

## Survey creates a model of excellence

A KENTISH small business has been helping the Government's Small Business Service in its mission to support businesses nationwide.

Dave Richards and Derek Medhurst, directors of D&D Excellence Limited, have created a 34-question 'excellence' survey for SMEs to assess how 'excellent' they are and to review where they might benefit from improvements.

D&D Excellence is based in Sevenoaks and Erith, and specialises in helping organisations improve through the use of the EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) excellence model – an internationally recognised framework for organisational management and improvement.

As well as working in the UK, their work has taken them to Europe, US and Africa, and their website at [www.ddexcellence.com](http://www.ddexcellence.com) has been praised for being user friendly.

The questionnaire developed by D&D is based on the EFQM excellence model and is part of the SBS's benchmark index tool. The index is designed to encourage SMEs to look critically at their performance against similar firms, and use the results to identify opportunities for improvement.

The full index includes 'hard' financial and management data as well as the excellence questions. The excellence feedback report shows how they compare with the 'world class' performances of the best organisations. It also includes basic templates to encourage further improvement actions.

Mr Richards said: "SBS wish to use the excellence model fits with our belief that it is a valuable improvement tool for organisations. The model looks at everything an organisation does and so can be comprehensive indicator of excellence."

Mr Medhurst added: "Many businesses nowadays use the word 'excellence', but this often seems to refer only to a product or service. The model looks at everything. One client told us we had helped to 'shine a torch into the nooks and crannies' that didn't often get their attention!"

KENT ON SUNDAY

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