



NSAI

*Excellence
Through
People*

1000:2012

ASSESSMENT GUIDE

Excellence Through People

Success as a business owner or manager largely depends on the ability to improve business performance through people. Excellence Through People provides a business improvement model for organisations to enhance performance and realise strategies, through the management and development of their people.

The focus of Excellence Through People (ETP) is to get organisations to look at their people as a key source of competitive advantage. The scheme is available to all organisations – regardless of size.

The model helps you achieve business improvement by:

- > Putting the right human resource systems in place to maximise employee contribution
- > Aligning people practises with the goals of your organisation
- > Maximising the investment in human resource management

The scheme is used by many of Ireland's most successful organisations in becoming more efficient, productive, flexible, competitive and innovative.

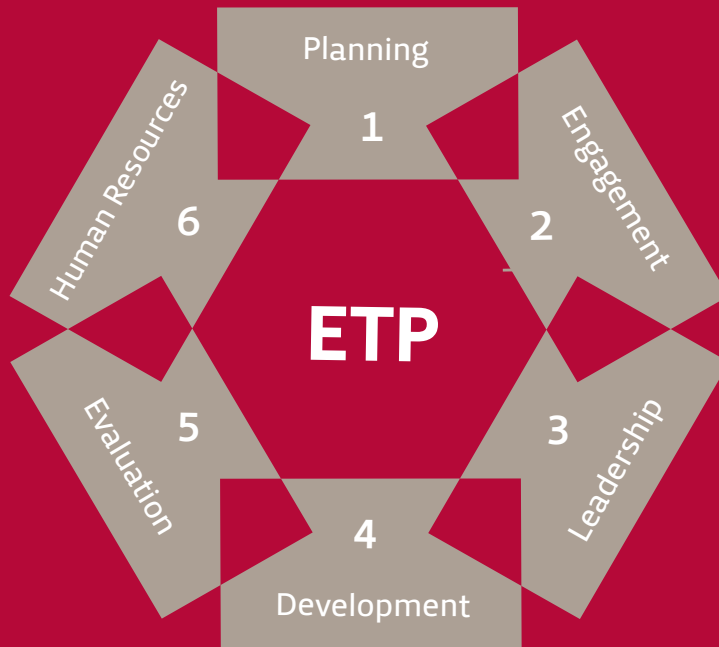
Benefits for your organisation include:

- > Bottom-line improvements
- > Customer satisfaction
- > Employee engagement
- > Workforce organisation
- > Quality improvement
- > Succession planning
- > Innovation

The process to achieve Excellence Through People certification:

- 1 Applicant briefed by NSAI on the requirements of the scheme
- 2 Conduct a self assessment
- 3 Implement actions to meet the scheme requirements
- 4 Apply for recognition
- 5 Assessment carried out by ETP assessor
- 6 Assessor report and recommendations
- 7 Certification decision and feedback

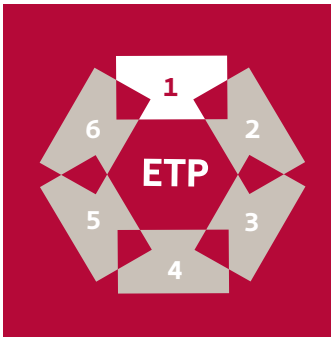
Business Improvement Model



| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 1 | Business Planning & Continuous Improvement | 170 Points |
| 2 | Effective Communication & People Engagement | 170 Points |
| 3 | Leadership & People Management | 170 Points |
| 4 | Planning of Learning & Development | 190 Points |
| 5 | Evaluation Of Learning & Development | 140 Points |
| 6 | Human Resource Systems & Employee Wellbeing | 160 Points |

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SECTION 1

Business Planning & Quality Improvement

Criteria

- 1a** The organisation has a documented business plan appropriate to the business needs.
- The plan sets out its measurable goals and objectives and takes into account external factors, e.g. marketing, promotion, technological, financial, legislative, environmental, facilities and human resource requirements.

Evidence Required

- Business plans available for review – written and/or observed.
- Key considerations for inclusion in your business plan:
- > Intended outcomes, what are you going to do, and when?
 - > Business analysis e.g. SWOT, technical and competitive factors that may affect you.
 - > Strategies – how you intend to achieve your outcomes.
 - > Human resources plans.
 - > Marketing and promotional plans.
 - > Financial plans and budgets.
 - > Quality plans.
 - > Technical plans.
 - > Legislative plans.
 - > Environmental plans.
 - > Information, communications and technology plans.

- 1b** Employees can describe the planning process as well as the mission, vision and values.

- > Employees involved in the business planning process can describe their contribution.
- > Verbal evidence that employees are familiar with the organisation's mission, vision and values.

- 1c** The organisation can show how it cascades relevant sections of its business plan down to departmental, team and individual plans with measurable goals and targets.

- > Employees can describe how the business plan is communicated to them at team and/or individual level.
- > Examples of internal communications systems, e.g. employee briefings.
- > Your communication mediums may include:
 - *Team briefings.*
 - *Department and functional meetings.*
 - *Team away days.*
 - *Presentations to employees.*
 - *E-mails and SMS.*
 - *Intranets.*
 - *Notice boards.*
 - *Newsletters.*
 - *Social media.*
 - *Brochures and booklets.*
- > Employees need to understand team and/or organisational objectives.

Criteria

1d

The organisation can show that it reviews its business plans on a regular basis and communicates changes to its employees.

Evidence Required

- > Evidence of systematic review process in place, may include monthly or quarterly management meetings. All changes to objectives and targets either organisational, departmental or team should be identified as evidence of this process.
- > Employees can describe the review process and how changes are communicated to them.
- > Minutes of review process meetings.
- > Any other relevant documents to demonstrate business plan reviews and communication of same to employees.

1e

The organisation can show that it operates a quality management system.

Where appropriate the organisation can show it has achieved relevant quality standards, certification, e.g. ISO 9001, OHSAS 18001, Quality Mark, FDA, or other appropriate sector accreditation.

The organisation can show it uses continuous improvement tools, e.g. balanced score card, six sigma etc, to communicate and motivate employees to focus on the key goals and objectives.

- > Documentary evidence of quality management system in operation.
- > Employees can describe how the quality management system operates.
- > The organisation will need to show evidence of a quality improvement programme and how it links with the business goals.
- > The organisation will need to show how employees are involved in the quality improvement programmes either on an individual or a team basis.
- > Certificates of relevant quality standards available for verification.

1f

The organisation can show that it uses effective internal and external benchmarking and/or networking activities to conduct comparative analysis and that such activities contribute towards efforts for continuous improvement in business performance.

- > Top management can provide documentary and verbal evidence to show that the organisation has benchmarking and/or networking information demonstrating a sustained and continuous improvement in its performance, e.g. benchmarking results against best practices, competitor and/or market analysis.
- > Employees can describe how internal and external benchmarking activities are carried out and the impact on the organisation, e.g. employees can articulate the benchmarking approaches used and how the outcomes from these activities are used to improve performance.

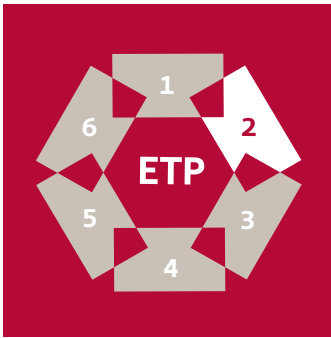
1g

The human resources strategy should support and be aligned to the business strategy.

- > The organisation can demonstrate an alignment of these strategies, e.g. aligned sales and market growth plans corresponding with human resource needs (hiring, development, training).

Points Summary

170 points



SECTION 2

Effective Communication & People Engagement

Criteria

Evidence Required

2a

The organisation has a communications policy and mechanisms, and can show that groups of employees are kept informed in an effective manner, e.g. individuals, departmental groups, teams, representatives, committees etc.

- > Employees throughout the organisation can describe the communication processes in place and how they are kept informed, e.g. one to one meetings, departmental meetings, team meetings, newsletters, committees, notice boards, e-mails, SMS, intranet, forum meetings etc.
- > Evidence of a written policy includes support for employee engagement and is in compliance with appropriate legislative requirements, e.g. European Directive for organisations with operations in different EU countries.
- > Documentary evidence to show methods of communications in use.

2b

The organisation measures the effectiveness of its communications systems.

- > The organisation will need to provide examples of how they evaluate the effectiveness of the communications processes, e.g. employee attitude and opinion surveys, internal focus groups, communication review groups.
- > Evidence that the feedback provides relevant information regarding the organisations approach to communications.
- > The organisation can clearly identify what are the most effective and preferred methods for communicating.

2c

The organisation carries out a regular review of employee opinions and implements actions as a result.

- > Documentary evidence to show the organisation regularly reviews employee opinions and implements actions as a result.
- > The organisation can show that employees have been involved in the design of surveys.
- > Employees can describe how survey results are reviewed and what actions are taken as a result.
- > The organisation can show how it effectively communicates the survey results to employees
- > The organisation can show examples of organisational development as a result of employee engagement

2d

Employees can describe their involvement in improvement activities identified as a result of the employee attitude reviews.

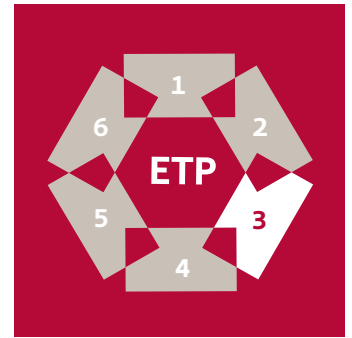
- > Employees can give examples of how they have been involved in improvement activities resulting from attitude reviews.

Points Summary

170 points

SECTION 3

Leadership & People Management



Criteria

- 3a** The organisation can show that all employees undergo at least one formal performance review per year and can provide examples of how the review has impacted successfully on them.

Evidence Required

- > Evidence of completed performance reviews.
- > Employees can describe how their formal performance review takes place.
- > Verbal evidence confirming that performance discussions have impacted on the individual's performance.
- > Evidence that the performance review process is consistently applied.
- > Employees can describe the value of performance appraisal.
- > The organisation can show that employees undergo interim performance reviews.
- > The learning and development plan should reflect the development of all employees involved in the performance review process, e.g. appraisers and appraisees.

- 3b** Employees can describe how they contribute to the learning needs analysis and an understanding of the range of learning methods available to them for learning and development.

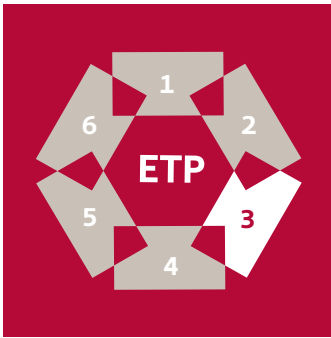
- > Verbal evidence of how the learning needs analysis takes place and how employees input to this process.
- > Verbal evidence to indicate the learning approach.

- 3c** The organisation has a system in place which supports leadership development.

- > The organisation can show that a system for leadership development is available, e.g. mentoring, coaching, learning and development programmes, 360° feedback, talent management and succession planning systems.
- > Verbal evidence from employees describing how they have received leadership support and development.
- > This development should form part of the learning and development plan and records.

- 3d** The organisation can demonstrate to all employees that it values them as individuals and their input to business success.

- > Employees can provide examples of how the organisation values their input.
- > The organisation can give examples of how employee input has contributed to continuous improvement or goal attainment.



SECTION 3

Leadership & People Management *Continued*

Criteria

Evidence Required

3e

Employees can provide examples of how their managers motivate them, and recognise their contribution to the success of the organisation, e.g. performance appraisal, objective setting and recognition.

- > The organisation can show the range of approaches it uses to recognise employees input, e.g. reward and/or recognition systems, learning and development supports and methods of acknowledgement for good performance.

3f

The organisation has clearly defined competencies underlining and supporting employee performance and development.

- > How are competencies developed and then linked in to development plans.
- > Evidence of competency frameworks in place.
- > Employees can describe how competencies are used and their usefulness.
- > The organisation will need to show how their competency frameworks link to the organisation's objectives.

3g

The organisation can show that it has effective succession and career development planning in place.

- > Written evidence of these plans in place.
- > Senior management can describe their approach to succession and career planning, e.g. internal promotions, job enrichment, performance management and job rotation etc.
- > The organisation will need to show examples of how the succession and career planning has worked.

3h

The organisation effectively communicates its key selection criteria for management positions to facilitate, where appropriate, internal promotion opportunities.

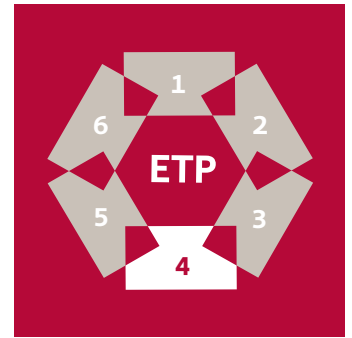
- > Written evidence of selection criteria for management positions.
- > Verbal confirmation that appropriate employees have received the selection criteria for management positions.
- > The organisation will need to show how they include selection criteria in their internal advertising of management positions. Advertising may be by documents, notices, e-mails, intranet etc.

Points Summary

170 points

SECTION 4

Planning of Learning & Development



Criteria

- 4a** The organisation has a learning and development policy which shows a direct link to the organisation's objectives and its commitment to employee development.

- 4b** The organisation has a learning and development plan which is directly linked to the business plan. It covers all departments, employee categories, teams and indicates priorities, course providers, schedules and overall costs.

- 4c** The organisation can show that each new, transferred or promoted staff member is provided with effective induction, guidance and support through the use of experienced colleagues, mentors, buddies, development programmes etc.

- 4d** The organisation can show that employees involved in learning and development, whether internal or external are suitably developed in training techniques and delivery.

- 4e** The organisation maintains records for each employee of their learning and development, training, experience and other actions necessary to achieve competence.

Evidence Required

- > Learning and development policy appropriately approved.
- > Links to business objectives can be explained.
- > Employees understand the policy.

- > Detailed learning and development plans in place.
- > The learning and development plan must show linkage to all business activities, e.g. training for employees involved in recruitment, team work, health and safety, dignity at work training etc.
- > The plan covers all departments, employee categories, teams, course providers, schedules, priorities and overall costs.
- > Evidence that the plan is reviewed and updated.

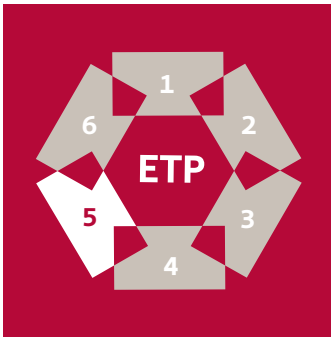
- > A structured induction is available for new, transferred and promoted employees.
- > Written and verbal evidence demonstrating the use of experienced colleagues, mentors, buddies etc. in the induction processes.
- > Employees can describe how they have been supported by experienced colleagues, mentors, buddies etc. and the learning outcomes derived from such support.

- > Evidence of formal training and appropriate certification that trainers have received for their specific role.
- > The organisation will need to show evidence in the form of the qualification certificates, professional designation etc.

- > There must be a system in place, electronic or paper, to demonstrate this.
- > The records must show linkage to the learning and development plan.

Points Summary

190 points



SECTION 5

Evaluation of Learning & Development

Criteria

Evidence Required

5a

A structure for learning and development programmes is in place.

- > Written programmes for all learning and development activities whether internal, external or private time study which is supported by the organisation must be available. The structure of these programmes must conform to systematic training specification, e.g. details of programmes showing course aims, SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timed), training dates, target audience, course provider bibliography, duration and copyright.
- > You will need to show that all your learning and development programmes conform to a structured specification.

5b

Employees can describe how they have contributed to the evaluation of their induction and/or orientation.

- > Employees will be able to describe how their induction and/or orientation was evaluated and their input to that process. This process should form part of the learning and development plan and records.
- > Documentary evidence of feedback on the induction process.
- > Evidence of improvements made to the induction process as a result of feedback.

5c

The organisation can show that evaluation criteria are set out for planned learning and development activities and that such activities are assessed and certified where applicable.

- > Written and verbal evidence of evaluation criteria are set out for planned learning and development activities. This may include course assessment sheets, questions, tests, demonstrations, projects, samples, etc.
- > Where appropriate, evidence of certification that is linked to the National Framework of Qualifications.
- > Do the evaluation criteria clearly show the outcomes of the learning activity?

5d

Managers can describe development that they have received in setting SMART objectives and evaluating learning and development activities.

- > Verbal evidence from managers describing the development and support they have received in objective setting and evaluation skills. This development should form part of the learning and development plan and records.

Criteria

Evidence Required

5e

The organisation can show behavioural changes achieved as a result of staff learning and development and that such changes have been documented.

- > Written and verbal evidence of behavioural changes achieved as a result of employee learning. This may relate to increased confidence, improved communications, project management, team working, changed behaviour etc.
- > Employees will be able to describe how such changes have taken place and their impact on themselves and the organisation.

5f

The organisation can show that it uses evaluation approaches, [e.g. Kirkpatrick's or Phillip's Model etc.] to establish outcomes that influence improved performance.

- > Written evidence and results of the use of evaluation methods.
- > Confirmation of the understanding of these methods from appropriate employees.

5g

Employees can describe how they are encouraged to share their learning outcomes with fellow team members

- > Employees can provide examples of how they are encouraged to share the outcomes of their learning with colleagues, e.g. team meetings, presentations.
- > The organisation has a written policy addressing the transfer of learning and development.

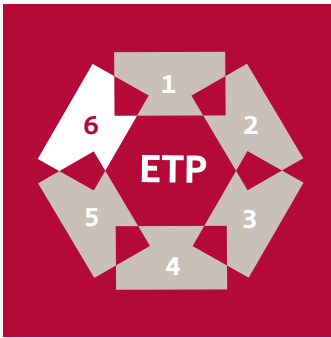
5h

Senior management can describe how they review and evaluate the impact of learning and development on the performance of the organisation and what actions they take as a result.

- > Written and verbal evidence from senior managers describing how they review and evaluate the impact of learning and development on the organisation, preferably supported by a documented procedure.
- > Verbal evidence from senior managers showing that they clearly understand the costs and benefits of learning and development to their organisation.

Points Summary

140 points



SECTION 6

Human Resource Systems & Employee Wellbeing

Criteria

6a The organisation can show that appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support all aspects of the business, e.g. health and safety, recruitment and selection, etc. These policies and procedures are in line with current and relevant legislation and also demonstrate a commitment to non-discrimination, diversity and equality promotion.

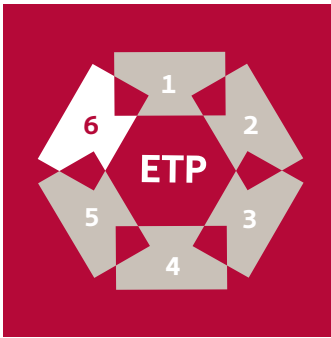
Evidence Required

- > Written declaration of compliance with relevant legislation or policies and signed by the senior manager.
- > Evidence that health and safety statement and policy are available and effectively communicated to all employees. Evidence that risk assessments are being carried out, records of consultation with all employees are available.
- > A trained health and safety committee in place, along with minutes of regular meetings. This training should form part of the learning and development plan and records. A proven track record of addressing health and safety issues.
- > Named person responsible for health and safety with appropriate training supports. The training supports should form part of the learning and development plan and records.
- > Recruitment and selection procedures for employees involved in interviews and storage of associated documentation.
- > Written, verbal and observed evidence of interview notes and scoring documents retained in a secure and confidential location. Examples of the range of assessment tools in use, e.g. assessment centres, aptitude tests, presentations etc.
- > Written governance and/or ethics policies.
- > Employee can provide evidence of how they are aware of these policies and the corresponding impacts on them and the organisation.

6b The organisation has an Equal Opportunities Policy which addresses diversity, equality and disability.

- > The organisation will need to ensure that equality policies cover the nine grounds named in the equality legislation i.e. gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, race, sexual orientation, religious belief, membership of the travelling community and have sections on recruitment, pay, working conditions, staff training and discipline and have procedures to address incidents of discrimination, e.g. grievance and disciplinary procedures.
- > Employees can describe what the equality policies and procedures cover.

| Criteria | Evidence Required |
|---|--|
| <p>6c The organisation completes regular reviews of its policies and practices.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > The review process should consist of an examination of the organisation's policies, procedures, practices and review mechanism. > Written evidence of reviews have taken place. > Evidence of document controls steps in place. |
| <p>6d The organisation can define its approaches to supporting staff wellbeing.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Written and/or verbal evidence of strategies which support employee wellbeing, e.g. family friendly policies, ergonomic assessments, employee assistance programmes, flexible working arrangements etc. > Employees confirm their understanding of these strategies. |
| <p>6e Managers can describe their responsibilities for the health, safety and wellbeing of staff.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Evidence from managers describing their responsibilities and training received. This training should form part of the learning and development plan and records. > Employees can confirm this is happening. > Documented responsibilities in manager's job descriptions, etc. |
| <p>6f The organisation can show that it measures staff perception on its approach to health, safety, wellbeing and equality. The records of data and results of monitoring and measurement are sufficient to facilitate subsequent corrective action and preventative action analysis.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Written evidence of questionnaires, responses and/or focus groups. > Employees can describe how the organisation measures perception. > The organisation will need to show that the measures used and results are displayed effectively throughout the whole organisation. |



SECTION 6

Human Resource Systems & Employee Wellbeing

Criteria

Evidence Required

6g The organisation can show that the facilities it uses provide ease of access for employees, visitors and job applicants who have physical, intellectual and/or sensory disabilities.

- > Observed evidence of levels and types of accessibility and supports within organisations.

6h The organisation has a defined Corporate Social Responsibility Policy, understood by all employees and can show that it encourages and supports employees in contributing to community involvement activities.

- > Evidence of a written corporate and social responsibility policy in place.
- > Employees can describe their understanding of the corporate and social responsibility policy.
- > Employees can describe how they contribute to community activities and how their organisation supports them in doing so.

6i The organisation has appropriate human resource information, communications and technology systems in place.

- > Appropriate application systems, e.g. time and attendance records, payroll details, employee records, performance management, learning and development, employee intranets etc.
- > Evidence that the systems are supported by information, communications and technology usage policies, e.g. data protection, email usage.
- > The organisation can demonstrate that they are embracing social media applications.

6j The organisation practices data protection and data confidentiality measures.

- > Evidence of good systems and/or processes for storing human resource records, confidentiality treatment of these records and employee file information.

Points Summary

160 points

Notes

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