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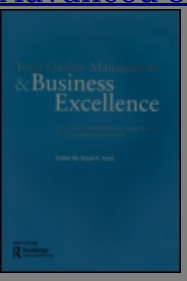
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Helping the Kiwi to Fly: Creating World-Class Organizations in New Zealand Through a Benchmarking Initiative

Robin Mann
&
Nigel Grigg

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Abstract

This paper describes an innovative approach to fast–tracking a group of organizations towards world-class performance. The New Zealand Benchmarking Club, formed in May 2000, currently comprises 18 organizations that are striving to achieve an ambitious vision of 'World- class performance by members and widespread adoption of excellent business practices within New Zealand'. Club processes include (1) workshops for sharing best practices; (2) benchmarking projects for undertaking focused best practice studies; (3) an annual business excellence assessment; (4) a business excellence results sharing meeting; (5) benchmarking research support; (6) partnerships to identify and disseminate best practices; and (7) access to a benchmarking and performance improvement website resource. All of these processes are continually improved to help members to identify and adopt better business practices. Findings from the first three years of operation show that the Club is on track to fulfil its vision as members improve their self-assessment scores by approximately 50 points per year. Analysis of the Club's self-assessment results is adding to the general understanding of business excellence. Results provide evidence that if an organization's management systems improve (as assessed by the Baldrige criteria) their business results will improve. Research also shows that the strongest relationship between the Baldrige criteria items is between 'customer focused results' and 'financial and market results'

Keywords:

- Benchmarking
- benchmarking clubs
- business excellence
- self assessment
- consortiums

Notes

. However, it is noted that in 2003, for the first time in nine years, the Baldrige Index performed worse than the Standard and Poor's 500.

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