

With SAB® to EQA Finalist

Knorr-Bremse Excellence Manager Wolfram Alschner is convinced by SAB®

In the course of the EQA 2004 award in Berlin, we had the opportunity to interview Mr. Alschner on his experiences with the SAB®-method.



PHOTO

Wolfram Alschner
Business Excellence Manager
KNORR-BREMSE S&N GmbH

Innosys: Mr. Alschner, first of all our congratulations to you on the award as Excellence Manager of the year by the EFQM and to your company Knorr-Bremse Systems for Commercial Vehicles as a finalist of this year's European Quality Award. By now, you already work for over 4 years with the self assessment method SAB® that is developed by us. At that time, which were your motives to use SAB® company-wide?

Alschner: When I started to work intensively on the topic Business Excellence, I quickly realized that without the participation of the executives of each location, we would not be able to move efficiently to the direction of Excellence. Therefore, I looked for a method, which would be simple and at the same time would systematically ensure the integration of all executives in the Excellence process. By chance, my attention was drawn on Prof. Dr. Schnauber and Dr. Raptakis of INNOSYS who had developed a professional method exactly for this purpose.

Innosys: So, how have you integrated the executives into the Excellence process exactly?

Alschner: Through a con-

sistent integration in all steps. The Excellence process requires a permanent, comprehensive performance assessment based on an Excellence model like the EFQM model. At the beginning of the process, this performance assessment is realized in form of a self assessment. With the SAB® method it was possible for me to run structured self assessments with the participation of all executives at all locations. This did not even take me two hours. The evaluation systematic of the SAB®-TOOL provides the

With the SAB® method it was possible for me to run structured self assessments with the participation of all executives at all locations.

results in a professional visualisation for the executives within few minutes. In this way, I can give a direct feedback and initiate a following discussion and consensus finding about the essential aspects. In this respect, I am supported by portfolio representations, spreads, distributions and visualized information deficits. Then, in the discussion within the management it gets clear very quickly, where we can use our resources most purposefully. The decisions for improvement projects taken in consequence of these results

are very sustainable as testified by our success.

Innosys: Knorr-Bremse Systems for Commercial Vehicles is an internationally operating group. How do you manage to integrate the different cultures into the Excellence process?

Alschner: As you know, I am an internationally experienced person. Indeed, I have an office in Munich, but our locations in Europe and overseas are my workplace.

If one supports the analysis phase by questionnaires, one should make sure that everybody finds him- or herself in the questions, too. Therefore, I have specifically adjusted the questionnaires to our needs.

It is of decisive importance that the used questionnaires at the location are held in the respective national language. By this, I can minimize understanding problems as they would appear in a work-



FIGURE
LEVEL THREE of the Levels of Excellence of the European Foundation for Quality Management

Shop, for example. Meanwhile, the SAB® concept is available in ten languages. In some translations, I brought

Continuing on the back side >

in my own EFQM experiences and excellence-specific linguistic proficiency.

Innosys: Mr. Alschner, could you give a recommendation to our customers who are on the path to excellence or who want to enter it, based on your experiences?

Alschner: I have always envisaged a relationship of 20% resources for the self assessment and 80% for the deployment. Of course, we could have created the internal Award as a classic self assessment according to the EFQM criteria. But that obliges one to put enormous resources into assessor training.

However, the capacity of the management is needed for the implementation of actions and not for the self assessment itself. With 20 questions per criterion the essential contents of the EFQM model are covered. So to speak, with SAB® I achieve my goal "quick and proper", fast and accurately.

Innosys: How do you make sure that the essential as-

pects of the assessment from the EFQM model are also applied in the self assessment?

Alschner: First of all, we don't waste any resources with the effortful assessment of all single partial criteria and areas to address with the RADAR Scorecard.

First, we identify the top 30 improvement points with the help of SAB® and afterwards we go into the RADAR Scorecard and look, whether it is due to the missing approach, the missing deployment, assessment or review. By that, we focus the executives' resources on the really important topics.

Innosys: Why is the integration of the executives by the SAB® method so important for you?

Alschner: By the integration of all executives in the self assessment I can additionally ensure that all executives perform an assessment to all criteria and with that to all important aspects of the enterprise.

The thought of the entrepreneur, the "businessman in the enterprise" is fortified by

that. The executives' acceptance to give opinion to all criteria and to understand their interactions is essentially increased by the SAB-method's promptitude. Within the time-consuming, classic methods of assessment the responsible areas often only take account of "their" criteria. However, in a really excellent enterprise, I must demand that a staff manager also knows how content the customers of the enterprise or how good the business results are.

My Credo: Business Excellence managers have 40 hours per week time to think about Business Excellence and the EFQM model. Their "Customers" – that are executive boards, managing directors or location leaders – have perhaps 1 hour per month for that. But they have 40 hours per week (and often more) to make an excellent business. This understanding helps both sides to understand Business Excellence suitable for practice.



I have always envisaged a relationship of 20% resources for the self assessment and 80% for the deployment.

With SAB® I'm achieving my goal "quick and proper", fast and accurately.

- FURTHER INFORMATION SOURCES**
- > www.knorr-bremse.de
 - > www.knorr-bremsesfn.com
 - > www.sab-info.de

EDITOR'S NOTICE



customerinform
ENGLISH EDITION

Edited by Innosys GmbH in self publishing

Innosys Gesellschaft fuer Innovative Arbeitssysteme mbH

Universitaetsstraße 142 AG Bochum, HRB 4888
44799 Bochum USt-IdNr.: DE204618585
Tel.: +49 234 58731-0 Steuer-Nr.: 350/5718/0872
Fax: +49 234 58731-99 Geschäftsf. Ges.: Prof. Dr.-Ing. Herbert Schnauber

Web: www.innosys.net Email: info@innosys.net

CUSTOMER NEWSLETTER OF INNOSYS GMBH
YEAR 1, ISSUE 2, NOVEMBER 2004

