

EQUIPE PROJECT

Case Study

QUALITY IS A LONG TIME JOURNEY: FROM ISO STANDARD TO EFQM MODEL

Case of the Continuing Education Centre in the Technical University of Valencia¹

The Continuing Education Centre (Centro de Formación de Postgrado)

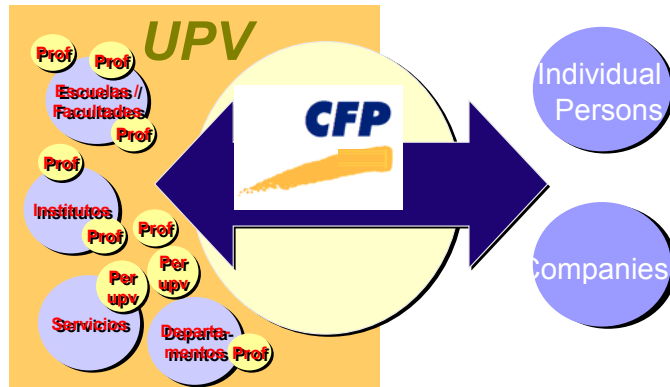
The Continuing Education Centre (CFP¹) at the Universidad Politécnica de Valencia is a university service which is in charge of managing lifelong learning within the university.

Lifelong learning consists of the following:

- **Postgraduate Training:** Specialist Training for university graduates
- **Further Complementary Training** (or continuing education): principally for university students who are looking to improve their qualifications and their knowledge of techniques and tools.
- **Courses, seminars or conferences** which promote the diffusion of scientific, technical and cultural knowledge among all sectors and levels of society.
- **Company Training:** Specialized Training that is designed ad-hoc to meet the specific demands of companies.

The CFP functions as a bi-directional unit in its relation between the University and its social environment. For this reason,

- It promotes and collaborates with distinct organisms of the university in the creation and development of courses and facilitates their diffusion and promotion within the social environment external to the university.
- It analyses the different demands for training from companies and channels these training needs towards the university community so as to be able to organise and promote new ad-hoc courses in an agile and flexible form.
- It serves as a shop window where the university's educational training is on display and on offer because it is a centre where information about training matters is permanently available, it centralises registration matters and deals with the awarding of the various kinds of certificates and the granting of degrees.



The Continuing Education Centre was established in 1991 and, currently, there are 30 members of staff. It has no teaching staff. The teaching of the courses is carried out mainly by teachers within the university and external lecturers with recognised prestige in the field.

During 2001, the CFP managed 1.030 courses and registered more than 23.000 students.

¹ Centro de Formación de Postgrado – Universidad Politécnica de Valencia

The Universidad Politécnica de Valencia offers diplomas/degrees in the area of applied science and, more particularly, in the fields of engineering. It has 34.000 students and 2.400 teachers.

The Quality Management System in the Continuing Education Centre (CFP)

The development of the Quality Management System in the CFP has been (and still is) a heady long time journey.

In April 1997 the direction understood that it was important to study what on earth was this word of “quality” that all the enterprises used and how to implement a “Quality Management System”.

The evolution until now was not a linear one. There were two principal stages, with an inflexion point on December 2000. Before 2000 the CFP worked on the ISO 9000:94 standard and after 2000 they changed following the European Model of Excellence (EFQM).

(1997-2000) The ISO 9002:94 stage

In the moment the centre took the decision of implementing a quality system the first question was “how do we begin? Where do we find information?”

The Continuing Education Centre (CFP) is an interface unit between University and Society. Then it was though that the best way was to use the models already recognised by the enterprises, and this was the ISO Standard.²

Four principles were set up for success:

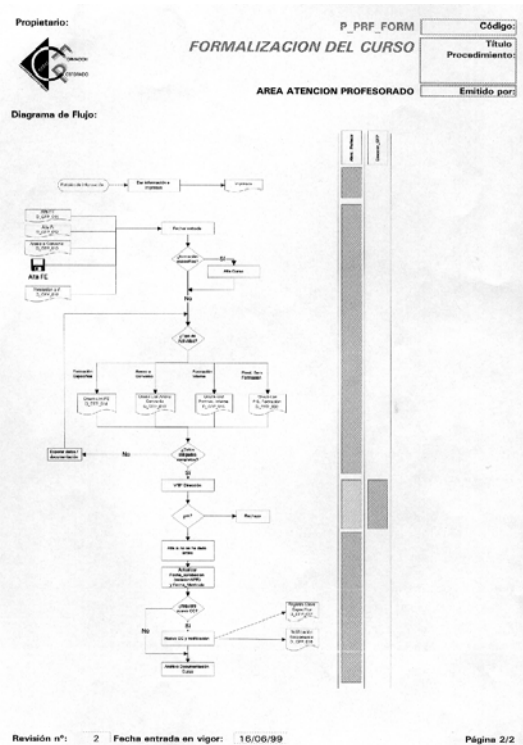
- A committed leadership: The leadership that promoted the implantation of the quality system putting resources (time for meetings, human resources in the person of the quality co-ordinator, and financial resources to pay the external assessor)
- One internal quality coordinator: Someone in the organisation who co-ordinated the development of the system and the meetings with the different groups and with enough authority to get the enhancement proposals under way.
- External assessor: involved in the process helping in the training of the whole group, giving an external point of view and setting order in the meeting scheduling.
- Everybody: in the centre was involved in almost one enhancement group and could participate in the definition of the processes.



² Principal Characteristics of the ISO 9001:94 standard

Puntos de la Norma ISO 9001:94	
1.- Responsabilidad de la Dirección	12.- Estado de la inspección y ensayo
2.- Sistema de Calidad	13.- Control de los productos no conformes
3.- Revisión del contrato	14.- Acciones correctivas
4.- Control del Diseño	15.- Manipulación, almacenamiento, embalaje y entrega.
5.- Control de la Documentación	16.- Registros de calidad
6.- Compras	17.- Auditorías internas de calidad
7.- Productos suministrados al cliente	18.- Formación y adiestramiento
8.- Identificación y trazabilidad del producto	19.- Servicio postventa
9.- Control de los procesos	20.- Técnicas estadísticas
10.- Inspección y Ensayo	
11.- Control de los equipos de inspección, medición y ensayo	

Propietario: P. PRF. FORM Código:
FORMALIZACION DEL CURSO Título Procedimiento:
AREA ATENCION PROFESORADO Emitido por:
Objetivo:
 Colaborar en el establecimiento de las características básicas de las distintas actividades formativas y proceder a la tramitación pertinente cumpliendo las Normas Regulatorias.
Documentos:
 D_CFP_011 Tramitación Formación Específica
 D_CFP_012 Tramitación Formación Personal UPV
 D_CFP_013 Anexo a Convenio
 D_CFP_014 Check-list Formación Específica
 D_CFP_015 Check-list Formación Personal UPV
 D_CFP_016 Check-list Anexo a Convenio
 D_CFP_017 Registro Clave Específica
 D_CFP_018 Notificación CC a Responsable
 D_CFP_019 Prestación de Servicio de Formación
 D_CFP_020 Check-list Prestaciones de Servicio de Formación
Ambito de Aplicación:
 Todos los cursos y prestaciones de servicio de formación gestionados por el Centro de Formación de Postgrado, excepto los Títulos Propios
Alcance:
 EMPÍEZA: Con la petición de información por parte del Profesor de la UPV, o bien cuando trae los documentos de alta de las distintas actividades formativas.
 ACABA: Con el VºBº del curso por parte del CFP y la asignación de clave específica si se requiere.
Observaciones:
 No hay
Referencias:
 No hay
Responsables:
 El área de Profesorado es la responsable de la Formación de las distintas actividades formativas y su alta en el sistema informático. La dirección del CFP es la responsable del VºBº de todas las actividades formativas
Indicadores:
 - NO EFECTIVIDAD EN EL TRAMITE: % Cursos con un periodo de tramitación mayor a 1 semana respecto al total de cursos dados de alta durante un mes.
 - DESINFORMACION (CURSOS CON MATRICULA): % Cursos (que requieren matrícula en ventanilla) en los que la información de los mismos está disponible con menos de dos semanas de antelación al comienzo del curso respecto al total de cursos dados de alta durante el mes.
 - DESINFORMACION (CURSOS SIN MATRICULA): % Cursos (que no requieren matrícula en ventanilla) en los que la información de los mismos está disponible con menos de 1 día de antelación al comienzo del curso respecto al total de cursos dados de alta durante el mes.
Aprobación / Aceptación:
 Distribución:
 Fecha: 15/06/99 Fecha: 15/06/99
 Revisión nº: 2 Fecha entrada en vigor: 16/06/99
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During this period (until December 2000), with exhaustive and motivated work, the CFP set up the organisational chart, the mission and vision statement and stressed in the definition and documentation of the processes.

Every work group (there were 4 groups) analysed their own key procedures and described and documented them. But the benefits were not only the documented procedures but also the high motivation of the personnel and the interesting enhancement proposals arising from the interaction of people with different tasks. The greater part of the enhancement proposals was implemented immediately and then the procedures became dynamic (perhaps too much).

In spite of ISO standard which does not promote specially evaluation by indicators and continuing enhancement, the CFP through its groups, set indicators for all the key processes and they were revised monthly in the group. With the indicators the performance of the processes increased substantially.

But, after the implantation phase where the procedures and indicators were settled there began the maintenance stage in which the rate at which meetings were held was slowed down. At the same time the number of people working on the centre nearly doubled due to the approval of an important European project and the new people didn't have the same quality culture.

Additionally, during this year 2000, the CFP moved into a new building with 15 classrooms in its charge. Until then the CFP had only one classroom and the rest of the courses were taught in classrooms spread across the university campus. This new and wider infrastructure was intended to get new services and processes underway.

All that supposed a diminished interest in the quality system and practically a total abandon of the indicators and revision meetings.



(2001-2003) The EFQM stage

Just after moving into the new building, the CFP was invited to participate in an EFQM Conference organised by the university. The EFQM was a model more oriented to services with a more wide vision of the organisation.

Adopting the **European Model of Excellence (EFQM)**³ as its reference model for its quality management was the opportunity to restore the quality system. This decision was made at the end of year 2000. But the assumption of this model was not to "start again" but rather was to organise everything that had been achieved previously in "new shelves".

To commence the introduction of this new model of quality, it was decided that it was essential to offer training to all personnel in the Centre about the fundamental characteristics of the EFQM model. For that, a course was planned and designed to combine a **theoretical** part, in which the different criteria and subcriteria were explained, and a second **practical** part in which an analysis of the current situation of the centre was carried out from the point of view of the criteria of the model which had been studied (self-assessment)⁴.

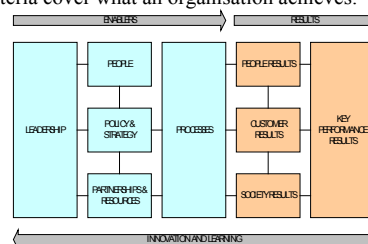
Among the distinct forms of self-assessment proposed by the EFQM, the **self-assessment portfolio** was chosen which is characterised by utilising a form or pre-established document (like a template) in which is detailed the criterion, subcriterion and areas to be tackled (grey area in the figure) and a free zone is left so as to be filled with data from the analysis. In what follows, one can appreciate the kind of schematic outline that is being used in these forms.

CRITERION <i>(Description of the criterion according to the model)</i>	
Subcriterion <i>(Description of the subcriterion according to the model)</i>	
Areas to be tackled <i>(List of areas to be tackled that are suggested by the model)</i>	Strong Points: <i>(Strong points identified in the organisation).</i> Areas for improvement: <i>(Areas for improvement identified in the organisation).</i>
Evidence: <i>(Evidence or facts which corroborate that described in the strong points)</i>	

On finalising the course at the end of the first EFQM year, the CFP obtained a Self-assessment document of the centre based on the EFQM model with suggestions of strong points and areas for improvement covering all the areas of the centre. The document contained 150 ideas related to strong points and 210

³ The **European Model of Excellence**, better known by the abbreviation **EFQM** (European Foundation of Quality Management), which corresponds to the foundation which developed it, is a practical tool which helps organisations to determine at what point they find themselves on their way towards excellence.

The model centres its attention on nine criteria which are considered fundamental to the pursuit of excellence in an institution. These criteria are divided up between five *Enablers* and four *Results*. The 'Enabler' criteria analyse what an organisation does, how it carries out its key activities. The 'results' criteria cover what an organisation achieves.



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⁴ **Self-assessment** is a global, systematic and periodic examination of the activities and results of an organisation compared with the EFQM Model of Excellence. In the self-assessment, strong points and areas where improvements may be introduced are identified.

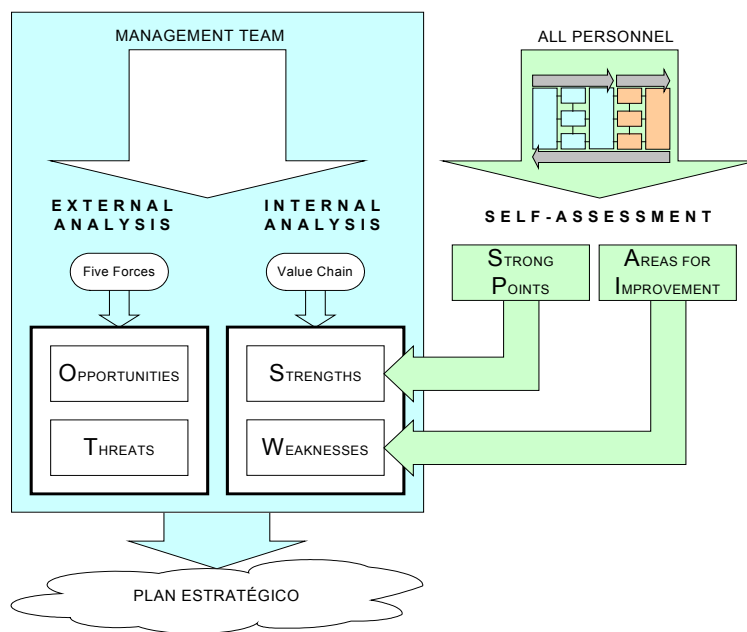
suggestions for improvement which one can suppose that this means the document faithfully reflected the state of the centre at that moment in time.

The contribution of self-assessment to strategic planning

The Continuing Education Centre has a strategic plan which is revised annually by the co-ordinating team (8 persons) through a classical **SWOT**⁵ analysis with its two phases: **External Analysis** and **Internal Analysis**.

It was observed that the strong points and areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment could complement and complete the strengths and weaknesses identified in the internal analysis.

In this way, in the strategic plan for 2002-2003, the suggestions of classical strategic planning were gathered together with that of the EFQM self-assessment as is shown in the following figure.:



The strategic plan thus formulated contained 9 strategic points with 113 actions or proposals for improvement.

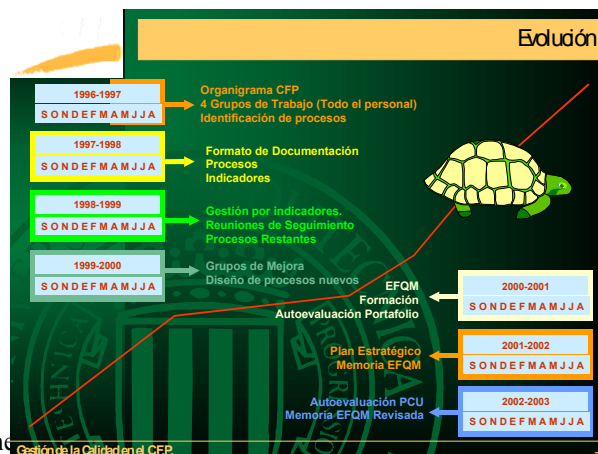
After the Self Assessment portfolio and the strategic Plan, now, the CFP is working in writing the EFQM report for the prize.

Conclusions

The CFP has been working in its Quality management System for seven years following two models (the ISO 9002:94 before year 2000, and EFQM after 2000).

The ISO stage settled the Processes and their documentation but there were a lot of aspects that constrained the daily work.

EFQM was a model more directed to services and the continuous enhancement philosophy worked better than the certification one.



⁵ The **SWOT** Model is based on the analysis of the environment and the internal factors of the company. In the external analysis, one tries to identify the opportunities which the environment offers us as well as the potential threats which we should take into account. In the internal analysis, one tries to detect strengths and weaknesses.

The European Model of Excellence is a useful tool to be able to carry out an internal diagnosis of the degree of quality in the management of the centre, through the use of self-assessment.

The model facilitates comparison with other organisations, of a similar or distinct nature, through a series of widely accepted criteria in the whole of Europe and which also help to identify and allow for the sharing of "best practice" in the organisation.

The self-assessment portfolio allows for a profound analysis of the organisation with relatively limited resources.

The strong points and areas for improvement identified in the self-assessment allow us to complete the strengths and weaknesses identified in the internal analysis.

The strategic plan set out is based on ideas and suggestions of all the personnel. It is much richer and easier to communicate than that thought out only by management.