.

### **The Learning Challenges Of Implementing A Sustainable Development Strategy Within A Company : The Case Of The Next Iso 26 000 Norm**

**Daniel Belet**

Most European companies, especially large companies, are aware of the importance of implementing sustainable development strategy to remain competitive on future markets as well as to comply with the environmental and social standards expected by the tomorrow western developed society. But this new strategy represents a dramatic change from the previous mainstream business strategies only focused on short term financial results and shareholders benefits. It means to answer simultaneously to the needs and expectations of several stakeholders both inside and outside the company with broader and balanced economic social and environmental objectives. Such changes imply major learning challenges about many issues at different levels : individual, teams, units, organization. The learning organization approaches can be helpful to bring about the right answers to these learning challenges. But they require a new kind of leadership as well as an adequate methodology to facilitate the necessary learning processes within the organization.

We will illustrate some aspects of these learning challenges with the example of the preparation for the ISO 26 000 standard ( which is supposed to come out towards the end of 2010) within a large company.

## **The Leader's Role In The Creation Of A Learning Organisation And The Innovation Process - The Example Of Estonian Enterprises**

**Made Torokoff**

In the process of innovation learning in the organisation (individually and as a team) plays an important role. Many entrepreneurs underestimate and dedicate little energy and time to formulating teams where members' skills complement one another; and do not engage in improving their own managerial abilities. One has to know how to gather and analyse information, make balanced decisions and constantly find new solutions in order to support the success of a business in a demanding and fast changing world of technology.

In the analysis of directing innovation process this article derives from the concept of learning organisation. The model and questionnaire were based on the five discipline model (Senge, 1990) and the three-dimension model of the framework of organisation development (Mets, 2002). The study covers years 2005 – 2009; the questionnaire was filled out by 671 employees from different companies in Estonia.

The study of different samples delineates different patterns of learning organisation. Based on factor analysis it became clear that the patterns of characteristics are substantially different for companies whose learning is based on employees or managers. Therefore the role of mid-level managers in directing the development of their direct subordinates is more important than has been realised thus far.

## **Self-Assessment For Education & Training Education A Sector Specific Translation Of The Efqm Excellence Model**

**C.-Andreas Dalluege**

The Concept of Excellence as represented e.g. by the EFQM Model helps a given organisation to improve and sustain its overall performance. To allow the widest possible usability in all types of organisations and sectors, the model is described in a complex language, guaranteeing a wording that is neutral and usable in each and every possible case.

The SAETO projects were targeted at translating the model in all details to the language and context of the education and training sector. Additionally, the process of self-assessment has been analysed and made scalable, allowing starting your journey towards Excellence without having the need to know and understand the Excellence Model right from the start.

The developed methodology has been implemented as a software tool for self-assessment, support by additional survey options targeted at the specific needs of Education and Training Organisations.

This approach supports a fast and easy pick-up of TQM by all types of ETO on different organisational maturity levels, from early starters up to EFQM experts.

## **In Troublesome Times, A "Keeping On" Paradigm Ultimately Leading To Career Legacies**

**Diane Doyon and Jacques Limoges**

When compared to performance, we may say that excellence is for a worker to do well what s/he has to do avoiding, at the same time, burn out and obsolescence. Our research, involving a European country, indicates that 52% of the workers have learned to do so particularly in troublesome times: downsizing, globalization, technologization, etc. We, so to speak, taped their career maintenance secrets to develop the Keeping on Paradigm. Then, we built up survival programs to help workers to achieve this successful and lasting work-life balance. And since for 9 out of 10 good "maintainers" this balance is impossible without the support of others, we integrated into these programs formal and informal group supports particularly those in tune with the learning organization concepts: mutual help, tutoring, coaching, mentoring, colearning groups. Quickly however, it appeared that work-life balance issues differ significantly depending at what career "third" a worker is. So we retailed our services for new, experienced and senior workers.

More particularly for workers of the senior group that is for those within 10 years of their retirement, we are validating a structured group program called the Career Legacy Circle (CLC). Organizations are experiencing the impact of the out-migration of retiring workers – not only in labour force shortages, but also in the loss of corporate knowledge and tacit wisdom which comes from a lifetime of committed employment. Compared to two decades ago, workers nearing retirement today are healthier, better educated, more willing to maintain/update their competencies and more able to extend their contribution to the labour market.

Therefore organizations will gain by providing them with meaningful work opportunities, including ways for

them to transfer their skills and knowledge to their workplace. CLC enables them to know “how to stay” and “when to go”. It contributes to work-life balance as described before by revitalizing the careers of workers. CLC can extend the active contribution retention of workers. In pilot sites in Canada, France and Switzerland, nearly half of the participants chose to postpone their retirement and questioned the need to abruptly depart from their profession without sharing their knowledge with others. CLC appears to be an efficient “survival” guide. We are now implementing CLC in different work settings.

### **Development Of Business Schools Into Learning Organisations: The Case Of Tallinn School Of Economics And Business Administration**

**Karen Voolaid**

The subject of learning organisations is topical in connection with the development trends of knowledge-based economy and knowledge-based society in Estonia and in Europe. While aiming towards the knowledge-based economy it is extremely important that universities and business schools had competences that would enable them to effectively respond to changes in the environment, thereby ensuring their competitive advantage.

The paper investigates the characteristics of a learning organisation in Tallinn School of Economics and Business Administration of Tallinn University of Technology, and makes proposals how to transform the School into a learning organisation to ensure its sustainable development under global competition. It is studied whether it is possible to purposely develop and design the learning process at the School with the purpose of transforming the University into a learning organisation. Watkins& Marsick's and Ekholm's organisation development principles provide the theoretical basis for the study, which is based on the interviews with the faculty who will evaluate the current situation and outlooks for further development of the organisation. The survey seeks to find out how different business school employees perceive a learning organisation; the executives and faculty as well as the administrative personnel will be interviewed.

The initial study demonstrated that the School supports employees' studies and finds resources for self-education; they approve the best accomplishments at the School and seek development of organisational culture. Nevertheless, everyday activity of the organisation members should be based more on the vision of the School; more information exchange and feedback on the results of activities of both individuals and various departments is needed. The survey helps us identify bottlenecks in the organisation and comprehend the potential of the School to develop.

### **Learning Challenges In A Multi-Generation Context**

**Marc Alen**

When discussing learning for sustainability, often organizations put the focus is on how to learn from the experienced employees and capture their knowledge for future generations. There is also much to be said though that learning for sustainability is also about learning from the new generations and matching their open minds with the experience of the employees that have been with the company for a long time. Just as with individuals, organizational unlearning is part of the organizational learning cycle. But in these troublesome times, organizations tend to try and hire primarily experienced people.

All this adds still another dimension to the already complicated challenge of facilitating learning in a multi-generation environment.

This session will briefly discuss the different learning agenda's of the different generations and then will explore together with the participants the multiple challenges that learning and the learning organization face in a context of a multi-generations workforce. During the session the speaker will build on personal experiences of - at the age of fifty - working with people in their twenties.

### **Learning Excellence A Benchmarking Approach**

**C.-Andreas Dalluege and Emel Arslan**

The Concept of Excellence as represented, for example, by the EFQM Model, helps a given organisation to improve and sustain its overall performance.

Amongst the basic tools and methods for implementing the Model, innovation and learning has a major focus. A special aspect in this is the concept of Benchmarking which EFQM understands not only as comparing ones company with average and best organisations of the company's own sector, but as a learning experience in which one strives to learn from the best possible partner for a given task – disregarding branch, sector or type of organisation.

After a short introduction of the concept of EFQM, the presentation will focus on examples of benchmarks that show out of the box thinking.

This part will be structured as follows:

1. Situation at ... (benchmark initiator)
2. Problem(s) to solve
3. Example of ... (identified expert for benchmarking Issue)
4. Common Issues

The audience will be invited to join the presentation by being invited to shortly discuss the "Common Issues" before they are shown for each case.

### **Organisational Learning And Organisational Excellence: Two Sides Of One Coin**

**Alaa Garad**

For years, quality gurus have preached on Total Quality Management. The TQM concepts and philosophies have formed the building blocks of organizational excellence. Organizational Excellence, now, is not just a philosophy or mere concept; considering the introduction and development of standards and frameworks such as Deming Prize, Malcolm Baldrige Programme, and EFQM Model, it has standard approach to organization management?. According to EFQM (2003) learning and continuous improvement are considered to be the heart of organizational excellence. On the other hand there is abundance of literature on Organizational Learning and Learning Organizations that does not adequately recognise the perceived association between Organizational Learning and Organizational Excellence. Researchers are challenged with a great deal of 'conceptual redundancy' and organizations are mystified with abundance of jargon and 'fads'. The aim of this paper is to present a critical review of the approaches towards organizational learning adopted by organizations that have been through excellence award journey and to juxtapose the approaches used in the context of TQM and Organizational Learning. Moreover the paper will introduce some empirical evidence of the approaches adopted by organizations as they strive towards excellence and learning.

### **The Awakening Of Organisations: Excellence As A Challenge For Higher Education Institutions**

**Thomas Pfeffer**

For more than a decade, higher education systems in many European countries have been in transition. They are still experiencing a paradigm shift from close state control towards a system of more institutional autonomy and accountability.

In countries, where higher education institutions used to be subordinated units to ministries, this tradition still can have significant influence on the current activities of these institutions and can inhibit their ability for organisational learning and for striving for organisational excellence. This makes it necessary to adjust the expectations on the organisational readiness of given higher education institutions to a realistic level. Many higher education institutions are still in the process of an organisational awakening, where it is necessary to distinguish the "self" of the organisation from its environment, to identify its own strength and weaknesses and to build up the basic fundamentals for strategic planning.

The presentation will characterise the paradigm shift from state control to autonomy and accountability, discuss the institutional readiness and the quality of management necessary for the continuous improvement of organisations, and raise the question, how best to support the organisational awakening of higher education institutions.

## **Lessons Learned: The Ti-Saeto Project in Turkey, Germany, Belgium and Latvia.**

### **Muharrem Tuna**

Quality in Vocational Education and Training (VET) is one of the central issues of the Copenhagen/Brugge Process towards more trust-based transparency and quality in VET and in the labor market. The tool developed by the Leonardo Project SAETO (LI-05-B-F-PP-164510) which supports system for self-assessment in educational and training organizations (ETO) that translates the EFQM model to the educational sector and links it with ISO 9000 in one assessment effort. The adaptations and localizations for country/ETO specific needs can only make it possible to benefit from these tools. And the project's aim is to achieve that together with 5 partner from 4 countries, namely, Turkey, Germany, Belgium and Latvia.

In order to be competitive in the globalizing knowledge economy, countries need to invest in their innovative VET systems at the national and regional levels. As countries are turning their production towards value-added segments and knowledge-intensive products and services, there is greater dependency on access to new technologies, knowledge and skills. And, with the parallel processes of globalization and localization, the local availability of knowledge and skills is becoming increasingly important.

For VET to be able to play their role, they must do more than simply educate and research – they must engage with others in their regions, provide opportunities for lifelong learning and contribute to the development of knowledge-intensive jobs which will enable graduates to find local employment and remain in their communities. This has implications for all aspects of these institutions' activities – teaching, research and service to the community and for the policy and regulatory framework in which they operate.

Within scope of the project, activities in partner countries with regard to localization and adaptations has been summarized to provide full picture of works accomplished under the following heading:

- EFQM, Quality in Vocational education and GOA software, and benefit to ETOs,
- The current status of the project, a brief presentation
- The education system as a whole;
- Quality management practices by regions and comparison of them with EFQM criteria
- A brief description of the educational institutions and providers of educational services that participate the project
- A brief presentation of newly developed software, "Central Repository Database" for comparison of ETO who wants to compare themselves with peer groups,

Recommendations for developing high quality, VET by nurturing the unique assets and circumstances of each institution, particularly in developing knowledge-based innovative curriculum that meets the need of both sector and participants.

## **Learning Organisation: The Next Generation**

### **Ton Bruining**

The credit-crunch of 2008/2009 makes painfully clear that our economies, our organisations, our employees and we ourselves need solid concepts to develop humane and sustainable organisations. Organisations that will facilitate people to think and to give them a right of say, that will challenge people to cross borders and explore new frontiers and to connect with others. Organisations no longer driven by greed, not afflicted with short-sightedness, nor burdened by bureaucratic stupidity. Learning organisations that will provide a glimmer hope for a better future. Between 2006 and 2009 a group of ECLo-members worked on e-book. They brought together 11 contributions in which they reflect on the learning organisation.

Most of these contributions had been simmering for a while. The majority of the chapters was written before the credit crisis of 2008. Nevertheless we think that the insights presented by our ECLo member are worthwhile for organisations and for the learning professionals supporting them. In the near future, research must answer the question whether investments in building Learning Organisations made these organisations more sustainable and tenable to the financial crisis and its aftermath.

We titled the book: Learning Organisation: The next generation. With this e-book ECLo celebrates the inspiring efforts of all those practitioners, managers consultants and researchers and others, who concentrated on an important issue of our modern knowledge dependent society.

I would like to discuss themes from the ECLo book, together with other authors present and the participants at the 17th annual conference of ECLo. In preparation of this discussion I will prepare a paper together with all the authors preceding the conference.

## **Best Practices in Customizing In-house Training Courses**

**Emad Eddien Hussein**

This paper presents the Change Masters International's (CMI) training methodology and sheds light on the various ramifications it has for directly affecting both the public and private business sectors through the effective implementation of the methodology. Furthermore, the paper discusses the different aspects that can be improved through sustained contact between the trainees and the trainers in the continual search for the most appropriate ways of fully using acquired knowledge on the job, meeting new challenges, and solving new problems that might arise out from the newly acquired training skills. CMI does not only aim to provide excellence in training service delivery, but also to ascertain that trainees obtain tangible through utilizing the new knowledge and skills. In fact, direct managers report higher levels of productivity after the trainees use their recent training to tackle issues and deal with problems at work. CMI proudly creates new horizons in the field of training through building totally new communication methods between the trainer and the trainees in order to obtain the best returns on investment and meet the highest expectations.

## **Balancing Organisational Learning**

**Ton Bruining**

The last few years I have been focussing on learning in the workplace. This resulted in a series of articles in the Dutch HRD journal *Opleiding & Ontwikkeling*. In the epilogue we reflected on the series and concluded that HRD experts look in a very unbalanced way at learning processes in organisations.

We considered the following five perspectives

- Explicit - Implicit learning processes and/or results
- Organised – spontaneous learning processes
- Learning in formal settings organised by others – learning in formal settings organised by learners themselves
- Desirable – undesirable learning processes or results. In (un)desirable learning processes desirable – undesirable learning processes in the perception of learners or others
- Asymmetrical– symmetrical interpretation of relations; dialogue and mutual understanding vs. power games

In our reflection we ascertained that the HRD experts tend to choose for explicit, organised, desirable, and asymmetrical learning processes and most of the time they take sides with management. In a follow-up on the series we invited authors to fill in the blanks.

Based on the two series in our HRD magazine, the five perspectives we distinguished and the contributions of twenty acclaimed HRD specialists I would like to discuss a paper: *Balancing organisational learning*, based on my work for the HRD magazine, at the 17th annual conference of ECLLO.

## **From Custard Factory to Cable Factory - Reflections on Experience Exchanges Between Creative Cities**

**Steve Harding and Nina Lakeberg**

The session will describe approaches to how learning can be developed within creative economy enterprises based on experiences from the ECCE Innovation Project, Economic Clusters of Cultural Enterprise and the Creative Metropolises project – both EU supported Interreg initiatives.

ECCEi is a 1V B project supported by the EU to explore new ways of working in the creative economy. The emphasis within the Birmingham strand has been on seeking ways to transfer knowledge between industry groups. The session will describe approaches with social media experts and businesses seeking new markets as an example of a learning cafe format.

The session will also discuss the role of the "Transfer Agent" a link between creative sectors - a facilitator of change and learning in creative organisations. The Transfer Agent role is needed to broker knowledge exchange –important for company competitiveness.

In the partnership we are looking at how to develop the learning cafe idea and roles to interact with companies. From BCU's perspective we have a research role in seeking to also transfer to our teaching and learning particularly for entrepreneurship and our students have been actively involved using social media techniques to observe the interactions. We are also utilising these observations in our MA curriculum.

Within the Creative Metropolises project (Interreg 1VC) we are looking at how policy makers at the city level can learn from each other. This is a policy approach to developing the creative economy and complements the work in ECCEi.

The ECCEi partnership is led by Nantes Metropole and has Aachen, Stuttgart, Cardiff, Eindhoven, Dublin, Birmingham and CIDA as partners.

Creative Metropolises is a partnership between Riga (lead partner) Tallinn, Vilnius, Warsaw, Amsterdam, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Barcelona, Birmingham/Wolverhampton and Berlin.

### **From Dusk 2 Dawn Magazine**

#### **Dan Lamoon and Jon Prest**

FD2D established in 2008 identified that there was a gap in the market for a publication catering for youth culture focusing on the arts of Leicester. The business model is constantly developing, although has always been focused around working with young creatives and creating opportunity.

FD2D has an open door philosophy where anyone aspiring to work in the creative sector can gain real life experience. All contributors get the opportunity to work in areas of the business that excite and inspire them to develop. FD2D has grown from a small local magazine to a large network of young creatives who all work together to produce a young, fun and vibrant magazine / website.

The next stage of FD2D will be the most exciting as the company grows and expands into surrounding cities. The business plans to implement training to engaging young people with creative workshops and work experience sessions, offering a more hands on approach to learning. These workshops will give young creative's a toolkit in how to get into the creative sector either as a freelancer or young entrepreneur, while teaching key skills in both creative and business systems.

When attending the conference we intend to present our practice and develop our methods of training and supporting creative's.

### **Innovative Learning**

#### **How The Sony Playstation Can Add Value In Learning Job Competences In Vet**

#### **Mireille Boonstra-Kints**

Is there a way to motivate students in secondary (VET) age 13-14, to learn professional qualifications? How can we give them a suitable job perspective? And can we introduce innovative learning methods? Yes we can!

By defining the day to day work processes in the bodywork industry (cars and trucks) and the qualifications and then combining them in several assignments we made a start. The Sony playstation portable did the rest... How? Come to our presentation on the ECLO conference. And you see how semacodes, camera's and enthusiastic teachers can make a difference.