

Developing & Implementing an Excellence Framework in Higher Education



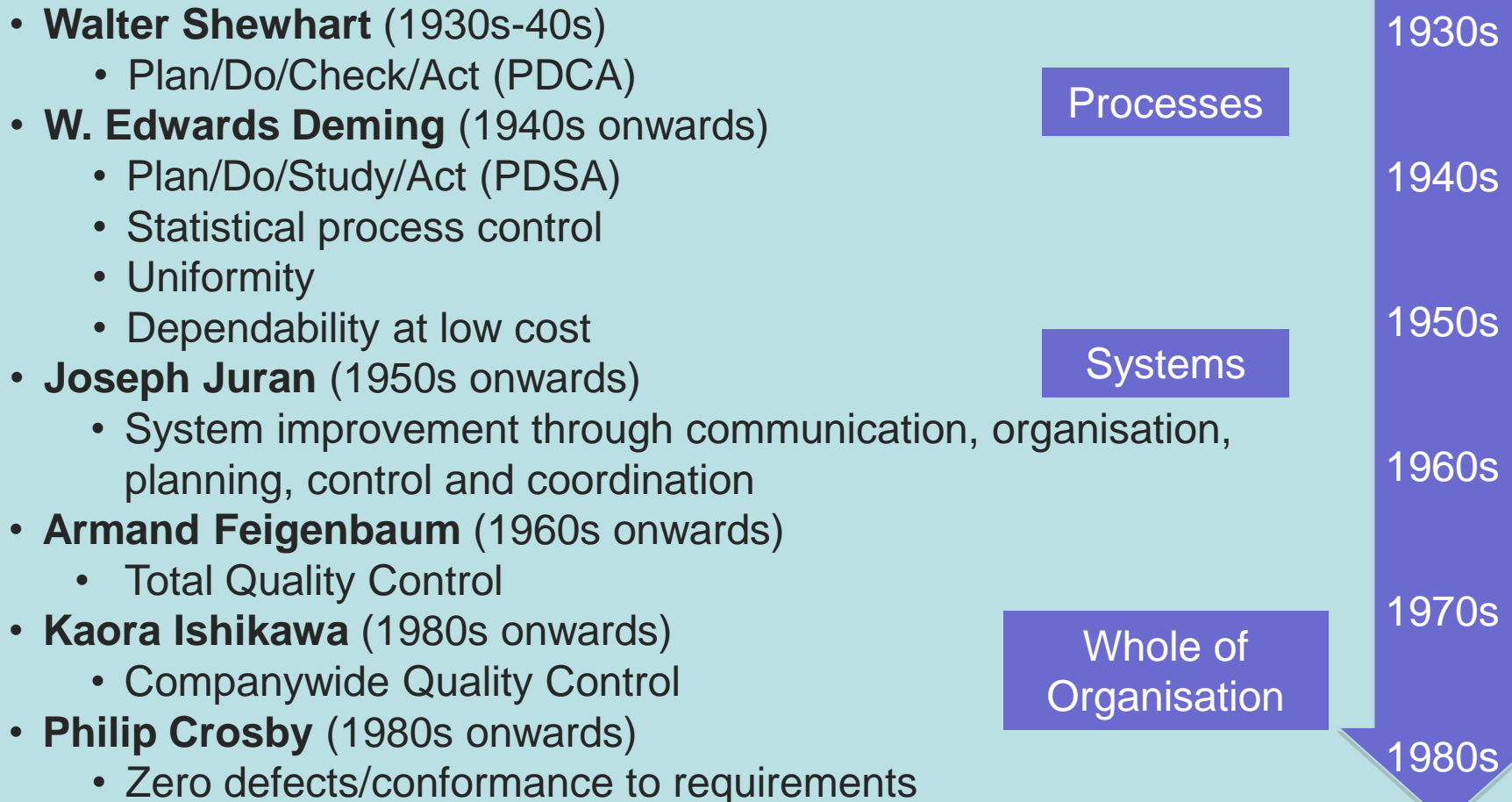
What will you get from this session?

- **ECU context**
- **Development of thinking on quality**
- **The need for a refreshed excellence framework at ECU**
- **Development of the Excellence Framework**
- **Challenges**
- **Implementation so far**
- **The road ahead.....**

Edith Cowan University

- **Established as a university in 1991 with predecessor institutions dating back to 1902;**
- **Enrolments >23,500: approx. 83% domestic students**
- **3 campuses**
 - **Metropolitan Perth: Joondalup and Mount Lawley**
 - **Regional: Bunbury**
- **2013 Good University's Guide 5 Star rating for teaching quality and student experience**
- **Recognised with a place in the inaugural Times Higher Education list of 100 Universities Under 50 Years Old in 2012**

Quality – A Brief (Modern) History*



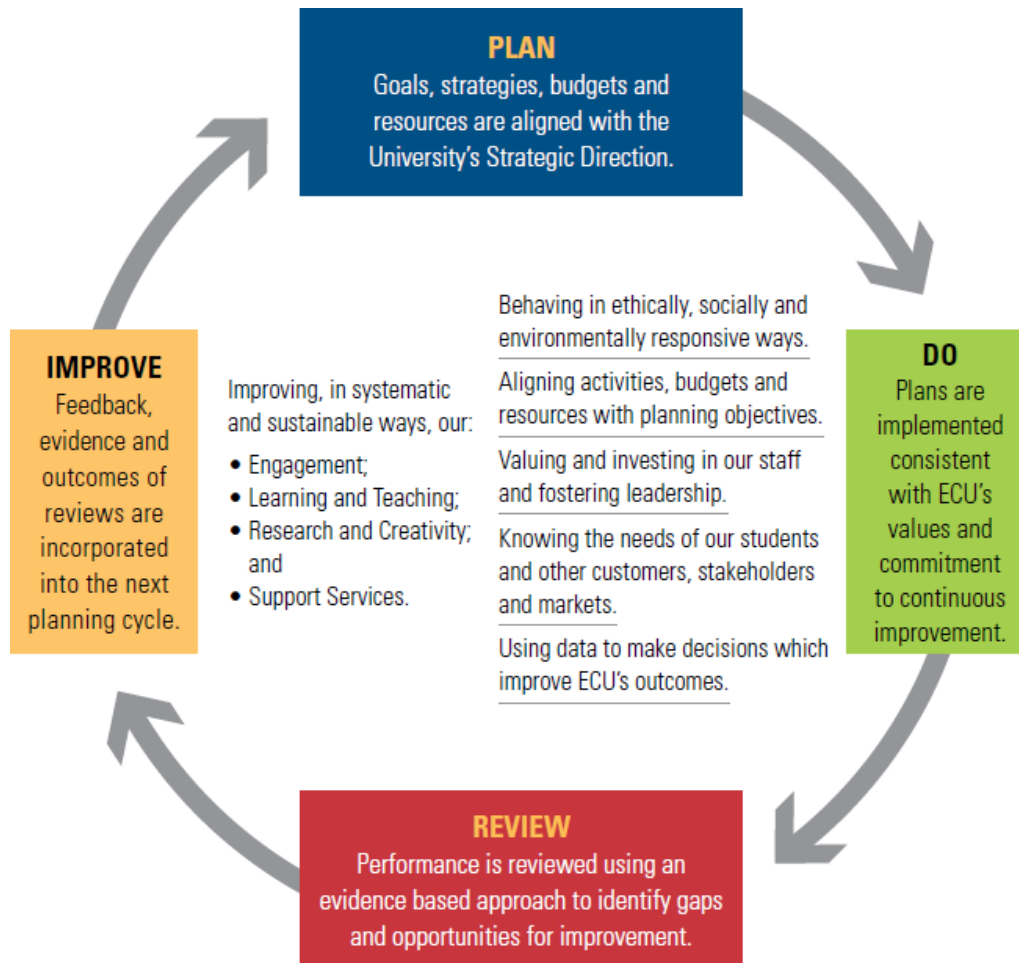
* Adapted from Duffy (2013)

Quality (or Excellence) Models

*A quality or excellence model is a conceptual, non-prescriptive quality management framework designed to enable organisations to achieve high performance or “excellence” within **a set of criteria or parameters identified as critical to success.***

- **Problem: Models were originally designed for business and industry**
- **Business and Industry: Success = profit**
- **Tertiary Education: Success = capacity-building to optimise positive social outcomes**

Quality@ECU Model



Problems with the “model”:

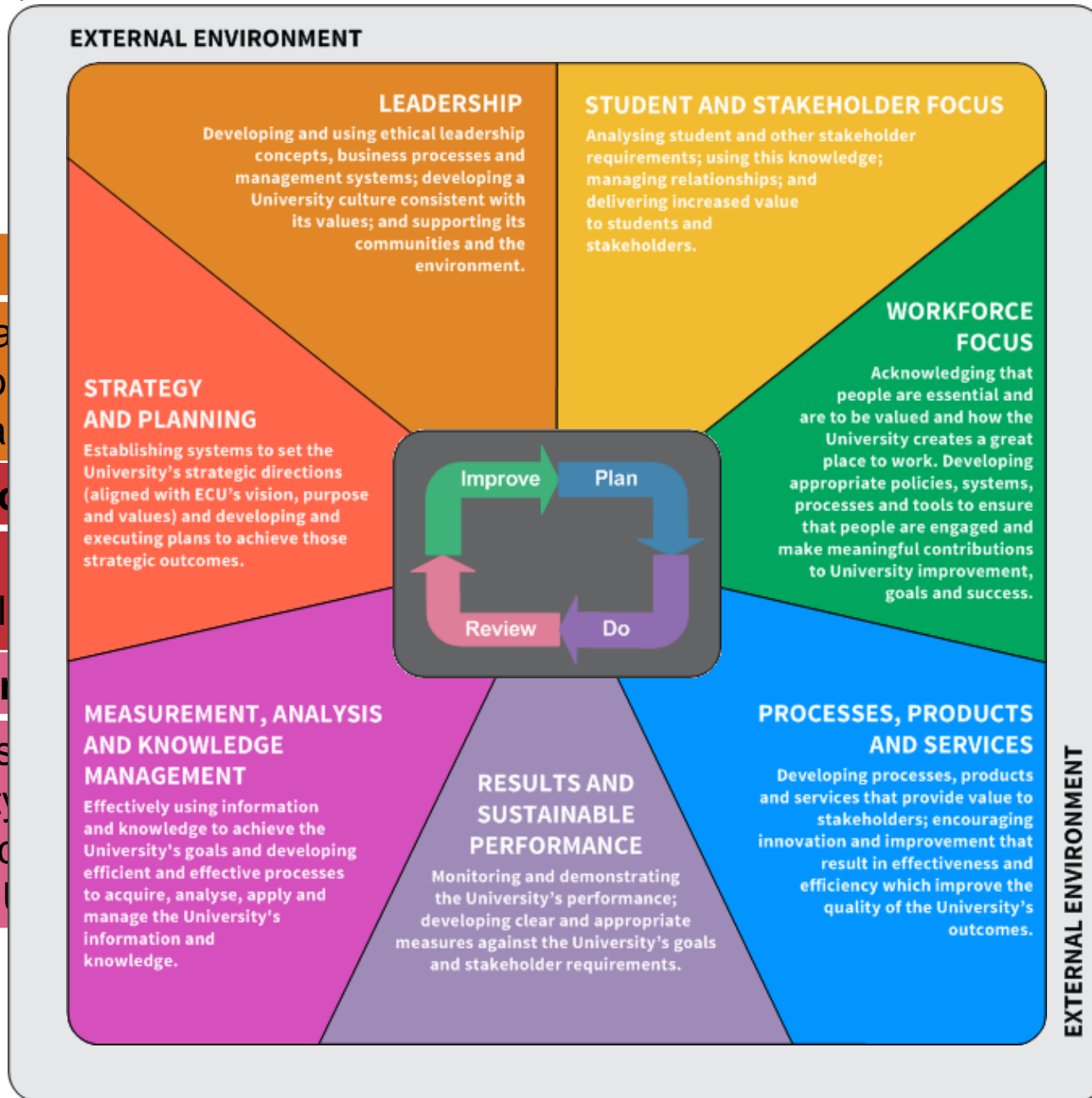
- PDRI is really only a cyclic quality improvement tool;
- There is no overarching framework;
- PDRI was not implemented consistently or systematically;
- Did not engage a wide cross-section of ECU's community;

Framework development timeline

Stage	Date
1. Development of a business case	Jan 2012
2. Framework development	Feb 2012
Intended outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A robust quality framework of international standard customised for ECU • Long-term <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of performance improvement; • Greater engagement with quality improvement activities; and • Promote better performance management. 	
• University committees and Council	May 2012 – May 2013
7. Enhancement of draft	
8. Further consultation	
9. Final Framework and policy approved	June 2013
10. Framework launched	9 July 2013
11. Communication strategy and ongoing implementation	July - Present

Developing the Framework

ABEF (2011 Framework)	ECU Excellence Framework	Baldrige Excellence Program (2011-12 Education Criteria)
Leadership	Leadership	Leadership
Strategy and Planning	Strategy and Planning	Strategic Planning
Information and Knowledge Relates to how an organisation establishes systems to set strategic directions...and how it deploys plans to achieve those strategies.	Key Relationships Workforce Focus	Examines how an organisation's senior leaders' personal actions guide and sustain the organisation.
Process Management, Improvement and Innovation	Processes, Products and Services	Student and Stakeholder Focus
Results and Sustainable Performance	People Results Sustainable Results Society Results	Operations Focus



Leadership

Developing a business plan and developing a

Strategy and

Establishing strategic directions (aligned with the University's vision, purpose and values)

Measurement

Effectively using the University's information and knowledge to achieve the University's goals and developing efficient and effective processes to acquire, analyse, apply and manage the University's information and knowledge.

requirements; and stakeholders.

are to be place to

that provide and efficiency outcomes.



So, what is the framework?

- The ECU Excellence Framework is:
 - **An integrated quality improvement system based on good practice**
It sets out the elements and organisational characteristics essential to sustaining high performance
 - **Non-prescriptive and truly generic**
It can be applied to any project or initiative, regardless of scale, type or organisational unit.

However, the approach always has to be adapted to the project in hand



Great, but.....

Criticism

- It looks very complicated;
- There's too much emphasis on **how** to do things rather than **what** to do;
- This is for people further up the ladder, it doesn't really apply to me, right?
- There's no time to do all this extra work!



OK, we'll give it a go, how do we use it?

- Development of tools
 - **ECU Excellence Framework analysis tool**
 - Customised analysis tools and templates (school reviews, accreditation, consultative committees, etc)
 - Other tools in the development pipeline:
 - Staff performance review; and
 - Research centre reviews.
 - The right questions are being asked.



The long road ahead!

Evaluation

- A multifaceted approach:
 - Extent of general awareness amongst staff:
 - Uptake and explicit use of the framework; and
 - External validation by ABEF assessors.
- Development of all staff on matters related to quality and performance improvement as it a
- Working with faculties, s develop custom analysis tools for different purposes
 - Unit and course dev
 - Staff performance r
- Embedding the framework processes
 - ECUonQ – unit and



Questions



References

Duffy, G. L. (2013) The ASQ Quality Improvement Pocket Guide, American Society for Quality, Quality Press, Milwaukee WI