

Factors that influence self- assessment in altering library environment

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Abstract: This paper describes the results of two consecutive EFQM- based self- assessments, which were performed in Meliusz County Library of Debrecen, Hungary in 2007 and 2008. In the time of the first self- assessment the library was functioned in many separated buildings, in bad conditions. Before the second self- assessment the library has moved to a new, modern building, where the ideal work environment was given. The focus of my examination was to determine how the positive change of environmental impacts influences the satisfaction of employees and users. Before evaluate of examination's result I had a preconception, which has predicted the results of second self- assessment more positive, because of the modern environment, than the results of the first. In one of my previous researches I developed an EFQM- based toolkit for library self- assessments which was the methodological base of these surveys. Borbely (2003) Enablers of organization- leadership, policy and strategy, people, partnerships and resources and processes- were evaluated and surveyed in both cases. Comparison of the two surveys' results led to unexpected achievements, because the employees deemed enablers in 2007 more positively, than in 2008. What can be the explanation of this astonishing deviation from the expected results? This study's goal is to response to this interesting dilemma.

Keywords: self-assessment, EFQM- based toolkit, human factor, environmental factor, satisfaction of organisation

Section Title

Challenges for managing and measuring Quality in Libraries at the beginning of the 21st century

Purpose, hypothesis

The Meliusz County Library has moved to a new, modern building in 2007's summer (next it will called just Library). It was a big event in the Library's life, because 55 years later from the establishment it has outgrown its previous seat. The previous building was an art relic in the downtown, which was built not for being a library and during its half-century's working it had only one serious resurrection. Because of the lack of place it has worked in many other places, in many corners of Debrecen in the lately decades. The new work environment has done radical changes and qualitative advance according to the previous status. The new building serves in 4000 m² with serious building engineering and computer infrastructure the employees and users.

The focus of my examination was to determine how the positive change of environmental impacts influences the satisfaction of employees. The first self- assessment was in 2007's spring, before the move on in bad conditions and the second was in a new, modern library in the middle of 2008.

Before reading the results of examination we hoped that the second self-assessment in almost every index has better change than the first has, because of the more modern library environment's influence. We thought that satisfaction of the organization has determined by the work environment's facts such as building's conveniences, workroom's comfortable equipments, technical instruments, computer infrastructure, etc.-which belong to every day's using.

The organisation has given such a very serious changes between, the two self-assessment. Before the second self-assessment the director, who has led the building operations, the move on and the new library's opening has checked out and after that the Library had to survive a grouped cut-back.

These facts could influence the results of course, but the comparing of the organization's state before and after the moving on is doable, because during the self-assessment we can represent the organization's topical state. Before reading the results we didn't know that the director's change and the cut-back how could influence the satisfaction of employees.

Methods

The examinations we did with the EFQM-based self-assessment's accessory supply, built on the pro-forma method. The EFQM model suggests five different self-assessment methods, these are the next: questionnaire, matrix, work meeting, pro-forma and award. [1] It looks to all of these like available and usable but no of them can be the best approach. The organisation's culture and special function waiting for the self-assessment can describe the best approach. The organization's quality approach's mature can also influence the way of the self-assessment. Standing in a kind of level of mature an organization has some other difficultly way in font of the user.

There is a difficult between the five self-assessment way suggested by the EFQM in the processes' correction and also in the data's quality

The advantages of the pro-forma method, which we preferred to use in the library area:

- The collecting process generates real facts.
- The method is scientifically proved.
- During the self-assessment we create the possibility for people who work in different places and function to work together.
- For the high average correction, it has real, average, or a little bit higher cost.
- In the last decades, the Hungarian libraries' point of view started to increase, so we can say that our libraries found the right way, for their self-assessment the pro-forma method could be the ideal solution.
- The pro-forma method needs not just an average cost, which is basically made up from the copy of the list of items and the questionnaires which help us to get know the organizational results, but needs average time and work from the users.

The steps of the preparation of the self-assessment

In case a library wants to do an EFQM- based self-assessment with the pro-forma method, it needs to do the following things:

First, they need to create a document kit, or they can use a prepared toolkit. A full pro-form kit has 32 parts, covered the EFQM Quality Model's nine criteria, the leadership capability, working capability, the organization's policy and strategy, partner relationship and resources, the organization's process and employees, users, civilization solutions and key process solutions. Also has to cover the 32 lower criteria. On the top of every list of items you have to write the description by the lower criteria of the EFQM together with the usage place terminology. We are consider, that to divide the empty place like it is shown by the 1. Table.

Sub-criterion			
Questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the leadership ...? • • 		Strength: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 	
		Areas which have to be developed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... 	
Facts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ... • ... 			
Approach	Deployment	Assessment and review	Total score

1. Table: Pro-form form

The area of the introduction and the questions: Actually this is where we can use the EFQM Model for a typical using area, in this case to adapt is for the libraries. We should ask those questions now, which help us to get know that in the specific library, how many lower criterion is there.

The rest of the area should be divided like this: Intensity, Areas what we should make better, make perfect, Facts, and Evidences.

We should put those comments during the self-assessment to the "Intensity box", which are about the organization's intensities of course, and to the "Areas what we should make better box" the comments about the weaknesses. Really important part of the self-assessment is the Facts because the pro-formal method has a big advance (the data what we get during the self-assessment are great quality, and can be proved by evidences) because the employees has to make a list with the data, which they think are Intensity or Weakness area of the organization.

They analyze the lower criterion percentage by the lists of data and use a conception, called the RADAR logic. (Results, Approach, Application, Assessment, Review)

They take the lists separately, which means that what in the lower criterion and the questions tells about the things what the library needs to do, are logical enough and do the employees know about them.

The points of the usage and the solution let us know, what the library did until the self assessment to put the lower criterion in action in the library.

The assessment shows that what did the library for assess and analyze the lower criterion description and use them. After the first self assessment the assessment is not that important, but if we repeat the self assessment, it can be useful.

Finally, we should write down the expectations of the library by criterion, and we should give a point which shows an average score on every criterion.

To do the self assessment by the pro-forma method the second step is to collect all the documents, evidences what we will need during the assessment. Really important parts of the collection are the interviews and questionnaires.

The last step of the preparation of the self-assessment is to make a decision on; we want every employee in the self-assessment, or just the smaller, bigger leading staff. We think that, if the library has more, separate section, do the self-assessment in every section by themselves because the pro-form method is great to compare the intensities and weaknesses, and to give more information to the employees, who need that. The previous assessments show that the self-assessment is really helpful to build a collective between the colleges, because during the test they think together in smaller groups about their workplace. The members of the groups have different level and quality information about how the library runs, and when they fill the list of items out, they share this information, and they have to come out a solution which is equally good for all of them.

To do the self-assessment you need an advisor, who can introduce the lists before the employees take them, and can advice useful terminology and with a few examples, he can show the correct way to fill in the lists.

The self assessment with the pro-form method gives information to the leaders of the library, which helps to create the best plans for make the whole library's and the different parts of the library's work better and faster. It takes relatively much time to prepare for the formal method, and to analyze the results, if the library does it by itself only, but with this method, the library gets specific and correct items about the library. The self-assessment can bring thing out, which generates tension between the employees and problems, what the leading team haven't think about before. It also helps to get familiar with the new, unused intensities of the library. By repeating the self-assessment in time to time, we can see the different changes inside or outside the library how effect the employees of the library, the users of the library, and the smaller or bigger environment of the library.

Results

The Meliusz County Library did a self-assessment in groups of 3-4 employees on average, basically on a whole working day. In 2007, there were 51 employees and they did the test in 12 groups. In 2008, when they did the second time the self-assessment, the library had only 35 workers, so they wrote the test in 8 groups.

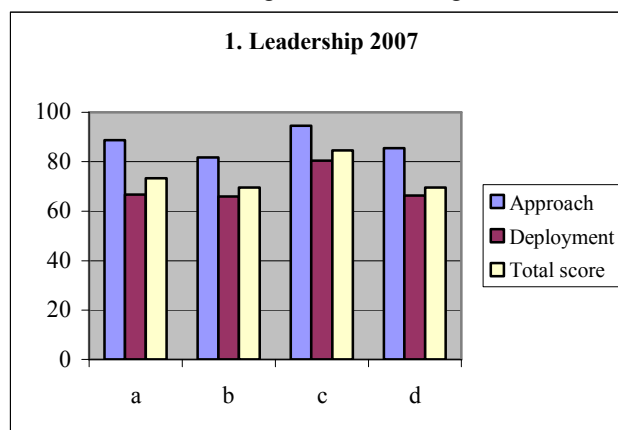
There was a conference before both years self-assessment, where they discussed the questions of the assessment. During the first assessment, there were many questions from the employees to make sure, they are doing the right thing, but in the second time, the groups could fill in the test without any questions.

The different area's of the organization were analyzed separately (Leadership, Policy and strategy, Employees, Partner relationships and resources) and they used A, B, C, D, or even E marks, to separate the different area's points of what the employees think about the organization.

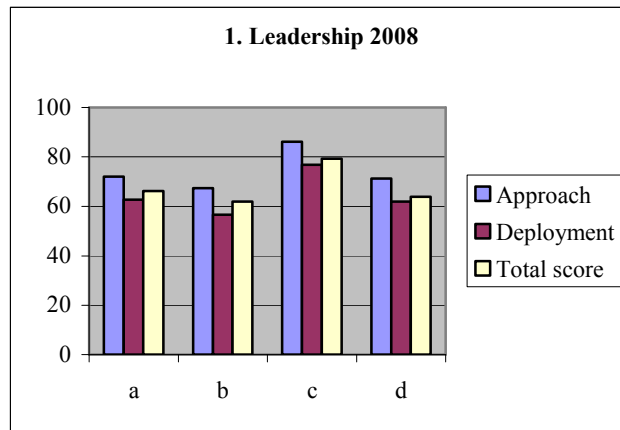
Leadership

How could the leaders of the library start and help verify what the library needs to do to create the library's future plans? How could they keep up the expansion what the library needs from time to time? And how can they actually work out the way to do all these things? And personally, how big is their effort to put the ideas and plans in action?

The library's leading structure is shown on the 1.Figure, and the 2.Figure shows the 2008 structure.



1. Figure



2. Figure

A

The leaders of the library create the library's strategy and plans, write down the library's future mission, and does the role model job in the library's quality culture.

In the year of 2007, by this point, the Approach, the Deployment and the All Score were all much better. The library's future plan, the quality role model of the leadership was clearer for the workers than it was in the old building. The construction during the years of 2006 and 2007, the plans of the moving in to the new building made every employees attention focus on the leader's job, but the employees gave absolute faith for the leaders, in spite of the usually doubtfulness.

B

The leaders of the library guarantee the library's management system's workout, to put it in action, and the continuous expansion.

They scored 60% in 2007 on what the library's management system's workout did on the conception, and even more than 80% on the ideas about the future. The data of 2008 were lower than it was in 2007.

C

The leaders of the library work together with the users, the partners, and the represents of the society.

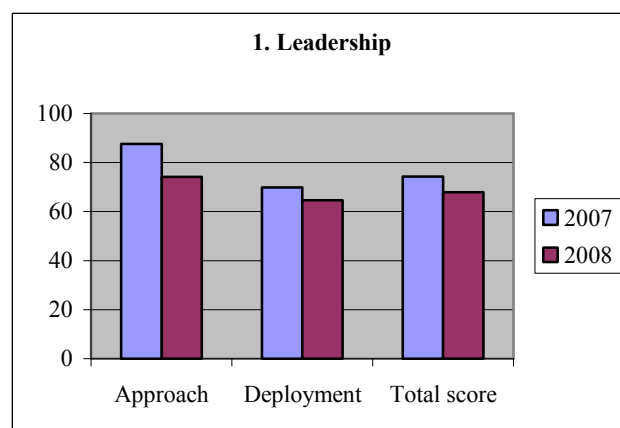
The data of 2007 shows that the care about the users and the partners was higher than 80% and the approach was almost 100%. The data of 2008 remained about 80%. This is interesting, because when they took the second assessment, the library was in the new building almost a year ago, and the new forms of the partnership had already worked out.

D

The leaders motivate, support and confess the employees of the organization.

In 2007, the employees felt bigger support from the leaders, than they did in 2008.

The results of the two assessments are shown together on the 3.Figure. As you can see, the employees rated higher the leaders in 2007 on the conception, on realize the conception and on the all impression in the old building. So we can say that, the better facility couldn't avoid the shock, what the organization had. The changes in the leaders, and the momentous cut back.

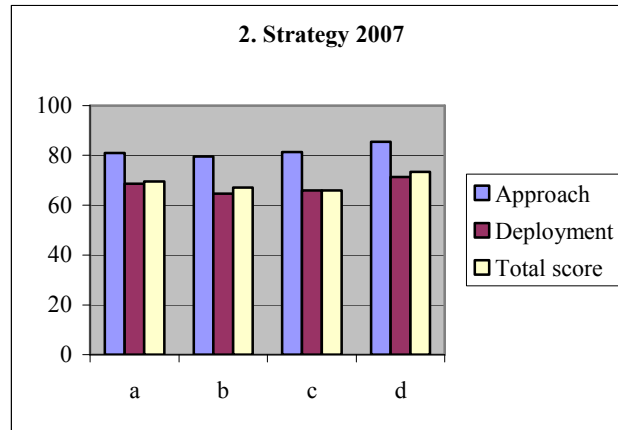


3. Figure

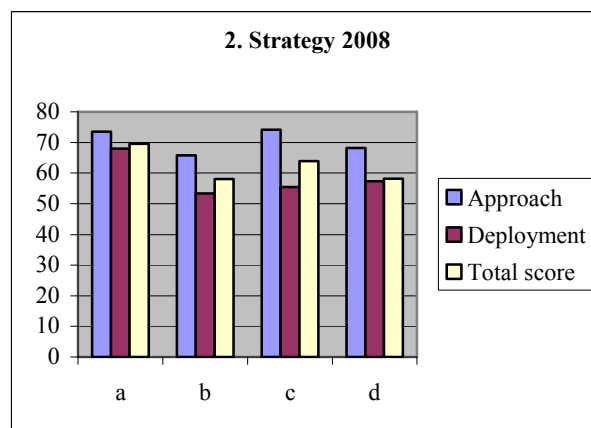
Policy, strategy

How can the library create its own mission and future imagine with clear and actual library policy, plans, goals and with prove strategy.

The library's policy and strategy structure self-assessment result in 2007 is shown on the 4. Figure and the result in 2008 is shown on the 5. Figure.



4. Figure



5. Figure

A

The library's policy and strategy is based on what the users and the society needs now, and the future.

B

The basic of the policy and strategy is the information from performance measuring, researching and learning.

The scores in 2007 were much higher about the basic strategy, but at this time the problems, what they had afterward hadn't shown up which made think over again the basics of the strategy.

C

The library's policy and strategy is under a continuous expansion, review and modernization.

The strategy's consequent expansion looked more insured in 2007 too by the employees.

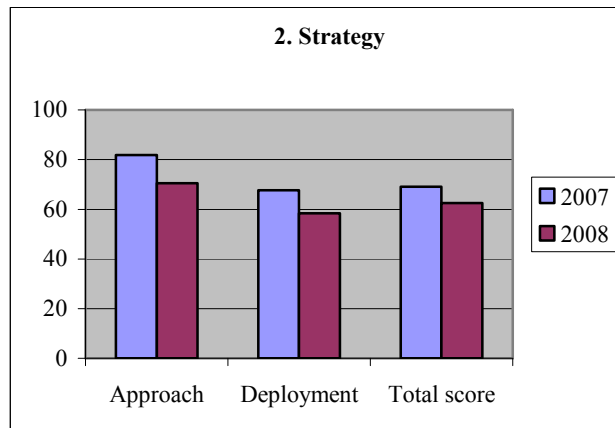
D

The library's strategy goes through key processes before it becomes real.

The insurance of the key processes of the strategy was lot higher in 2007, than it became in 2008. The new running structure of the library put the key processes to the front, and thinks it over again before and after the moving was necessary jobs to do, and basically put all the employees of the library in action.

The library's policy and strategy work is shown on the 6. Figure by the employees.

They rated the strategy in 2007 better in every area, before the moving. The explanation for this result could be that the employees were more into the library's business which made their influence and responsibility increase in the year of the moving.

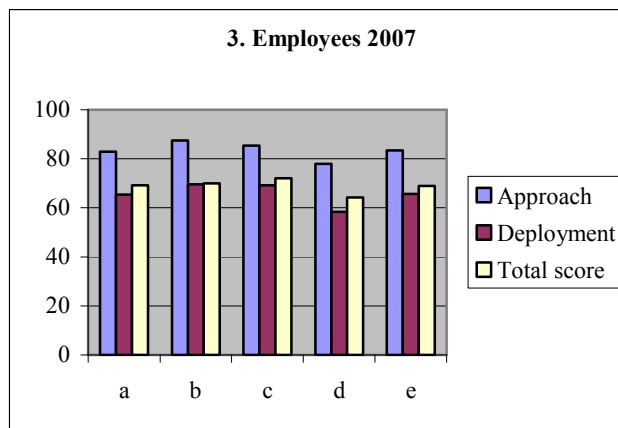


6. Figure

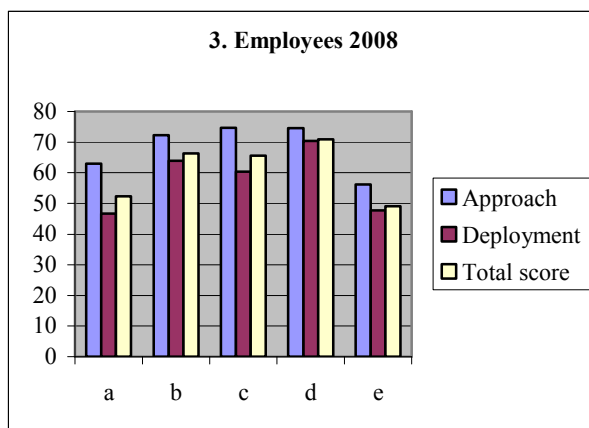
Employees

How can we manage, expose and make free the employees' knowledge, work ethic on the level of the organization, the groups, and the individuals? How can we plan the activity, which supports the organization's policy and strategy? How can we make the procedures effective?

The 7. Figure shows the results of the self-assessment about library's human factor in 2007, while the 8. Figure shows the results in 2008.



7. Figure



8. Figure

A

They plan, manage and develop the human means

The human means' planning could reach the 60% only in the level of image/approach in 2008, but the approach in 2007 could pass the 80%, the fulfilment and the assessment had also over than 60%.

B

They identify, define, develop and hold the employees' knowledge and skill.

The employees felt their knowledge's developing and using chance more insured in 2007, than in the new, modern library environment in 2008.

C

They provide for the employees' participation and the several tether.

The year, 2007 had provided more participation and tether for the employees in the Library, than the year 2008.

D

There is a conversation between the leadership and the employees.

The lead-applies communication has reached the value between 60-80%, the 2008's data were lower, they were more than 60 but could not reach the 80%.

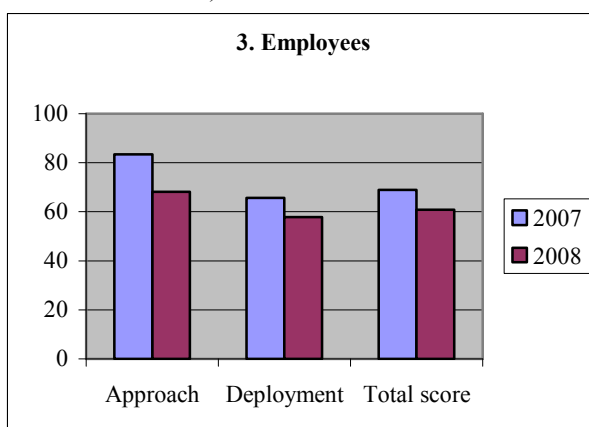
E

The library's lead care for applies, it grants and fees them.

Applies felt the care with them more intensive in 2007, between 65-85% value, in 2008 it was only between 50-55%.

The library's human means' management is pretended in the 9. Figure in the examined two years.

The employees' satisfaction in 2007 has exceeded notably the 2008's values. This fact makes us thinking again (because of the new, modern work environment).

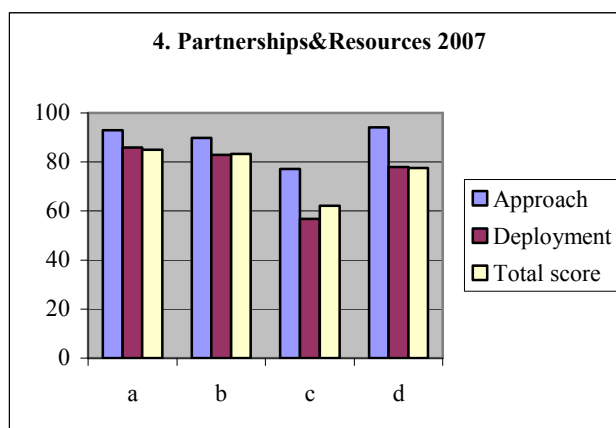


9. Figure

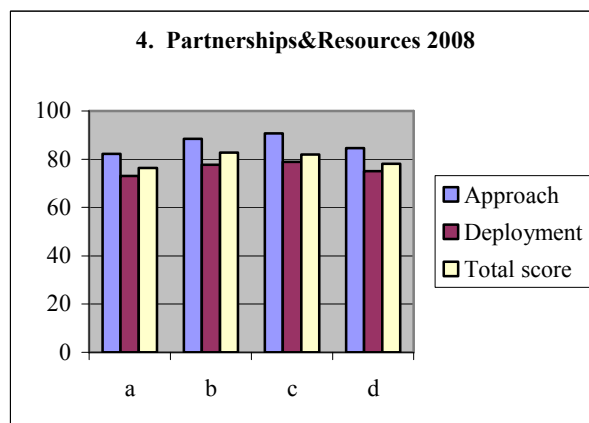
Partner relationships and Resources

How can plan and manage the library its external relationships and internal means make them sponsoring the organization's policy and strategy and also the processes' efficient working.

The library's partner relationships and means' 2007's results show the 10. Figure, and the 2008's results can be found in the 11.



10. Figure



11. Figure

A

The external partner relationships are managed

The partner relationships' management were in a high level as the employees said in 2007 over than 80%, moreover in the images it could come true around 100%. In 2008 only the images got a little bit more than 80%.

B

The finance is managed

The view of the finance's manage was almost the same in the two years, the fulfilment was a little bit better in 2007.

C

The buildings, the materials and the equipment are managed

This is the first characteristic whose 2008's value could reach the 2007's level. In 2007 the results were 55-60%, in 2008 80-90%. This positive change was caused by the new building and the new computer technology.

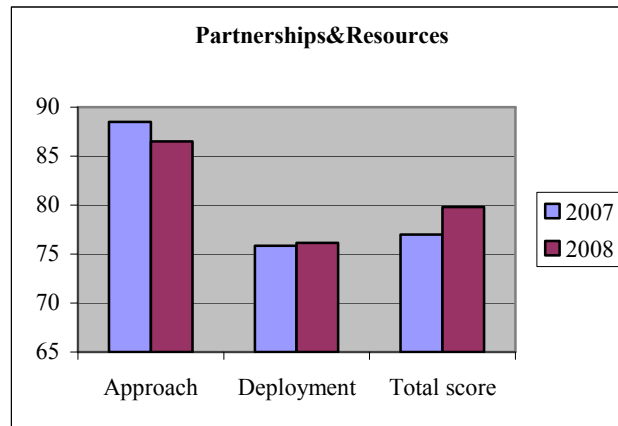
D

The informatics technology is managed

After the c point it is surprising that the informatics technology's management had the same 80% in 2007 in bad conditions and in 2008 too.

The Library's partner relationships and means' management could see in the 12. Figure.

The year, 2007 got a better judgment in the approach, the fulfilment is similar in the two examined year, according to total scoring the year 2008 seems like better. We do not have to believe in the results exactly, because from the four characteristic three one was better in 2007 than in 2008. The 2008's total score's first place was because of the new building, it was about only one examined viewpoint.

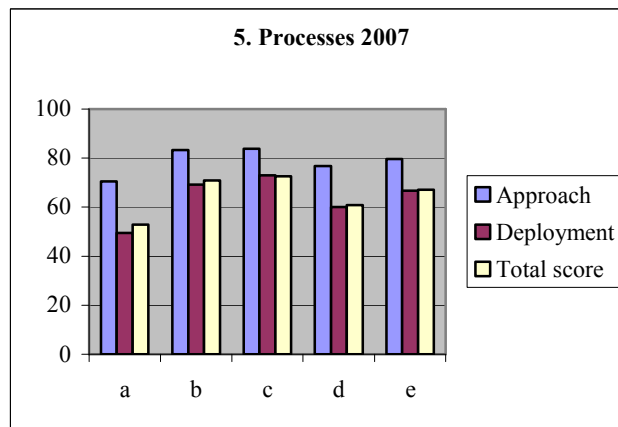


12. Figure

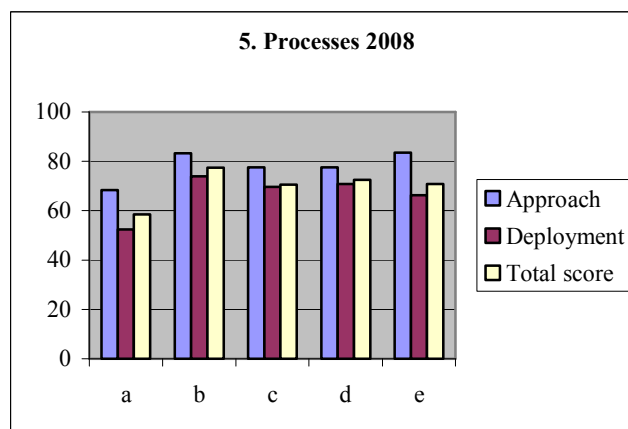
Processes

How can plan, manage and develop the library its processes make them sponsoring the organization's policy and strategy and make the users and other partners satisfied and also create large value for them.

The library's 2007's self-assessment organization makings' results could be seen in the 13.Figure the 2008's results in the 14.Figure.



13. Figure



14. Figure

A

The library's processes are systematically planned and managed.

The processes' planning and managing were an untended area in 2007 and in 2008 too as the employees said. In either year the results were 50-70%. The 2007's data a little bit better, than in approach, the 2008's in image.

B

Every process are developed in an innovative way to make the users and other partners satisfied and also create large value for them.

The exhibition of the developing chances, the stimulation of the users' innovative working, the suitable way using got in the to examined year 70-82%, the 2008's data a little bit higher. It can be because of the union inviting working in consortium, which has done many creative idea and serious developing by thinking together.

C

The services in the library are planned and developed by the users' needs and expectations.

In the employees' opinion the users' feedback, results of the users' examination about their needs are belonged to the services. They could feel its aim stranger in 2007, during the planning of the move than after the move to the new building.

D

The library's services are run, always checked and repaired.

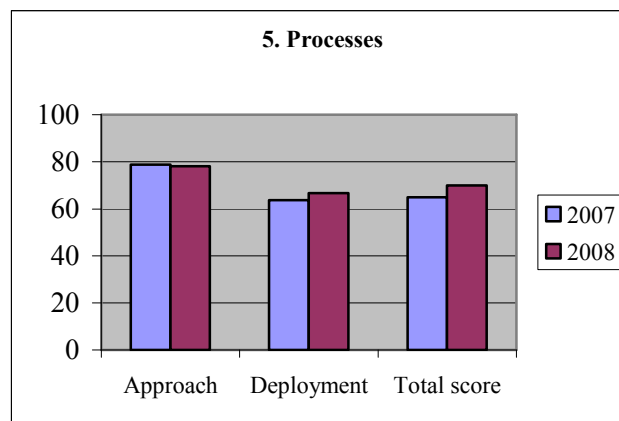
In the services' developing, services' environment, accommodation, furniture, computer services the 2008's data are higher, 70-80%, the 2007's are between 60-78%. The 2008's more positive image is because of the new library's furniture and the latest computer infrastructure, but it had to be expected a higher score in a new building.

E

The library's public relations are managed and developed.

The public relations' 2008's data could exceed the 2007's data. The new building can create an ideal place to make relationships and to keep them by new technology.

The library's processes' management results in the examined two years could seen in 15. Figure. The theme's approach have not changed, and the fulfilment's results in 2008 because of the new environment could raise a little bit.



15. Figure

Conclusion

According to the results of the examination we can say that, if the changes in the organization of the library has big effect on the life of individuals and employees and the opinion about the workplace and satisfaction with it. Changes effecting on the organisation has no equal influence in employee satisfaction. Change Alteration in the management of the library has radically determinated the moral of employee and the self assessment of organisation. Negative effects of leader altering couldn't be compensated in short time by the absolute positive effect in all workplace environments. We can make a statement, in case of organisations, where the boss had a personal, daily relationship with employees, the alteration of leader can cause a serious concussion for employees. It's even true, if they weren't totally satisfied with the performance of their superior. Supposedly negative effects of leader alteration in this library will be moderated in the future and employees will focus on positive environmental factors.

References:

[1] Practical Guide for Self-Assessment Assessing for Excellence. EFQM. Brussels, Representative Office, 2001.