

# THE LEVEL OF MATURITY OF PRO-QUALITATIVE ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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## Abstract

*Dynamic changeable and complex surrounding evokes the necessity of flexible adaptation of an organisation to challenges occurring. The statement that it is pro-qualitative management in which one should look for the chances of gaining competitive predominance seems rational. The source of competitiveness is constant development conditioning the rise of the maturity of organisational solutions.*

*The aim of the research made was to assess the level of pro-qualitative management system maturity – the development of competence conditioning effective and efficient adaptation to the changes of the surrounding.*

*What was used in the process of the assessment of the level of management system was self-assessment as a research instrument allowing to estimate the current level of organisational solutions development. In the research process there was used the Model of Management Improvement of Polish Quality Award as well as the models of self-assessment in accordance with the norms of EN ISO 9004: 2009 and EN ISO 10014:2007.*

*As a result of research conducted there were acquired information, knowledge – crucial for making effectiveness and efficiency of the process of organisation management bigger, creating its competence and, in turn, leading to its adaptation to the needs and expectations of the surrounding.*

*The effect of the research was the presentation of the methodology enhancing effectiveness and efficiency of pro-qualitative organisation management. Orientation towards excellence favours usage of occurring chances and avoiding dangers by means of eliminating (limiting) weak points of an organisation as well as a variety of invalidities.*

**Key words:** *management, maturity, pro-qualitative, quality.*

## Introduction

An organisation functioning in the sphere of market economy, dynamically changing and complex surrounding demands the creation of competence which will condition flexible adaptability of realised strategy to occurring challenges. Unprecedented challenges of macroeconomic nature, which should be treated as the ones happening in the fields of economy, society, politics, law and technology, ecology or environment, lead to constant improvement of their before accepted solutions. What exerts crucial influence on their functioning is the closest surrounding which includes, among others and above all, customers, suppliers, competitors, authorities, financial institutions, the media, or interest groups. Their influence is often decisive about the quality of an organisation's functioning. In order to provide with the ability of permanent and balanced development for an organisation, it is

necessary to approve of rules and regulations, concepts' realisation or tools' implementation, leading to the growth of the maturity of pro-qualitative management of a company.

### *Problem of Research*

In the 21st century organisations willing to maintain their position on the market are obliged to create competence or intellectual capital which will condition making competitiveness higher. It seems that in today's economic situation it is quality and excellence orientation where the chances of survival and development should be sought for. In Poland at the beginning of the 21st century it became popular to create quality by means of the implementation of quality management systems' regulations and norms of ISO 9001. The results of the research conducted by R. Haffer show that 56% leading enterprises in Poland have already put into practice the above mentioned norms. However, only 11% declared that they have taken steps to implement TQM concept (Haffer 2002, p. 218). The moment of Poland joining European Union in 2004 was the one when organisations faced new challenges to be fulfilled. What should be emphasised, it was the same moment when the door to a range of various possibilities was opened. Obviously, what happens is that complex quality management, constituting the foundation of excellence, must be perceived as the chance of gaining competitive predominance of an organisation.

In the world it has become popular to implement and certify the system of quality management. According to the facts publicised by the International Standardisation Organisation the certificate in accordance with ISO 9001 has already been given to more than 1, 1 million organisations (Rogala 2012). Obviously, implemented system must be systematically improved as well as flexibly adapted to occurring changes. What is more, it should be oriented towards excellence. Unfortunately, it is estimated that in Poland only around 1% of companies possess highly integrated improvement process which is through priorities and leadership oriented towards a customer and management. It can be claimed that, in general, these are organisations which intended to or have already got Polish Quality Award. They are characterised by excellence orientation and the ability to manage their company in a pro-qualitative way in compliance with TQM philosophy (Kowalczyk 2012, p. 81).

### *Research Focus*

It is rational to claim that the growth in maturity of the level of pro-qualitative management and an organisation's orientation towards excellence may be achieved thanks to systematic use of self-assessment – the instrument having its implementation in the process of comprehensive review of activities as well as results achieved by an organisation. It is perceived as the tool conditioning effective and efficient management, which contributes to constant and comprehensive improvement of organisational solutions. Self-assessment leads to the creation of a perfect object which is characterised by: „imbuing with positive thinking (goodness, advantages), completeness (the state of being complete and total), purposefulness, functionality, simplicity, harmony, compliance (agreement in the state of being various – excellence in consistence) and quality” (Borys, Rogala 2011, p. 13). Self-assessment serves the following functions (Zymonik, Hamrol, Grudowski 2013, p. 114):

- verifiable and comparative (the comparison of current level of maturity with the level reached in the past, changes identification),
- informative (providing with information on current solutions from a variety of fields in which an organisation operates, conditioning rationality of decision making),
- evoking awareness and initiating ( providing with information - knowledge conditioning the activation of improving, corrective and preventive actions),
- integrational and harmonising (orientation towards action leading to effective and efficient development of the system, comprehensive use of already possessed potential in order to realise set goals),
- cultural (creating conditions favouring organisational learning, competence and organisation's intelligence formation, orientation towards excellence).

Such actions make the chances of development greater; the development, in turn, is then

characterised by permanence, ability to survive on the market, maintaining balance between: the possibility of providing with innovative products, finding the sources for financing and achieving planned level of costs. This conditions effective realisation of short-term and long-term aims (Lobre 2009, p. 38). The use of self-assessment is connected with gaining such competence that would lead to the development of organisational learning, team work or change orientation. This, in fact, enables to reach synergy effect as well as gain innovative added value. Such behaviour gives the chance to gain permanent success in the future, favouring making the level of maturity and management system better (EN ISO 9004:2009).

## Methodology of Research

### *General Background of Research*

The functioning of an organisation in knowledge society requires involvement of leaders, workers and all those who are interested in its development in the process of the creation of organisational solutions, and above all, the quality of its management. Maturity may be understood as the ability to adapt to occurring changes or goals, whose realisation conditions the fulfilment of expectations and needs of people interested. This is the system that can come up to those expectations and demands. It is oriented towards providing with complete development and it is also competent in the sphere of the use of good practices favouring readiness to accept the changes of inner and outer character. The aim of self-assessment conduct is to make the level of maturity – flexibility in reacting to market situation bigger. The increase in the level of pro-qualitative management should be understood as the readiness to achieve aims in a comprehensive way. It should also be understood as the ability of an organisation in the realm of the creation of process architecture and providing with the ability of their operational management. The maturity of an organisation should be considered in economical and social, technological as well as environmental and ecological dimension. This is possessed intellectual capital together with organisational competence where the chances of maturity growth should be sought for. Efficiency and effectiveness of pro-qualitative management depend to a great extent on the possibility of taking reliable measure, gaining information and knowledge enabling to define the direction of improvement. What should be born in mind is the fact that a diagnose conduct and the estimation of the maturity level of an organisation demands the acceptance of such criteria that maintain „dynamic features despite the fact that the estimation of maturity does not have a permanent character but is carried out periodically. Therefore, what should be assumed is the fact that the current state of functioning of those systems is never perfect and can always be improved. It becomes essential to perceive inherent in actions constant improvement (...) unknown to the management of an enterprise characteristic features of final state that can be achieved. The only asset of the attempts and efforts of an enterprise is defined by gradual aims and intentions” (Jedynak 2007, p. 77).

What may be distinguished in the literature of an object is a range of methodologies referring to defining of maturity level of organisational solutions. However, for the purpose of this work it is rational to highlight 5 levels of maturity. These are the following (Paulk, Weber, Curtis, Chrissis 1995; Hormon 2003, p. 3-4; Cobb 2003, p. 16):

1. level 1 – initial level of maturity ( lack in created competence of an organisation in the realm of rules and guidelines respect conditioning the implementation and functioning of quality management system, the possibility of making success depends on undertaking disordered individual actions),
2. level 2 – basic approach ( an organisation is characterised by the ability of respecting rules and guidelines of pro-qualitative management, repetition of occurrences has been provided, however, lack of organisational solutions conditioning quality optimisation is noticeable),
3. level 3 – defined system approach ( an organisation possesses the ability of business processes management, managerial and informational instruments are used, which makes efficiency and effectiveness of a created system greater),
4. level 4 – constant improvement management (an organisation is complete in the sense

of continuous improvement, there exists high level of system integration, actions head for excellence – guidelines of business excellence models are respected),

5. level 5 – the best in its class (an organisation may be created as the best one in its class – constituting a pattern, able to gain permanent success – long - term development according to the idea of pro-qualitative management, oriented towards excellence).

#### *Sample of Research*

The research comprised 25 similar production plants. All of them deal with mining, processing and making aggregate more precious as well as serving in geological, correctional and transportation field. 18 production plants were located in the south-east of Poland – their participation in market is estimated at about 47%. 8 production plants were located in małopolska province – their participation in market is estimated at about 20%. The choice of organisations was not random. They are characterised by high similarity in the realm of activity type, organisational solutions and rules of functioning. Such procedure made the process of self-assessment more effective and allowed to define the direction of improvement.

#### *Instrument and Procedures*

In order to verify the ideas of pro-qualitative management and defining the level of organisational solutions, the models of self-assessment based on the norms of EN ISO 9004:2009 and EN ISO 10014:2007 were used. They are used in the process of improvement of quality management systems. In order to verify gained information, the criteria and guidelines of the Model of Excellence of Polish Quality Award were used. What must be emphasised is the fact that it was possible to carry out the research thanks to the kind permission of the examined organisations. The managers agreed to cooperate through making the documents available, presenting facts and data from audits or management reviews. Additionally, a crucial part of the research were the data revealed by managers, workers or outer customers of the organisations in question. The survey conducted allowed to estimate the level of maturity of a researched group.

#### *Data Analysis*

The research based on the rules and norms of self-assessment model of EN ISO 9004:2009 and EN ISO 10014:2007 was conducted at the turn of 2011 and 2012. However, the research based on the criteria of the Model of Excellence of Polish Quality Award was conducted in January 2013.

### **Results of Research**

Empirical survey conducted allowed to define the level of maturity of organisational solutions within the group of 25 production plants dealing with aggregates used in the field of building. According to self-assessment carried out with the norms and regulations of EN ISO 9004:2009 constituting the basis, average level of maturity equals 3,16 (Table 1) – which means that, according to the methodology accepted in this work, the level of maturity of examined organisations should lie within the level of 3. This, in turn, suggests that what exists is system approach. Having completed self-assessment procedures, what should be taken into account is that the low result of 2,5 in the sphere of monitoring and measurements, analysis as well as inspections must undergo particularly strict and intensified process of improvement. In the long run, currently used solutions may turn out to be insufficient to provide an organisation with effective and efficient development of an organisation. Gained 3<sup>rd</sup> level of maturity was confirmed after self-assessment process completion based on the criteria of EN ISO 10014:2007 – the result acquired equaled 3,44 (tab. 1).

**Table 1. Results acquired from the research of self-assessment according to the requirements of EN ISO 9004:2009 and EN ISO 10014:2007.**

| Self-assessment model   | Results gained from conducted self-assessment   | The level of maturity of an organisation (average value) |
|---|---|--|
| Results of self-assessment conducted with compliance of the requirements of EN ISO 9004:2009  | Organisation's management orientation towards permanence of success – 3,3<br>Strategy and politics – 3,3<br>Resource management – 3,1<br>Process management – 3,5<br>Monitoring, measurements, analysis and inspection – 2,5<br>Improvement, innovations and learning – 3,3 | 3,16   |
| Results of self-assessment conducted with compliance of the requirements of EN ISO 10014:2007 | Customer orientation – 3,5<br>Leadership – 3,5<br>People's involvement – 3,5<br>Process approach – 3,4<br>System approach – 3,4<br>Constant improvement – 3,4<br>Making decisions on the basis of facts – 3,3<br>Mutual relations with suppliers – 3,5                      | 3,44   |

In order to confirm acquired level of maturity, the research with the criteria of the Model of Management Improvement of Polish Quality Award was carried out. Results gained in the research are presented in table 2.

**Table 2. Results gained from the research of self-assessment according to the criteria of the Model of Excellence of Polish Quality Award.**

| Assessment criterion        | Results gained from the conducted research of self-assessment – the average value for the group of 25 production plants  |   |
|-----------------------------|--|---|
| An organisation's potential | Leadership – 60 points<br>Strategy – 40 points<br>Workers – 60 points<br>Partnership and resources – 40 points<br>Processes, products and services – 60 points | Altogether the potential of organisations was estimated at –260 points (it was possible to gain maximum 500 points) |
| Gained results              | Results referring to customers – 80 points<br>Results referring to workers – 70 points<br>Results referring to society – 60 points<br>Key results – 70 points  | Altogether gained results were estimated at - 280 points (it was possible to gain maximum 500 points)               |

As a result of conducted self-assessment being in accordance with the criteria of the model, the potential of organisations was estimated at 260 points (average value) – which constitutes 52% out of maximum points possible to gain. Results gained, however, were estimated at 280 points (average value) – which constitutes 56% out of maximum points to gain. Bearing in mind that values from 40% to 60% reflect the level of maturity number 3 – defined system approach and achieved values in the process of self-assessment should be considered as satisfactory and, to a great extent, confirm the results achieved before. Therefore, what must be emphasised is the fact that the level of maturity of the group of examined production plants lies within the borders of the level number 3 – defined system approach.

The problem of an organisation maturity assessment and its use in the process of definition of self-assessment models in Poland is relatively new. From the research conducted by R. Haffer in 2011, which comprised the group of 230 enterprises functioning in Poland, it is clear that the main chance to improve quality are quality management systems put into use in the amount of approximately 70% of enterprises. Active use of more advanced approaches in the process of creation of business excellence such as, for example, the concept of TQM, is declared by only 5% of organisations surveyed. Moreover, active use of the models of business self-assessment excellence is declared by only 2% of organisations mentioned above (Haffer 2011, p. 378). Unfortunately, what should be emphasised is the fact that in Poland it is still not common to implement self-assessment in the process of business excellence creation.

Recently, the problem of defining maturity level of organisations functioning in the south-east of Poland has been dealt with by P. Kafel and T. Sikora. In 2012 they carried out the assessment of key elements of organisation management on the basis of 29 enterprises by means of self-assessment tools. In order to interpret the results gained in the process, they assumed that the value 1 denotes the lowest level of maturity and the value 5 the highest one. What can be concluded from the research conducted by them is the fact that the average level of maturity should be defined as 2,92 (Kafel, Sikora 2013, p. 10). The result achieved by them allows to qualify organisations examined as belonging to the level number 3 of organisational maturity – defined system approach.

Therefore, research conducted by them confirmed to a great extent results obtained in my research: 3,16 according to the requirements of EN ISO 9004:2009, 3,44 after the conduct of self-assessment following the requirements of EN ISO 10014:2007, 260 points in the realm of self-assessment potential and 280 point in the sphere of self-assessment of achieved results with the use of the Model of Management Improvement of Polish Quality Award. The results gained in the process allow to claim that despite relatively low use of self-assessment models in the process of the creation business excellence, there were a lot of actions undertaken in the sphere of the improvement of quality management systems. This, in turn, makes it possible to gain the level of maturity number 3 – identified system approach.

Gained results from the empirical research certify that the idea of pro-qualitative management was implemented in the organisations examined – a range of crucial elements of the concept were put into practice. It became visible that examined organisations are characterised by their orientation towards excellence, however, they still lack in competence which would condition the effectiveness of management of constant improvement. This would allow to treat them as a pattern to follow – the best in their class.

In consequence, in the future these are effectiveness and efficiency of improvement process on which the emphasis should be put. The guidelines of methodology favouring permanent success achievement may come in handy in this point – providing with long-term development ability. What should be strived for are the following:

1. Observation of the surrounding – strategic analysis of macro- and competitive environment, making the chance of identification of changes bigger.
2. Analysis of the inner potential of an organisation, self-assessment conduct in order to estimate the level of maturity – definition of competence in the sphere of leadership, strategy formation, human capital managing, process managing and abilities to create effectively functioning system.
3. Analysis of gained results, self-assessment conduct conditioning the possibility of estimating the level of satisfaction of outer customers, workers and people interested.
4. Identification of discrepancies between plans and real achievements. Definition of the direction of development – updating and procedures' designing; creation of competence which will condition an effective choice of goals as well as efficiency in gathering and using resources necessary for their realisation.
5. Estimation of the level of competence and intelligence of organisations, orientation towards their excellence.

## Conclusions

The maturity of an organisation may be defined as its ability to create competence necessary to achieve permanent success understood as a long-run ability to develop. Answering identified needs and expectations of surroundings and people interested is strictly dependent on the maturity level of organisational solutions. This, in turn, constitutes the fundamental condition of maintaining organisational competitiveness. Therefore, a mature organisation is oriented towards constant improvement in order to become ideal. However, what should be emphasised at this point is the fact that complexity and changeability of surrounding makes leads to the fact that the achievement of maturity state in each and every field of an organisation functioning is still not possible. That is why it is so crucial to accept the need of constant and comprehensive improvement because it conditions the growth of maturity level. This may contribute to gain competitive predominance.

To sum up, it should be claimed that the process of creation of maturity level of organisational solutions are to be treated as effective and beneficial action leading towards magnifying the chance of active adaptability to identified changes. The majority of European countries in recent years have faced the necessity of economic crisis. The occurrence of phenomena negatively affecting functioning of organisation empowers those of them which are prepared to it in the best possible way. Thus, the growth of the level of maturity of organisational solutions will definitely contribute to the improvement of the efficiency and effectiveness of undertaken actions. This should be noticeable in final results achieved. Conducted research allowed to define the level of maturity of pro-qualitative management system, favouring the development of competence necessary for effective functioning in dynamically changeable and complex surrounding.

Conducted research with the use of self-assessment models allowed to estimate the level of maturity of a researched group of organisations. They provide with the results – knowledge necessary to define the direction of their improvement. Self-assessment favours the improvement of pro-qualitative management elements. Those are as follows: leaderships, policy and strategy, organisational structure or organisational culture. Pro-qualitative management, self-assessment, the acceptance of the process of continuous and comprehensive improvement lead to the creation of: the effectiveness of organisational functioning, providing with the permanence of action (understood as identification of dangers and limiting their influence), integrity of implemented systems, creation of innovative activities of workers, increasing satisfaction of people interested, which conditions the achievement of the state of system quality maturity. Such procedure and such action lead to the formation of the quality of competence necessary to flexible adaptability of an organisation to occurring challenges, providing with balanced and permanent development and obeying the rules of social responsibility.

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