

UNIT SUMMARY

What is the unit about?

This unit is about overseeing the continuous improvement of the overall performance of the organisation. The emphasis is very much on identifying and implementing changes which will add value in the eyes of customers and other key stakeholders.

Who is the unit for?

The unit is recommended for senior managers.

Links to other units

This unit is linked to units **B7. Provide leadership for your organisation**, **C3. Encourage innovation in your organisation**, **E14. Support team and virtual working**, **E17. Outsource business processes** and **F10. Develop a customer-focused organisation** in the overall suite of National Occupational Standards for Management and Leadership.

Skills

Listed below are the main generic 'skills' that need to be applied in improving the performance of the organisation. These skills are explicit/implicit in the detailed content of the unit and are listed here as additional information'.

- Information management
- Communicating
- Benchmarking
- Thinking systematically
- Analysing
- Decision-making
- Prioritising
- Leadership
- Presenting information
- Valuing and supporting others
- Planning
- Evaluating
- Involving others
- Thinking strategically

OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

You must be able to do the following:

1. Establish valid and appropriate measures for evaluating the performance of your organisation.
2. Establish systems for collecting and assessing information on the overall performance of the organisation and use the findings to identify opportunities where organisational performance could be improved.
3. Establish a culture across the organisation where people freely come forward with potential and actual performance problems and suggested opportunities for improvement.

4. Benchmark the performance of your organisation against other carefully selected organisations and take action based on the findings.
5. Ensure that knowledge and understanding of how improvements have or can be made is shared across the organisation.
6. Ensure that any improvements made are in line with the organisation's vision and objectives.
7. Show that the improvements made reduce the gap between what your customers and other key stakeholders want and what your organisation's products and/or services and processes actually deliver.
8. Show that the improvements made are those that have been identified as being of most benefit to the organisation, its customers and other key stakeholders.

BEHAVIOURS WHICH UNDERPIN EFFECTIVE PERFORMANCE

1. You constantly seek to improve performance.
2. You develop systems to gather and manage information and knowledge effectively, efficiently and ethically.
3. You constructively challenge the status quo and seek better alternatives.
4. You show a clear understanding of different customers and their needs.
5. You make appropriate information and knowledge available promptly to those who need it and have a right to it.
6. You articulate a vision that generates excitement, enthusiasm and commitment.
7. You produce and recognise imaginative and innovative solutions.
8. You show sensitivity to stakeholders' needs and interests and manage these effectively.
9. You use a range of leadership styles appropriate to different people and situations.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

You need to know and understand the following:

General knowledge and understanding

1. The principles which support organisational improvement.
2. The importance of establishing and applying valid and appropriate measures for evaluating the performance of your organisation.
3. How to establish systems for collecting and assessing information on the overall performance of the organisation and how to use the findings to identify opportunities where organisational performance could be improved.

4. How to benchmark the performance of your organisation against others and take action based on the findings.
5. The value of a customer-focused culture.
6. The importance of developing a culture that continually improves and how to involve others in achieving this.
7. The importance of finding out the cause and effects of problems and changes.
8. Ways of measuring the effect of improvements.
9. The principles and processes of effective communication and how to apply them.

Industry/sector specific knowledge and understanding

1. The sector and market in which your organisation works.
2. The range of information sources and techniques for collecting information that are relevant to the sector in which your organisation works.
3. Relevant trends and developments in the sector.

Context specific knowledge and understanding

1. Your organisation's vision, objectives and associated plans.
2. Your organisation's structure, values and culture.
3. How your organisation adds value through the delivery of its products, services and processes.
4. Your organisation's customers and other key stakeholders and their needs.
5. Measures of performance relevant to your own organisation.
6. Methods of gathering information suitable for your own organisation.
7. Formal and informal sources of information relevant to your organisation.