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The Business Excellence assessment

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Abstract

Every company, regardless of its business orientation, strives for success. For many of them, success is equal to profit. Naturally, profit serves as a basic motivation for the formation of companies. On the other hand, it is however necessary to take into account the way of making a profit. This implies the need to achieve success which is most appropriately expressed by the term Business Excellence. The aim of the paper is to create a quick checklist for assessing the company's state of Business Excellence. Such tool is to be created by intersecting the Oliver Wight Class A Checklist for Business Excellence (OWC) and the core themes of excellence described by Les Porter and Steve Tanner. The main finding is that related items from OWC were identified and linked with every core theme of excellence. As a result, a quick checklist for assessing the company's state of Business Excellence, containing of 45 items, was created.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, every company is in a very difficult position because the competition is tough. Still, every company tries to be successful by focusing on doing everything as good as possible. But how does the company know if the results of its effort are good enough? And how does the company know whether it is successful or not? Of course, very important indicator of a company success is money. Money, however, should not be the most important indicator. A success of the company should be recognized in its every activity. So a space for the company assessment based on

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the conception of Business Excellence occurs here. As confirmed by our previous research [1,2,3,4,5,6,7], other research conducted in our university [8,9,10,11,12] and the research of foreign authors [13,14,15,16,17], Business Excellence represents a very important conception which should be adopted by every company that wishes to be successful.

For at least three decades, the conception of Business Excellence has been at the center stage of management theory and practices [16]. Generally, Business Excellence makes the world of a company better, it organizes and leads people to their happiness, and makes their dreams, and those of customers, companies and national economies, come true [14].

But still, it remains debatable whether the movement towards Business Excellence in theory as well as in practice is originated from the continued development of Total Quality Management (TQM) or if it is making a gradual but definitive departure from it [16]. When talking about TQM, one must be sure to understand the term quality. It is clear that quality exists as a conformance to requirements but on the other hand, it is also defined by features or characteristics with the ability to satisfy a given need. Most importantly, quality means a degree of excellence [18].

To provide a clear delimitation of Business Excellence, following definitions are suitable:

- Ionica, Baleanu and Irimie [15]: "Business Excellence is the state or quality of excelling. Particularly in the field of business and organizations, Business Excellence is considered to be an important value, and a goal to be pursued."
- Zhao and Bryar [13]: "Business Excellence approaches combining the knowledge of management philosophy and quality principles are essential to achieve competitive advantage."
- Hemzal [19]: "Business Excellence is systematic use of quality management principles and tools in business management, with the goal of improving performance based on the principles of customer focus, stakeholder value and process management."

As confirmed by the results of an extensive research conducted in China, India and the rest of the developing world [20], the Business Excellence assessment is a very useful business improvement initiative. On the other hand, companies use many different tools for the Business Excellence assessment. Such tools can be divided into three groups:

- Tools regarded as business improvement initiatives: Lean Management, Six Sigma, Business Process Reengineering, Balanced Scorecard, Quality Management Systems (QMSs), TQM, Performance Benchmarking;
- Complete Business Excellence frameworks: Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, EFQM Excellence Model and other Business Excellence models;
- Tools which assist with specific Business Excellence tasks such as developing a Pareto Chart, Quantifying the Benefit to Cost ratio of an improvement initiative or Calculating the Standard Deviation of a set of measurements.

Since the full scope of Business Excellence is so broad, there are many other management methodologies which can be used for the Business Excellence assessment. However, a universally applicable tool for the Business Excellence does not exist [21].

The aim of the paper is to create a quick checklist for assessing the company's state of Business Excellence. The paper is divided into five parts. Introduction represents input to the problem. Terms as quality and Business Excellence, as well as the Business Excellence assessment are defined in the second part. Third part is devoted to the methodology. Fourth part, results, includes the process of creating a quick checklist for assessing the company's state of Business Excellence by intersecting the Oliver Wight Class A Checklist for Business Excellence (OWC) and the core themes of excellence described by Les Porter and Steve Tanner. The last part is represented by conclusions. It consists of evaluation of the results from the previous part, fulfillment of the aim of the paper and statement of certain recommendations.

2. Methodology

The aim of the paper is to create a quick checklist for assessing the company's state of Business Excellence. We have chosen the checklist form because checklists help companies to focus on many management elements, such as

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