



Manual

ESF-EQUAL

Self-evaluation model for
(transnational) development
projects

Version 1.4

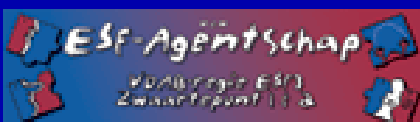


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1 Introduction

Capgemini developed for the ESF Agency a self-evaluation model, enabling project promoters and project partnerships to assess the quality of their project management and project execution.

The self-evaluation blanks tool (in Excel) is completed with a manual and a technical note (both in PDF).

The self-evaluation results in a chart, containing scores on several management aspects, a graphical presentation of the results as well as an action plan featuring action, responsibilities and timing.

The model was designed together with promoters out of Equal partnerships. It was designed for promoters and partnerships of research and development projects.

The model is a free tool, and should not be seen as an extra control system that was imposed from outside or as a labelling system for organisations, but as a tool to help promoters evaluate and improve the management of their project. Promoters, together with their partners, will check the project's 'readiness', in order to bring it to a good end.

The model is based on the EFQM or CAF quality model. However, it is a 'light version', user-friendly and adapted to the needs of project promoters. It is not meant to submit an entire organisation to an EFQM test.

The self-evaluation model is a very important tool to raise awareness about further professionalisation, which is absolutely necessary for the research and development projects in the employment sector. Major issues concerning vision, strategy, objectives, means and results are being dealt with.

Moreover, it will largely support the partnership process: running development projects through professional partnership. The experiences from the trial period learn that the self-evaluation tool will have partners communicate better and understand each other better. The results may help prepare policies, with regard to cooperation models in the employment and training sector.

This tool may be an excellent aid, when starting up a development project: it is a checklist to verify if one is ready to start up a project.

Project promoters can 'benchmark' by comparing and discussing their results. Why not submit 2 projects to the test and afterwards have 'visits' and learn from each other's strengths and weaknesses. Collaborative networking will prevail much more in the employment sector in the future.

This is the user guide of the self-evaluation model. It provides back-ground information about the model and the method of self-evaluation, and explains how to use the tool.

2 Back-ground information

2.1 Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation means that one reflects on essential issues and communicates on it. Is there sufficient leadership, vision and strategy? Do partners consult each other sufficiently? Did we select the right profiles? Do we have the right means? Are our management procedures clear enough? How do our results relate to the objectives?

The definition of self-evaluation we want to use is:

Regularly and **systematically investigate** an **organisation**'s **activities** and **results**, compared to a **reference model**, in order to define the **strengths** and the **items to be improved**, to set up **action plans**.

Let us go into several sub definitions:

- **Regularly** means that it should be more than a single action. For development projects, it is interesting to do the test before the start of the partnership (ex-ante), every time when a report has to be made up, and at the end (ex-post).
- **Systematically** means, using a methodology. This method will be explained.
- **Investigating** here means analyse and assess.
- **Organisation** has different notions here:
 - The project promoter, the organisation that is 'legally' responsible for the project, the 'coordinator' within a partnership.
 - The organizational unit, which occupies actually and operationally with the factual and technical aspects of running a project as a whole. This may be the same as the first definition when we talk about relatively smaller organisations. If not, it is an underlying organisation, a division.
 - The entire project structure of the partnership: coordinator and partners.

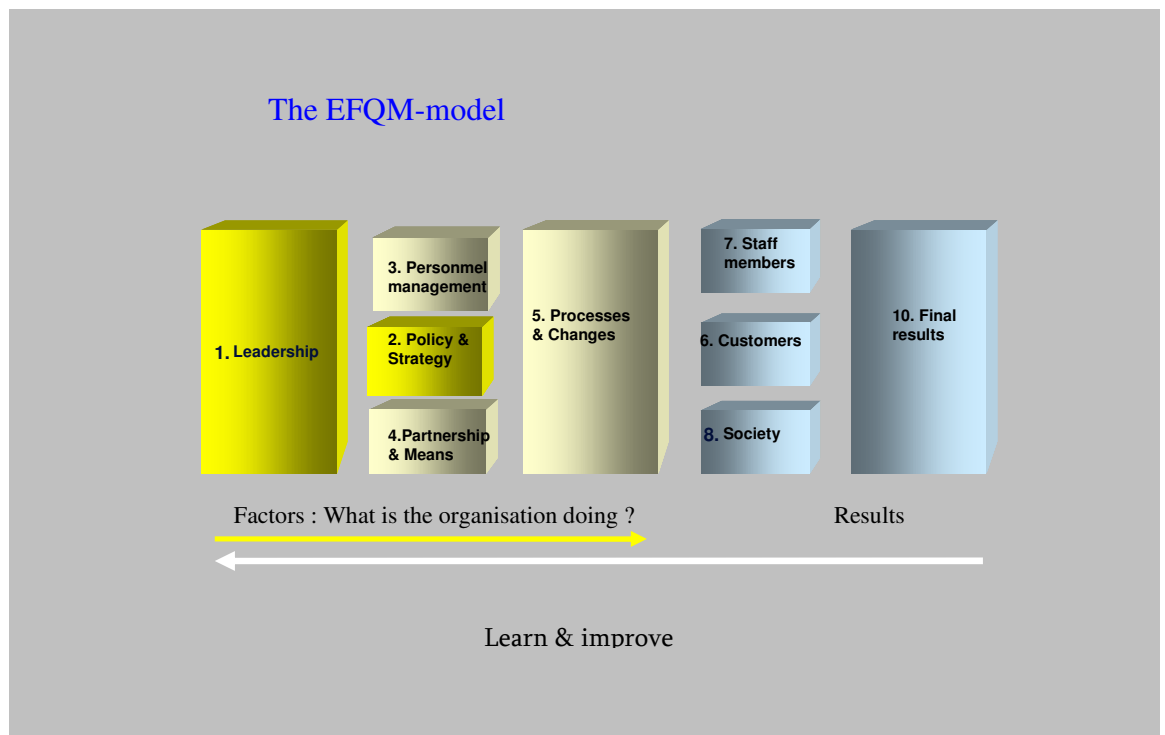
The evaluation system will always mention what will apply to whom.

- **Activities** means the way an organisation manages the project. The self-evaluation will be done in comparison with another concrete project.
- **Results** means the project's concrete results, compared to the objectives that were set.
- The **reference model** refers to the management model that is used to subdivide the aspects with regard to the results and activities. The reference model that is used here is the EFQM model, which will be explained further on.
- The **strengths** and **items to be improved** should lead up to an **action plan**, containing action points, a timing and responsibilities to expand the strengths and cure the weaknesses.

2.2 Model

The EFQM model was chosen as a reference model. The reasons are:

- The model has already proven its reliability in both the private and the public sector (CAF – Common Assessment Framework)
- The model is generally known and accepted
- The nine fields of the model cover all organisation and result fields.
- The model uses a flexible interpretation of the criteria per field.



The nine fields are:

Leadership: means the extent to which the management initiates, stimulates and follows up the project's functioning. In this context, the management's involvement, as well as the availability of the means needed, and appreciation of the staff's efforts. When setting the criteria, a distinction will be made between:

- the management of an organisation, the persons or an organisational unit being responsible for the general strategic management of the organisation as a whole.
- The direct operational direction, the hierarchical responsible to whom the project coordinator has to report
- The project's national steering group
- If so, the project's transnational steering group

Because the group of organisations is so diverse, the self-evaluation model provides an organisation chart, allowing users to indicate the different levels of leadership.

Policy and strategy: to what extent and what way the (innovative) objectives of a project are fitted in the global policy of an organisation, how the communication on factual project objectives and project results is being organised and how they are being followed up

Personnel management: this means planning, managing, training and following up the staff, in order to manage the project properly.

Partnership and means: the way of networking with stake holders. For this application it involves national (and if so, transnational) partnerships. On the other hand, attention goes out to the way the means, IT and knowledge are being administered.

Processes and changes: Process means the extent to which the processes that are used to initiate, plan, follow up and assess projects, are efficient and effective.

Staff members: In this field, the extent to which an organisation and project management structures meet the staff's expectations, is measured. Staff members are asked to assess their own motivation and participation. This self-evaluation has to be based on personnel satisfaction measurements.

Customers: in this field is verified to what extent the project results meet the participants' expectations: intermediary and final target group. The evaluation has to be based on a customers satisfaction measurement.

Society: in this result field is being verified what efforts are done to make the project and its results known towards outsiders, and what the results are.

Final results: this result field verifies to what extent the financial and factual project objectives have been achieved.

Since this model is designed for projects having an added value to society as their main goal, the fields 'society' and 'final results' should be put together.

Since this model is designed for projects having an added value to society as their main goal, the fields "society" and "final results" are merged.

3 How to use the model ?

3.1 Introduction

The tool itself consists of an Excel workbook, containing several spreadsheets:

1. **Cover:** title and version

The 'organisational chart' button allows you to shift to the next screen.

2. **Organisational chart:** an information screen providing the needed information on the program, the project, organisation and structure

- The name of the program (e.g. Equal)
- The name of the project
- An indication to know if the document is filled in by one partner (organisation), or by a partnership
- Date on which the document is filled in (validation)
- When "organisation" is chosen
 - the name of the organisation
 - the section indicating what is considered as the 'organisation's management'
 - a section indicating what is considered as the 'operational direction'
- When "partnership" is chosen:
 - a section indicating the structure of the steering group/core group

The organisation criteria (cfr. 4.2)

3. **The organisation:** organisation results (cfr. 3.2)

4. **The results:** result criteria (cfr. 3.3)

5. **Score chart:** Score per field with graphical representation (cfr. 3.4)

6. **Action plan:** a summary of all actions, where timing and responsibilities need to be filled in.

3.2 Organisation criteria

The work sheet 'organisation' per criterion looks as follows:

ORGANISATIONAL READINESS										
N°	Domain	Criterion	Level					Explanation score	Explanation & Proof	Action
			MA	-	.	x	+			
1	Leadership	The board of the organisation(s) has (have) a strategic vision on the needs with regard to innovative products and methods within the organisation		o	o	o	o	-- The organisation's board has no strategic vision on the needs with regard to innovative products and methods - The organisation's board has a strategic vision on the needs with regard to the innovative products and methods, but it is not made explicit in a document. + The organisation's board has a vision on the needs with regard to innovative products and methods, and it is made explicit in a document ++ The organisation's board has a vision on the needs with regard to innovative products and methods, and this vision is made explicit in a document. This vision is assessed and adjusted regularly		

Columns :

1. number of criterion
2. the field to which the criterion belongs
3. description of the criterion
4. the level of development that has to be scored:

A 'not applicable' option for some criteria (with regard to transnational aspects, which do not apply for each type of project).

The levels may vary from --, -, +, ++.

The general taxonomy of the scores is:

- : the project's subject is not present or has not been carried out
- the project's subject is present or has been carried out to some extent
- + the project's subject is sufficiently present or has been carried out
- ++ the project's subject is sufficiently present or has been carried out, is being assessed and adjusted.

The highest level reached should be marked. Each criterion should be filled in. For some criteria, one may choose the 'not applicable' option. The score on this criterion will not be taken into account for the total score.

It is possible to correct the score by clicking again on the mark.

5. The levels, worked out per criterion.
6. A section in which an explanation and proof for the score should be given
7. A section in which planned actions are to be filled in

In each field, the global score per field will appear as a percentage.

LEADERSHIP	0%
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3.3 Result criteria

The work sheet containing the result criteria has a similar structure as the organisation screen.

RESULT CRITERIA										
N°	Domain	Criterion	Score				Explanation	Explanation & Proof	Action	
			NA	- Very negative	- Rather negative	+ Rather positive				++ Very Positive
1	Staff members	The staff's motivation		☉	☉	☉	☉	To what extent is the staff positively, actively, looking for solutions?		
2	Staff members	The staff's participation		☉	☉	☉	☉	To what extent does the staff participate in meetings, activities?		

Only the scores of the four result fields are different.

Here, an appreciation should be given according to the system:

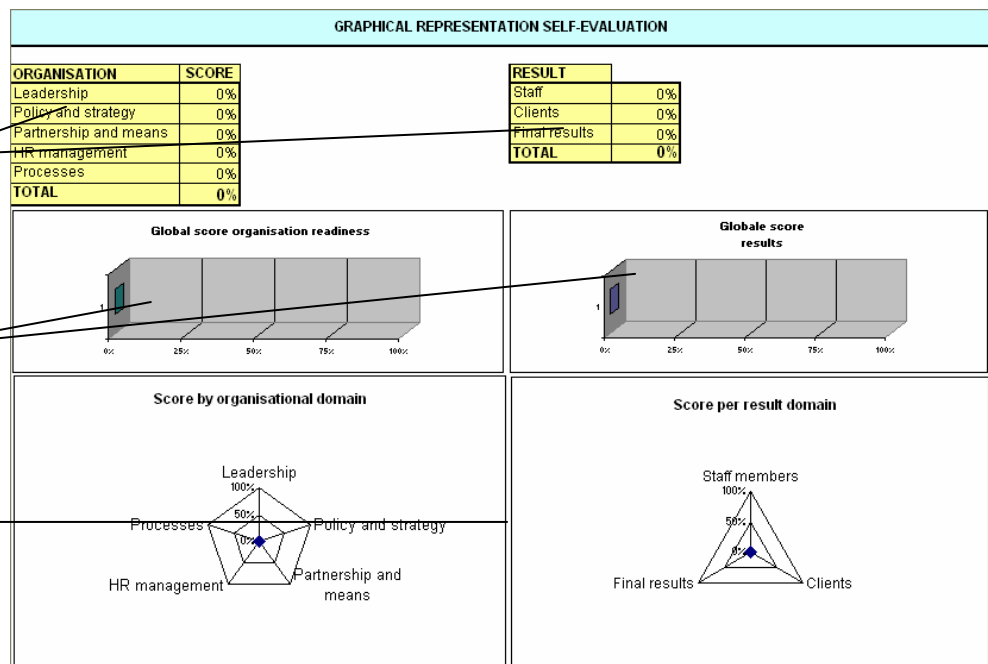
1. very negative
2. rather negative
3. rather positive
4. very positive

In the explanatory column, the criterion is reformulated. Here as well, explanation/proof should be given and actions should be filled in.

Each field will show the global score as a percentage.

3.4 Score chart

The score chart gives a survey of the results :



Review procentual score per domain and total

Graphical representation of the global score concerning organisation and results

Graphical representation of the score per domain

4 Carrying out the evaluation

4.1 The evaluation process

The preparatory process to the self-evaluation as such, is definitely as important as the final score. Partners will talk about the self-evaluation, which will lead up to a better view into one's strengths and weaknesses, a better understanding within the partnership and actions and improvements.

It would be better for promoters to carry out the self-evaluation before the start of a development project. It will be a way to check out if one meets the minimum organisational conditions to carry out the project: are the objectives clear enough and are they the same for everyone? Are the right partners involved? Do we have the appropriate means?

The result fields can not be scored yet, but they will be checked and adapted to the application.

The evaluation process can be repeated during the project's term, each time linked to the half yearly report: is there a positive or negative evolution compared to the start of the project? Have the planned actions been carried out?

At the end of a project, a final self-evaluation will be carried out, linked to the final report.

An evaluation traverse for a promoter /partnership may look as follows:

Step 1:

- The steering group of the partnership takes a formal decision to line out the evaluation traverse.
- An assessment leader is nominated to take care of the content and the methods, to consolidate the results, administer the versions.
- During an initial meeting, the process will be discussed: approach, timing, etc.

Step2:

- The organisations participating, fill in the tool within their own organisation.
- They will start up the process during a (number of) meeting(s) of the project team
- The criteria should be scored from the perspective that each partner has its own role. When doing so, criteria will appear concerning the organisation's internal functioning (does the leadership of the organisation have a vision) and questions rendering the organisation's view on the partnership.

Step3:

- During a steering group meeting, the partnership will assemble and aggregate the results through discussion and consultation.
- This will be done, using the workshop method: the results are communicated and discussed per criterion, and subsequently, an aggregated score and an action plan for the partnership will be worked out using a method that was fixed from before.

- In this step a workshop facilitator will be needed, to have everything worked out well (e.g. the evaluation monitor).
- The aggregated whole will be registered by the person responsible for the project.

4.2 *The score*

Marking the score levels will automatically generate a score per field en for the fields 'organisation' and 'results'.

Classifying and interpreting the score should be one of the subjects of the preparatory meetings.

For example, agreements can be made to foresee action for organisation fields under 60% (for stronger criteria it would be good to make up actions that at least maintain the level, even if circumstances change).

Result fields having scores under 50% should be considered as negative, whereas fields having scores over 66% should be considered as very good.

5 Useful links

Organisation	URL
European Institute of Public Administration	www.eipa.nl
Public Quality	www.publicquality.be
EFQM	www.efqm.org
Instituut Nederlandse Kwaliteit	www.ink.nl

For more references, please contact

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