



The EXCELLENCE factor



By adopting best practices in management, B.C. organizations are increasing revenues, lowering costs, pleasing customers, stripping time-to-market, building global reputations and attracting and retaining top talent.

What does excellence look like in practice? How do you achieve results? Read these inspiring case studies.

At Your Service

How does a company operating in difficult market conditions manage to distinguish itself and outperform competitors?

"It all comes down to a culture that attracts and retains the best talent, a relentless commitment to employee matters, right from the top of the organization on down," says Bill Pallett, senior vice president of people and quality at Delta Hotels, which manages more than 35 city centre, airport and resort properties in Canada. Six of Delta's properties are in B.C.

Delta won a Canada Award for Excellence in 2000 for quality business practices; then another in 2004 for its healthy workplace.

Delta Hotels has made the workplace a priority, with supporting policies and practices in compensation and benefits; health, safety and wellness; learning and development; recruitment and selection; and communications and ethics.

In the hotel-saturated Richmond, B.C. market, such measures have contributed to room-revenue results that outperform the market fourfold. "It's not the building that makes the difference," says Gordon Johnson, regional vice president and general manager of Delta Vancouver Airport. "It's the employees – and their enthusiasm to serve."

To build a culture of involvement and commitment, Delta uses surveys, town hall meetings and a 'Power to Please' program that empowers every employee to do what it takes to delight the guest.

Cities that Shine

What makes a city liveable? Accountable to its citizens?

In Kamloops, chief administrative officer Randy Diehl is leading the drive for continuous improvement. Having achieved NQI PEP level 2, the city is now engaged in process mapping to meet the requirements of level 3.

"We regularly survey our clients and adjust our practices accordingly," says Solange Belleforte, human resources director.

Some of the best ideas come from employees. "They may be small ideas but they work," she says. "It's very energizing to work here, knowing that ideas will at least be tried."

Today, the city is an employer of choice in the region and citizens are throwing support behind its *Tournament Capital of Canada* improvement initiatives.

Prince George, like many other local governments, is constantly challenged to do more with less, as other levels of government download responsibilities and citizens resist tax or fee increases.

"Increased expectations compel us to continuously improve," says city manager George Paul. "We are working to earn our

customers' trust and to nurture a working environment where employees have a say in their work, feel comfortable to take risks and know they are an important part of the municipal machine," adds Paul. "Our strategic direction is more realistic now, because it's based on what is practical and most needed, and where results can be assured."

On the Move

Handling over a million pieces and 50,000 calls daily, Purolator Courier Ltd. considers quality the only route to customer satisfaction and competitiveness. The company's registration to ISO 9001:2000 quality management standards and its track record on service earned it the Silver World Excellence Award from Ford Motor Company. In Alberta, Purolator has been recognized under the Partners in Injury Reduction, which has helped it earn more than \$600,000 in Workers Compensation Board premium rebates.

Last year, Purolator field-tested new hybrid electric-powered vehicles, reducing green house gas emissions while improving fuel efficiency by up to 50%. "As we begin adding these vehicles to our fleet, we believe we'll lead the industry in shifting to environmentally friendly fleet management," says general manager Paul Merrick.

Bringing Value

More than an association to about 7,700 real estate professionals, the Real Estate Board of

Greater Vancouver (REBGV) wants to be seen as a cost-effective producer of high-caliber products and services that members value. To guide its adoption of the world's best practices and validate results at various milestones, REBGV turned to NQI's PEP program.

"We're employing technology in innovative ways and improving our processes to serve our members better," says Brad Scott, associate executive director.

Eight years into its quality journey, the REBGV benefits from widespread commitment to quality internally, a sharper eye for cost reduction opportunities and a systematic way to improve products and services.

Small Business Doing Big Things

When your customers are the world's electric power companies, quality is not an option; it's a pre-requisite for doing business. They want to be assured that high standards of product excellence can be met.

Into this mature industry has leapt IFD Corporation, a new supplier of fault sensors aimed at improving utility operations and the safety of distribution transformers.

The company builds quality into engineering and manufacturing processes, and into customer service. IFD has achieved level 1 recognition under NQI's PEP program.

"We have never lost a customer once committed to our product," says J. Paul Chisholm, president & CEO. Revenues are growing dramatically, as IFD closes business with some of the industry's largest players.

Sustaining Performance

Much has changed since Bowne & Co. was founded 230 years ago, but not the core values of quality, continuous improvement and customer service. Today, the company provides financial printing, digital printing and electronic delivery of personalized communications.

Says Lorne Patterson, managing director: "Our business model in Canada is based on the NQI and Baldrige excellence frameworks, and encompasses a wide range of measures, which have contributed to a healthy and positive workplace."

Customer satisfaction has risen 5% since 2002, reaching 97% in 2004. "By engaging all employees in our business system model, excellence has become a part of Bowne's culture," adds Patterson. "This has positively affected our bottom line, thereby increasing shareholder value."

The Customer Connection

"It's essential that mission-critical solutions like ours are rarely down, and that our customers have confidence in the quality of

our software and customer support," says Christene Best, VP of customer services and quality, at Fincentric, a provider of core retail banking systems.

That's why Fincentric continuously improves processes and recently adopted a formal approach to organizational excellence. "NQI's PEP has given us a common language and helps us identify quality gaps and ways to close them," says Best. "PEP breaks down the process into small steps you can implement incrementally.

"We detect problems early on, take action and avoid large, costly consequences," she adds. "We can also direct more resources to creating new products rather than fixing problems. Installing enterprise software is a complex months-long effort, yet we've been able to make accurate implementation estimates for our clients."

This promotional feature was prepared for National Quality Institute by BCBusiness magazine's Special Advertising Features Dept. Writer: Deirdre Davey. For information contact BCBusiness director of corporate features John Cochrane at 604-299-7311. Email: jcochrane@canadawide.com ■

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About NQI

The National Quality Institute (NQI) is Canada's leading authority on the development and sustainability of excellence through quality and healthy workplace environments.

The four levels of NQI's Progressive Excellence Program (NQI PEP®) are a roadmap for continuous improvement and certification at levels 3 and 4 leads to eligibility for the prestigious Canada Awards for Excellence.

For more information on NQI, call 604-241-1117 or 1-800-263-9648 ext. 221. Or visit www.nqi.ca.

Continuing their.....

Performance Excellence Journey

NQI Level II



City of
Prince George