



Case description:

1. Identification

- **Title:** Self-assessment in the context of the management by objectives at the Autonomous Regional Administration of the Azores
- **Name of the organisation:** Regional Directorate for Organization and Public Administration
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- **Level:** Regional
- **Sector:** Administration
- **Principle of Excellence involved:** Results Orientation

The Azores is a Portuguese archipelago, composed of nine islands. Situated in the Atlantic Ocean, half way between Europe and North America, The Autonomous Region of the Azores is one of the two autonomous regions in Portugal, and therefore with its own legislative and government institutions.

The archipelago has around 244.000 inhabitants, 18.260 of whom work in the autonomous regional administration, representing 15% of the region's workforce.

2. Quality improvement issues

In its Programme, the IX Government of the Azores (2005-2008) stipulated, as one of its basic objectives for administrative modernization, the improvement of the quality of service delivery to citizens. The X Government, elected at the end of 2008, also decided to develop that objective.

To that end, it is necessary to change the culture of the Azorean public administration that presides since the mid-70s of last century, preparing it for a result-oriented administration.

The implementation of CAF as a model of self-assessment and the arising action plans have given a self knowledge and a better preparation to provide organizational and individual goals (short / medium / long term). Since 1 January 2009, services, managers and workers are obliged to assess and measure their results under the integrated system of management and performance evaluation of the regional public administration of the Azores (SIADAPRA).

3. Case background

The X Government of the Azores is composed by nine departments: Presidency of the Government; Vice-Presidency and 7 Regional Secretariats, in areas such as Science, Technology and Infrastructures, Education and Training, Economy; Labour and Social Solidarity; Health; Agriculture and Forestry; Environment and Seas, and thirty regional Directorates.

In order to achieve the governmental objectives mentioned, for instance the organizational model of the Azorean administration, several projects and initiatives were - and continue to be - developed.

The new management model of regional administration is based on three pillars: 1st) Management of human resources; 2nd) Organization of services; 3rd) Evaluation of services.

With regard to this third pillar, the Regional Plan for the Promotion of Quality in Public Services came to foresee the assessment as a fundamental step in the pursuit of the continuous improvement in services. Three evaluation principles were considered: evaluation by citizens (questionnaires in a daily basis are available to citizens), management audits and self-assessment process.

4. The actors

The President of the Azorean Government; the Vice-Presidency of the Government, by the Regional Directorate for Organization and Public Administration, (VPGR-DROAP); CAF Regional Coordinator; Quality



Promotion Groups (NPQ); CAF Teams. Collaborators and Stakeholders (suppliers, clients and citizens) were also involved on the process through surveys, interviews and informal conversations.

5. The work process/the approach

One of the main objectives pursued initially was enable services to apply TQM tools and begin to deal with new perspectives provided by those tools.

In the beginning, the process was carried out on a non regulatory basis, but soon it was perceptible that few services would join the process. Therefore regulation was created to enforce the adoption of this process.

Resolution nº 119/2003, of 2 October, later altered by Resolution nº 120/2006, of 21 September, concerning self-assessment, establishes the implementation strategy of CAF in the services of the regional administration and promotes the constitution of Quality Promotion Groups (in Portuguese NPQ), one for each governmental department. Those NPQ, among other tasks, were created to internally accompany CAF processes.

For education and health services (schools, hospitals and health centres), because of their specificities, exceptions were established concerning the self-assessment tools. In Education a project denominated "Qualis - Evaluation of Schools" was created which adapted the CAF tool to the school reality. In the Health sector, it was decided that they should continue with their specific tools.

The Orientation nº 2/2006 - IX Regional Government, of 27 January, stipulates the compulsory nature of all services to apply the CAF as an organizational analysis tool. As a result, self-assessment teams were created in all of the services of regional administration.

Since 2004 Portuguese Public Administration reforms are a reality, with new processes of progression on careers, measuring performance on an annual basis. The Azorean administration could not remain indifferent to the new reality. So in the middle of 2008, with the publication of the Regional Legislative Decree nº 14/2008/A, it was determined that on 1 January 2009, the Azorean services would be covered by SIADAPRA that integrates the self-assessment process.

The VPGR-DROAP - the department with competences on public administration-, is responsible for the general coordination of the process (permanently following the implementation of CAF in coordination with the Quality Promotion Groups; training all members of the Quality Promotion Groups and Self Assessment Teams; producing and actualizing instruments and information; following the Improvement Actions' Plans).

In each Governmental department, NPQ promotes surveys, follows and dynamizes the CAF implementation process (from the creation of CAF teams to the monitoring of the improvement plans); supports CAF teams (frequently reunites and liaises with them); prepares reports about the process of self assessment and of the execution of improvement actions, to top management and VPGR-DROAP, on a quarterly basis.

The CAF teams are responsible to develop the self assessment in each organization, to prepare the improvement action plans and to send the final report to its department coordination.

The self-assessment process, using quality management tools (in particularly CAF) is, at the moment, a widespread process in all regional administration services.

The Azorean administration sectors that employ more workers - Health and Education - , also present more specificities. Therefore, the process of self-assessment, using Total Quality Management tools, was implemented in Azorean administration based on three methodologies: CAF (services in general), QUALIS (Education services) and MoniQuOr (Health services). The implementation support was carried out by the human resources recruited within the services, without external assistance, and by doing so, the financial costs are minimal.

6. The measure of success

Because the majority of the CAF team members didn't have the necessary qualification to proceed with this process, a vocational training plan was prepared.

As a result, 20 editions of the training "The implementation of CAF in the Azores Public Administration Services" were carried out, with 363 CAF team members: 168 in 2006 and 195 in 2007.



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In April 2007 a workshop was organized denominated "CAF in Regional Public Administration of Azores - Challenges and Strategies", with 163 participants representing all CAF teams and Quality Promotion Groups. That event counted with the participation of the European Institute of Public Administration and the Portuguese representative in the European Group of Innovative Public Services.

During 2006-2007, 117 CAF teams were created, 54 of which in 2006 and 63 in 2007. 459 collaborators of regional administration were integrated on those CAF teams.

In terms of results, 54 services that created the CAF teams in 2006 applied the CAF tool - version 2002 and 63 services that created the CAF teams in 2007 applied the CAF tool - version 2006.

Of those who applied CAF version 2002, 52 drew up their final reports and implemented the proposed improvement initiatives. Many of those initiatives were accomplished. The average final score obtained was 11,37 in a scale of 0 to 45. The criteria whose average score was lower were the 8 "Impact in the society" and 6 "Citizens/customers Results". In contrast, the criteria whose global average score was higher were the 4 "Partnerships and Resources" and 1 "Leadership", in this order. Comparing the Enablers criteria with the Results criteria we can conclude that, on average, services obtained better scores in the first ones (1,37 versus 1,12 in a scale of 0 to 5).

Of those who applied CAF version 2006, 48 concluded the process and implemented the proposed improvement initiatives. The average final score obtained was 284 in a scale of 0 to 900. The criteria whose average score was lower were the 9 "Key-Process Results" and the 8 "Impact in the society". By contrast, the criteria whose global average score was higher were, also, the 4 "Partnerships and Resources" and the 1 "Leadership", in this order. Comparing the Enablers criteria with the Results criteria we also concluded that, on average, services obtained better scores in the first ones (37 versus 25 in a scale of 0 to 100).

Considering the score differences among Enablers and Results criteria, we can conclude that services of the regional administration are starting to comprehend the importance of evaluating and quantifying their practices.

At the end of 2008, with regard to the 316 improvement initiatives proposed by the CAF teams during the self-assessment process, 30% were concluded, 47% were in execution and 23% were not implemented. The number of not implemented initiatives is justified because many teams concluded the self-assessment process in the second half of 2008. At the end of 2009, 45% were already concluded.

E. g., the majority of services has determined their mission, vision, values, and strategic objectives, in a management perspective, with the collaboration of their workers. They also started to work on the results indicators. Others have implemented new electronic tools to manage their resources (human, material, financial). Others have elaborate procedures and welcome manuals, training plans, among others.

Some services improved their internal and external communication, using new electronic software such as e-mail, newsletters, electronic forums, correspondence management systems.

Many services have begun to hear their internal clients (including collaborators) and external clients, with the purpose of measuring their satisfaction. The majority of services started to assemble evidences on a daily basis.

The implementation of CAF by the services of the regional administration of the Azores, between 2006 and 2008, was extremely important for the overall collaborators' involvement in the process of continuous improvement. Services have begun to become aware of their strong points and improvement areas. Most of the improvement initiatives were accomplished as a result of the self-assessment process and have generated evident improvements with regard to service delivery. The need of managing by processes and by evidences was evident. This process has allowed top and middle management a vaster knowledge of their organizations, in order to supply better public service to the citizens.

Another objective achieved with the CAF implementation was to prepare services to execute some of the premises that were adopted by the new process of organizational and individual evaluation that entered in force on 1 January 2009, named SIADAPRA.

On the long term the results will be measured every year, through self-assessment, imposed by SIADAPRA. For instance, annually, services are assessed based on a matrix of criteria that punctuates and ranks the



services who apply for excellence. This Matrix includes 12 criteria, each one with 10 levels, punctuated by one to ten. In order to emphasize the application of CAF or other similar tools and methodologies a criterion denominated "Total Quality Management" was included. A service assessment recognized with "Excellent" requires an increased quota for differentiation of the merits of middle managers and workers, with implications on the progression of their career.

The results of the integration of the CAF tool in SIADAPRA will be measured in two or three years, but we can already say that several services are now applying CAF with a strong orientation for results.

7. The main obstacles

The voluntary adherence to the process by the services. This obstacle was overcome with the commitment of the government, particularly the President, and by the regulatory initiatives formerly described.

Mistrust on the part of middle managers and employees and little knowledge of the tool. This obstacle was overcome with a well structured training plan, with the persistence of the general coordination and departmental coordination and with a strategy of proximity between those coordinators, top and middle management and CAF teams.

Lack of time to carry out the process. This obstacle was overcome with the awareness of the leaders to release the employees involved in the CAF teams of some of their daily tasks and giving schedule flexibility during the implementation process of the CAF.

8. Lessons learned

To implement quality processes the political endorsement as well as the involvement of top and middle management and of all workers is fundamental. The size of the organization is another aspect to consider. After each moment of self-assessment it is extremely important to develop a plan for improvement with comprehensive but realistic actions, and to set up deadlines for their implementation.

9. Project innovation content and adaptability

The regulatory basis that sustains the use of self-assessment tools, in particular the use of CAF, does not determine a penalty regime. By contrast, the intention is to be the "engine that pulls" the services to the process, requiring them to do the minimum and giving them the freedom of choice to move to more demanding levels, as certification and accreditation processes. With this obligation, all services are placed on the same level of departure, at the level of basic knowledge.

With the integration of CAF in our new assessment system, we gave more significance to the use of CAF tool, transforming it in an essential pillar for the definition and operationalization of the strategies of the services.

So we recommend to those public administrations where the accession of the services is very slow, the obligation of applying CAF.

With the presentation of our practice we want to show you that sometimes it is necessary to give a "strong push" for Quality to happen, and in quality, like in other things, we can do more and better on a voluntary basis or on an obligatory basis.