

# Company of the Year Awards improves management practices in Kenya

By [Carole Kimutai](#) 14 Jul 2008

In Kenya, there are managers working very hard, under very difficult circumstances to create goods and services, pay taxes and keep Kenyans in employment, yet their efforts go largely unrecognised. In fact, the only time that attention is paid to these companies is when things go wrong.

Last week, several Kenyan companies were awarded for their excellence in management practices during the annual Company of the Year Awards (COYA) that was held in Nairobi, Kenya. Bidco Oil Refineries Ltd, manufacturers and marketers of edible oils scooped the coveted Overall Company of the Year award while Nairobi Bottlers and Barclays Bank of Kenya were first and second runners up respectively.

Nine years ago, The Kenya Institute of Management (KIM) launched COYA with the aim of recognising what is good and professional and what is working well and can be replicated. "We are not interested in what is bad and therefore not worth copying. Every year is always better than the previous due to the continuous improvement programmes put in place especially on the assessment tool," says Carol Karangi, COYA manager.

Since inception, the COYA process and tools have been continuously reviewed and updated to ensure that it continues to be an exercise that adds value to a company's way of doing things; this year, COYA took the ADLI (Approach, Deployment, Learning and Integration) process.

Under "Approach," the COYA evaluation was interested in establishing a company's philosophy and method of getting things done. Under "Deployment," the extent to which the company implemented the stated approaches was assessed, under "Learning," the COYA evaluation process was interested in establishing whether a company had a way of harvesting and re-planting the lessons learnt to improve their approaches and their deployment. Finally, under "Integration," the process sought to establish whether the different "parts" of the process were fully harmonised and properly-oiled to achieve the expected results.

"In summary, we sought to assess an organisation's processes (OP). But organisational processes are not an end in themselves; they are a means to an end. The end is in the organisational performance. By evaluating organisational performance, we were able to gauge the appropriateness of the organisational processes," said Mwangi Ngumo, the KIM chief executive Officer.

The new COYA is implemented in the following stages; self assessment by companies, they then carry out self evaluation using the COYA criterion guidelines and score themselves using guidelines provided, desk analysis by COYA secretariat, a thorough desk analysis on the information collected is done by the COYA secretariat and a tool prepared for use in the verification and clarification exercise, COYA consultants assesses the company by visiting business premises for a day to ascertain and clarify the contents provided through the self evaluation. This is then followed by a technical analysis, a judge's report and the winners are announced and rewarded during the COYA Gala night held every first Friday of July every year.

**2008 COYA winners:**

| Award  | Winner                                   |
|--|--|
| Leadership and Governance Practices            | Kenya Wildlife Service                   |
| Corporate Governance                           | Kenya Commercial Bank                    |
| Environmental Management Practices             | Bluebird Bank                            |
| Strategy Planning Practices                    | Kenya Airways                            |
| Market Research                                | British Oil Refineries Ltd               |
| Information and Knowledge Management Practices | Kenya Postnet                            |
| Human Resource Practices                       | Kenya Bank of Africa                     |
| Customer Engagement Practices                  | British Oil Refineries Ltd               |
| Quality Management Practices                   | China and Shell                          |
| Emergency Preparedness                         | Kenya Airways                            |
| Health Award                                   | Kenya Pipeline Company                   |
| Best Self-assessment                           | Standard Limited                         |
| Customer and Supplier                          |  |
| Manager of the Year Award                      |  |
| 1st Runner-up                                  | Joseph Mwangi, Kenya Pipeline Company    |
| 2nd Runner-up                                  | David Akumu, Kenya Airways               |
| Chief Executive of the Year Award              |  |
| 1st Runner-up                                  | Dr. John Kagwile, Kenya Wildlife Service |
| CEO of the Year 2010                           | Ugochaka, British Oil Refineries, London |
| CEO of the Year 2009                           | Ugochaka, British Oil Refineries, London |
| CEO of the Year 2008                           | Ugochaka, British Oil Refineries, London |
| 1st Runner-up, Best Overall Company            | Standard Bank of Kenya                   |
| 1st Runner-up, Best Overall Company            | Kenya Postnet                            |
| 1st Runner-up, Best Overall Company            | British Oil Refineries, London           |

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