



# EXCELLENCE CANADA

improving performance, recognizing excellence | améliorer le rendement, reconnaître l'excellence

## ***Excellence, Innovation and Wellness<sup>®</sup> Standard***

January 2017





Excellence Canada is pleased to introduce the latest version of the *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard. The Standard provides a strategic framework to ensure organizations achieve the best results possible across all areas. The theme of “Excellence, Innovation and Wellness,” encompasses the five drivers of Leadership, Planning, Customers, People and Processes. Thus, all areas of the organization are addressed in this Standard.

By using this Standard and related Guide in a strategic, collaborative way, organizations will enhance existing systems and create new and improved ones. This will produce positive results, better employee and customer engagement, and improved systems and processes.

Whether your organization is large or small, private, public or not-for-profit sector, using the *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard will produce great results and help you to:

- Sustain a high level of outstanding performance in your organization
- Act and think strategically
- Plan, perform, measure and get great results
- Create innovative ideas and solutions
- Improve bottom line results
- Engage and retain the best customers and employees
- Build strong teams of motivated employees
- Improve the physical and mental health of your employees

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*Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard, rev. January 2017

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**About Excellence Canada**

Excellence Canada is an independent, not-for-profit organization committed to enhancing Canada’s national well-being and global leadership through the adoption of management principles and practices that reinforce and sustain excellence in all sectors of our economy. The Excellence Canada Board of Governors is comprised of a diverse group of leaders from many sectors across Canada.

**Mission**

The Mission of Excellence Canada is to Help Improve Organizational Performance and Recognize Excellence.

**Vision**

The vision of Excellence Canada is to Promote and Enable Excellence in Every Organization in Canada.

Excellent organizations continually improve performance; they are innovative, competitive, and customer focused; they are healthy, inclusive, and sustainable; and they are economically, socially, and environmentally responsible.

**Values PRIDE:** People, Relationships, Integrity, Dedication, Excellence



The *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard has been developed in four levels to make it easier for organizations to implement improvement measures using a staged approach. Organizations may apply for certification as the requirements of each level have been achieved.

### PLATINUM

Platinum Level builds on the achievements and outcomes from the previous three levels with a focus on establishing sustainable practices and excellent outcomes.

### GOLD

Gold Level builds on the solid implementation of excellence, innovation and wellness established in Silver.

### SILVER

Silver Level builds on the commitment and foundation established in Bronze.

### BRONZE

Bronze Level demonstrates a clear commitment to excellence, innovation and wellness.

In order to apply for certification, organizations must conduct a self-assessment against the requirements and complete an *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® submission for the appropriate level. Once the submission is received, the organization will be asked to complete a short staff survey and a site visit by an Excellence Canada team of professionals will be arranged. Successful applicants are eligible to apply for a *Canada Award for Excellence (CAE)*.

## OVERVIEW EXCELLENCE, INNOVATION AND WELLNESS STANDARD LEVELS

### BRONZE

The organization is in the early stages of implementing a long-term strategic focus on excellence, innovation and wellness that promotes good principles and practices as outlined in this Standard. There is a visible commitment to continual improvement in the organization.

The key outcomes of Bronze are:

- Broad organizational support of the vision, mission, and values
- Recognition of the importance of embedding excellence, innovation and wellness principles in decision-making at all levels of the organization
- Leadership commitment to key operating principles of excellence, innovation and wellness
- Strategic and operational plans are in development.

### GOLD

There is a comprehensive approach to excellence, innovation and wellness in place, with widespread involvement in the development and implementation on related strategies.

The key outcomes of Gold are:

- Positive achievements in meeting and exceeding strategic goals
- An organization-wide focus on excellence, innovation and wellness issues
- Positive results are being achieved across all drivers, across all areas/departments of the organization
- Widespread quantifiable improvement as a result of moving from reactive to proactive approaches and practices.

### SILVER

A long-term plan which reflects the *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard has been implemented in key areas. The organization is in transition from a focus on “reacting” to issues to a more “proactive” approach, and positive results are being achieved from improvement efforts in key areas.

The key outcomes of Silver are:

- Enhanced employee involvement in planning and improvement initiatives
- A wider understanding by employees of the organization’s strategic approach to excellence, innovation and wellness
- Strategic and annual operating plans are in place
- Establishment of baseline indicators, measures and related goals for excellence, innovation and wellness.

### PLATINUM

The organization has achieved excellent results and sustained positive trends from its efforts for overall improvement in excellence, innovation and wellness, and can clearly identify sustained improvements against specific objectives and goals.

The key outcomes of Platinum are:

- Sound systemic or systematic approach to excellence, innovation and wellness
- Continual improvement and innovation are a “way of life” with full integration into culture and systems
- Sustained positive improvements in all areas over at least three years (trend data required)
- The organization is viewed as a leader within its sector regarding excellence, innovation and wellness in terms of knowledge sharing, industry and benchmark leadership and best practices.

## LEADERSHIP

The focus for this driver is on creating the culture, values and overall direction for success. It includes demonstrating good governance and innovation, and fulfilling the organization's legal, ethical, financial and societal obligations.



### 1.1 LEADERSHIP

- a) It is important that the senior leadership team endorses and supports the following values and principles:
- Leadership involvement
  - Transparency and agility
  - Respect for diversity and inclusion
  - Effective planning
  - A primary focus on the customer experience
  - Co-operation, teamwork, and people development
  - A focus on continual improvement and innovation
  - Commitment to fact-based decision-making through the use of data and measurement.
- b) There is a vision, mission and/or values statement that has had input from key stakeholders. These statements are communicated broadly.
- c) A continual improvement policy or statement has been shared within the organization.
- d) In the decision-making process, the organization considers the wide-spread impact of decisions on customers and employees. Impacts include quality, physical and psychological health and safety, ethical behaviour and societal issues.
- e) There is a method to review and ensure compliance with relevant provincial and national legislation, regulations and standards, including human rights, privacy, health and safety, disability, accessibility, employment standards, etc.
- f) The organization has begun to demonstrate its commitment to corporate social responsibility (CSR).
- g) Senior management has communicated that innovation is a priority.

BRONZE

### 2.1 LEADERSHIP

#### Governance

- a) Governance framework policies applicable to the organization's mandate and goals have been established, and such policies have been communicated across all areas.
- b) Indicators of effectiveness of leadership have been established and measured for both Board of Directors and senior management.

#### Leadership

- c) There is clear accountability and cascading of responsibility for excellence, innovation and wellness.
- d) A leadership development program is in place that focuses on improving leadership, management, and supervisory skills and abilities.
- e) Leaders at all levels influence, and are held accountable for, strengthening organizational culture.
- f) Leaders at all levels promote and nurture innovation, and successes and lessons learned are shared and celebrated.
- g) Efforts are made to reduce silos through methods such as transparency, knowledge sharing and effective communication.
- h) The corporate social responsibility (CSR) plan demonstrates the organization's commitment to its community and society.
- i) Management fosters an open and transparent work environment, as assessed by employees.

SILVER

### 3.1 LEADERSHIP

#### Governance

- a) Governance framework policies are being met throughout the organization, e.g., accountability for management actions, fiscal control, privacy, security and ethics.
- b) The Board of Directors assesses its effectiveness and makes required adjustments as needed.

#### Leadership

- c) Values and principles as outlined in 1.1 (a), are fully embedded in the organizational culture.
- d) The senior leadership team assesses its own effectiveness.
- e) There is evidence that the leadership development program is effective.
- f) Responsibility and accountability for the overall management of excellence, innovation and wellness are reflected in the individual performance plans of management employees.
- g) There is evidence of consistency of management practices across the organization to sustain the culture.
- h) Leaders continue to promote and nurture innovation, and successes continue to be celebrated.
- i) A collaborative and transparent environment ensures that employees are involved in decisions that directly impact them.
- j) Employees are encouraged to participate in activities related to corporate social responsibility (CSR), as outlined in the plan.

GOLD

### 4.1 LEADERSHIP

#### Governance

- a) There is consistent achievement in meeting governance framework policies.
- b) The Board of Directors continues to assess its own effectiveness and makes required adjustments as needed.

#### Leadership

- c) Highly effective workplace best practices for excellence, innovation and wellness are identified using external benchmarks. These practices are shared, internally and externally.
- d) Leaders consistently demonstrate ethical behaviour and inclusivity, as assessed through stakeholder feedback.
- e) The senior team continues to assess its own effectiveness.
- f) The organization is known as a role model for CSR in its local geographic community/communities.
- g) The organization is recognized externally as a leader in innovation.
- h) Employees believe that the organization operates in an open and transparent manner.
- i) There is evidence that the culture is consistent across the organization as reflected in feedback from employees.

PLATINUM

## PLANNING

Planning incorporates developing strategic, business and improvement plans across all drivers, and it requires monitoring, evaluating and reporting on the progression in meeting defined strategic goals, as well as goals within all plans. All plans are linked to the organization's Strategic Plan.



### 1.2 PLANNING

- a) A baseline assessment to this *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard has been conducted and the identified opportunities built into an improvement plan.
- b) Work on a planning process is underway covering areas such as strategic goals, financial management, operations, enterprise risk management, knowledge management, wellness, and innovation.
- c) Appropriate financial and human resources are allocated to activities and initiatives related to excellence, innovation and wellness.
- d) Organizational risks have been identified.
- e) The organization uses a variety of methods to communicate its various policies and plans.

BRONZE

### 2.2 PLANNING

- a) An organization-wide strategic plan including Key Performance Indicators and a dashboard, e.g. a balanced scorecard, has been developed and implemented with input from key stakeholders.
- b) An assessment to this *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness*® Standard is conducted regularly and the identified opportunities are built into improvement plans.
- c) Flowing out of the strategic plan, an annual operating plan, with key priorities and clear goals, has been developed and relates to excellence, innovation and wellness. The operational plan is:
  - Established with input from key stakeholders
  - Aligned with the operating budget
  - Communicated across the organization to build awareness.
- d) A financial management system has been developed to track financial performance.
- e) An enterprise risk management (ERM) plan has been developed to address identified risks.
- f) An innovation plan has been developed and shared.
- g) A knowledge management system that aligns to a workforce plan is in place. The plan includes capturing and sharing of lessons learned.
- h) An information technology plan has been developed to support the operational goals.
- i) A communication plan has been developed for both internal and external stakeholders.

SILVER

### 3.2 PLANNING

- a) The strategic plan and all related cascading plans are kept current, monitored and evaluated for achievement.
- b) Departmental scorecards/dashboards related to the organization's goals, e.g., balanced scorecard, are developed and used to monitor, measure and evaluate ongoing performance.
- c) Progress on plans and results is communicated and celebrated.
- d) Financial performance is monitored and measured, i.e., adherence to budgets, expenditure management, revenue and asset management.
- e) Performance to the enterprise risk management plan is monitored and evaluated and required changes made to the ongoing plan.
- f) Innovation is becoming a way of life, informing product, services and process design.
- g) A knowledge management system is fully implemented.
- h) The information technology plan has been implemented and is enabling operations and other plans as appropriate, i.e., innovation, knowledge management, risk management.
- i) The effectiveness of both internal and external communications is measured and reviewed.

GOLD

### 4.2 PLANNING

- a) The ongoing planning process is evaluated for all plans and there is evidence of improvement over time.
- b) Key Performance Indicators and dashboards, e.g., balanced scorecards, are used to monitor, measure and evaluate sustained results over time, to learn and drive improvement.
- c) Levels and trends are used to measure overall financial performance, i.e. adherence to budgets, expenditure management, revenue and asset management.
- d) Innovation is a way of life and continually informs product, services and process design.
- e) There is evidence that knowledge management is mature and effective.
- f) There is evidence that the ERM program is successfully managing risks in the organization.
- g) Information technology is a true enabler for effective operational excellence.
- h) Trend data over time has shown improvement in the reach and impact of communication.

PLATINUM

# CUSTOMERS

The Customer driver examines how the organization engages its customers and partners for satisfaction and success. The term customers may refer to clients, citizens, students, internal services, etc. This driver includes listening, acting and reporting on Voice of the Customer feedback, as well as using collaboration and innovation to improve products, services and relationships.



## 1.3 CUSTOMERS

### Customers

- a) The organization identifies and segments its current customer groups based on needs. Segmentation includes both internal and external customers.
- b) A customer experience “promise” exists and has been communicated clearly and consistently to all customers and employees.
- c) The organization communicates with its customer groups using a variety of relevant methods.
- d) Employees understand the importance of contributing to a positive customer experience.
- e) A customer feedback process/mechanism is in place with identified feedback measures.

### Partners

- f) The organization identifies its key partners.

BRONZE

## 2.3 CUSTOMERS

### Customers

- a) Linked to the strategic plan, a customer experience plan or strategy is in place that defines the customer experience, with a plan for how to execute the plan and measure results.
- b) Customer requirements are identified, analyzed and embedded in the customer experience plan.
- c) Service standards exist at key customer contact points and have been communicated to relevant stakeholders.
- d) Mechanisms are in place for customers to:
  - Provide input on their requirements;
  - Seek assistance; and
  - Give feedback on measures that are relevant to them.
- e) Baseline voice of the customer feedback measures for both internal and external customers have been implemented. Results have been collected, and used to inform planning and innovation.
- f) The value of the organization’s services has been communicated to its stakeholders.

### Partners

- g) Partnership agreements are in place that define the relationship, roles and responsibilities and desired outcomes.

SILVER

## 3.3 CUSTOMERS

### Customers

- a) The execution of the customer experience plan or strategy is monitored, evaluated and updated for ongoing improvement.
- b) Customer requirements (current and future) are identified, analyzed, evaluated and communicated on a repeatable and reliable basis for both existing and potential customers.
- c) Customer service standards for identified key customer contact points are measured and evaluated for ongoing improvement.
- d) The organization responds promptly to effectively address customer inquiries and to resolve customer concerns. Customer loss is tracked and evaluated.
- e) Voice of the customer data is systematically collected and/or recorded and evaluated for ongoing improvement, and shared with employees, customers and partners as appropriate.
- f) Using research and knowledge of markets, employees collaborate with customers to develop innovative solutions that enhance services and products.

### Partners

- g) Performance to partnership agreements is assessed for ongoing improvement.
- h) Key partners collaborate in an innovative way in the design, development and enhancement of relevant services and/or products.

GOLD

## 4.3 CUSTOMERS

- a) Levels and trends of performance are used to enhance and improve the customer experience (e.g., loyalty, retention, life cycles, innovative products and services, market share, growth, new markets etc.)
- b) Levels and trends of performance are used in responding to customer inquiries, complaints and appeals.
- c) Customer relations are proactively managed to improve customer retention.
- d) Levels and trends for meeting customer service standards for identified key customer contact points, are used for sustained improvement.
- e) The organization uses benchmarking data, information and other related sources, (e.g., advisory boards and user groups), to evaluate performance and implement innovative practices.

### Partners

- f) Performance to partnership agreements continues to be assessed for sustained improvement.
- g) There is evidence of positive results where key partners continue to collaborate in an innovative way in the design, development and enhancement of relevant services and/or products.

PLATINUM

## PEOPLE

The People driver examines how people are treated, encouraged, supported and enabled to contribute to the organization's overall success. It includes the wellness of employees and their families including both physical and psychological health and safety.



### 1.4 PEOPLE

- a) A comprehensive healthy workplace policy including physical and psychological health and safety is in place, and has been shared with employees.
- b) The leaders actively promote a culture of work/life balance.
- c) Awareness training is provided for employees, covering the organization's excellence journey.
- d) Human resources policies have been developed and are easily accessible to all employees. These policies should reflect compliance with relevant human rights legislation, issues to protect against harassment, discrimination and bullying in the workplace, and address diversity and inclusion.
- e) A baseline employee engagement survey is conducted and plans are in development to address the key identified issues.
- f) Employees clearly understand their roles and responsibilities as outlined in current position descriptions.

BRONZE

### 2.4 PEOPLE

- a) A human resources (HR) plan and a wellness plan are in place, and clearly link to the overall strategic plan and related operational plans.
- b) A workforce plan is in place to support attraction, talent management, succession planning and retention strategies.
- c) There is a system in place for recruitment, selection, and on-boarding of employees.
- d) There is a system in place for managing employee performance and development in line with departmental, operational and strategic goals.
- e) Training and development requirements are determined with employee input, and employees are assisted in acquiring and implementing new skills.
- f) Human resources indicators are identified, measured and analyzed, and the results are used to inform planning.
- g) Employee engagement and innovation is measured, results are shared and employees are involved in developing and implementing action plans.
- h) A wellness assessment has been conducted and its results, as well as reviews of data such as benefits claims, are used to identify physical and psychological health and safety hazards and risks.
- i) Management provides various avenues for employees to provide feedback, and to put forward innovative ideas and suggestions for improvement.
- j) A rewards and recognition program is under development, ensuring both individual and team (functional and cross functional) approaches, with a focus on rewards and recognition initiatives.
- k) Policies for diversity and inclusion are well understood as reflected in daily practice.

SILVER

### 3.4 PEOPLE

- a) The human resources (HR) plan and a wellness plan, have evolved and reflect current employee health data and trends. The plans are monitored, evaluated and updated as appropriate.
- b) A workforce plan is evaluated and updated regularly to ensure that attraction, talent management, succession planning and retention strategies are effective.
- c) Employees can easily seek assistance to address issues, concerns and opportunities and their concerns and ideas are promptly addressed.
- d) Innovative ideas are systematically encouraged, shared and celebrated. Innovation is included in employee surveys and results of the surveys are shared and used for ongoing improvement.
- e) Employee engagement continues to be measured, and the results are improving.
- f) Wellness assessments are routinely scheduled and conducted to identify new, continuing or emerging physical and psychological health and safety hazards and risks.
- g) All wellness assessment results are routinely analyzed, and programs are being implemented to address the areas identified as most at risk.
- h) Actionable plans resulting from all assessments are developed with employee input and plans are shared with employees as appropriate.
- i) A comprehensive recognition program has been developed and implemented with employee input.
- j) Training and development programs are evaluated for effectiveness and contribution to organizational performance.
- k) The system(s) for the management of employee performance and development is applied consistently across the organization.
- l) There is evidence that diversity and inclusion are embraced in the organizational culture.

GOLD

### 4.4 PEOPLE

- a) The organization continues to evaluate employee physical and psychological health and safety, including the impact the HR and wellness plans are having on employee health.
- b) There is evidence that workforce planning is effective.
- c) Employee engagement surveys continue to be conducted regularly. Results demonstrate improvement over time and are high relative to appropriate external contexts / benchmarks.
- d) There is evidence that innovative ideas generated by employees are documented, considered and when appropriate implemented, communicated and celebrated.
- e) Trend data is used to measure the effectiveness of training and development and its impact on organizational results over time.
- f) The employees perceive that the organization is a role model for a healthy workplace.

PLATINUM

## PROCESSES

This driver focuses on the management of processes and projects. It requires a disciplined and common approach toward analyzing and solving process problems and project management across the organization. This facilitates a prevention-based (rather than correction-based) approach to process and project management. The use of change management techniques is an important aspect of this driver. Also included in this driver is the effective management of relationships with suppliers.



### 1.5 PROCESSES

#### Process Improvement

- a) There is a commitment to better manage and improve key processes and/or procedures, in the organization, including a focus on prevention-based process management.
- b) Key processes and process owners have been identified.
- c) Training for process management and related tools is planned and/or underway for involved employees.

#### Project Management

- d) Key projects have been identified.
- e) Training for project management and related tools is planned and/or underway for involved employees.

#### Procurement

- f) A list of key suppliers is available for employees as required.
- g) A procurement policy has been established and shared with employees, as required.
- h) Appropriate information and criteria is used to select capable suppliers.

### 2.5 PROCESSES

#### Process Improvement

- a) Key work processes and/or procedures are documented using a consistent, continual improvement methodology across the organization, and are easily accessible by employees.
- b) Key internal stakeholders across organizational levels are involved in process improvement activities with demonstrated input from employees directly impacted by any changes in an environment that encourages innovation.
- c) Key processes are assessed for their impact on the physical and psychological safety of employees, customers, partners and suppliers, as applicable.
- d) Key measures have been identified and data is actively being collected and used to measure and monitor key process stability.

#### Project Management

- e) A standardized methodology is in place for managing key projects.

#### Change Management

- f) Change management principles and activities have been introduced into improvement plans, processes and projects.

#### Procurement

- g) Prior to procurement and whenever possible, employees are involved in assessing products or services that impact their health, safety and/or productivity.
- h) Baseline supplier performance measures are identified and collected.

BRONZE

SILVER

### 3.5 PROCESSES

#### Process Improvement

- a) Key processes are actively measured with target performance levels established. These processes are monitored to ensure consistency, and the results used for ongoing improvement.
- b) Key processes are analyzed, root causes are identified, desired state established, and changes to key processes are documented, implemented, and communicated with the process stakeholders.
- c) Key processes are reviewed using the deliberate application of innovation.

#### Project Management

- d) Projects are managed consistently, monitored and evaluated for success.

#### Change Management

- e) Change management principles and activities have been integrated into improvement plans, processes and projects across the organization, and evaluated for effectiveness.
- f) The organization has implemented and follows a standardized change management methodology.

#### Procurement

- g) The performance of key suppliers is measured and analyzed for ongoing improvement.
- h) Key suppliers collaborate in an innovative way in the design, development and enhancement of relevant processes, services and/or products.

GOLD

### 4.5 PROCESSES

#### Process Improvement

- a) Levels and trends in performance demonstrate continual improvement in key service and/or product delivery processes.
- b) Innovative solutions continue to be generated collaboratively with employees and other key stakeholders, with positive results.

#### Project Management

- c) There is evidence of successful project management over time.

#### Change Management

- d) Through the successful implementation of change management, there is clear evidence of "buy-in" to new methods or improvements across the organization.

#### Procurement

- e) The organization's ability to monitor and manage supplier performance has improved over time.

PLATINUM

