

## **Knowledge workers is an approach to achieve outstanding performance requirements through strategic flexibility/Zain Telecom in Iraq as a model**

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### **Abstract:**

The aim of this research is to recognize the importance of the role of knowledge workers as a knowledge resource capable of dealing with environmental variables and leading the organization to be able to achieve outstanding performance in light of the great competition in the field of research. That performance is achieved by relying on the knowledge they possess as one of the most important the assets of the times and a basic source that leads to progress and development. Their basic role is activated by motivating them and giving them the necessary strategic flexibility that enables speed in solving problems, facing challenges and providing optimal solutions based on their creativity and innovations. To achieve this goal the researcher relied on the investigative - analytical approach based on a study relationships, dimensions and variables derived from its data from the searched field, relying on (research, analysis, proof). Zain Telecom in Iraq was represented as a field for research as it is one of the most competitive fields, and that success in it requires giving the knowledge workers a greater role and giving them flexibility to confront and succeed. Intentionally appointed according to the equation "Krejeie & Morgan, 1970" by (46) respondents represented by (director, director, pastor M., Division Director, Sales Manager). The questionnaire was relied on in collecting data and information as the main tool for research, and work was done on analyzing these data depending on the (SPSS) program and the Swarm Intelligence Algorithm (ACO). The research reached a set of conclusions, the most important of which are: The researched company is exposed to many competitive pressures from other companies in the telecommunications sector, which requires reliance mainly on knowledge capital in a capacity that is capable of continuously achieving outstanding performance. On the light of which the researcher presented a set of proposals, the most important of which is: Empowering knowledge workers and granting them powers. This allows they have opportunities to think, put forward new ideas and discuss them freely without any restrictions, and give them full flexibility in dealing with environmental variables to build an integrated organization that is adapted to its environment and is flexible in its dealings, and ensures the best performance.

**Keywords:** Outstanding Performance, Knowledge workers, Strategic Flexibility.

## صناع المعرفة مدخلاً لتحقيق الاداء المتميز عبر المرونة الاستراتيجية/شركة زين للاتصالات في العراق أنموذجاً

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### المستخلص:

الهدف من هذا البحث هو التعرف بأهمية دور صناع المعرفة بوصفهم مورداً معرفياً قادراً على التعامل مع المتغيرات البيئية وقيادة المنظمة لتكون قادرة على تحقيق الاداء المتميز في ظل المنافسة الكبيرة التي يشهدها ميدان البحث، ويتحقق ذلك الاداء عن طريق الاعتماد على ما يمتلكونه من معرفة باعتبارها من اهم موجودات العصر ومصدراً اساسياً يقود الى التقدم والتطور، ويتم تفعيل دورهم الاساسي عن طريق تحفيزهم ومنحهم المرونة الاستراتيجية اللازمة التي تمكن من السرعة في حل المشكلات ومواجهة التحديات وتقديم الحلول المثلى القائمة على ابداعاتهم وابتكاراتهم، ولتحقيق هذا الهدف اعتمد الباحث على المنهج الاستقصائي-التحليلي المستند على دراسة العلاقات والابعاد والمتغيرات المستمدة ببياناتها من الميدان المبحوث معتمداً في ذلك على (البحث، التحليل، البرهان)، وقد تمثلت شركة زين للاتصالات في العراق ميداناً للبحث باعتباره من اكثر الميادين منافسة، وان النجاح فيه يتطلب اعطاء الدور الاكبر لصناع المعرفة ومنحهم المرونة للمواجهة والنجاح، واختيرت عينة قصدية حسب معادلة (Krejeie & Morgan, 1970) بواقع (46) مستجيباً تمثلت بـ (المدير، مدير قسم، مدير شعبة، مدير مبيعات)، وتم الاعتماد على الاستبانة في جمع البيانات والمعلومات بوصفها الاداة الرئيسة للبحث، وتم العمل على تحليل تلك البيانات بالاعتماد على برنامج (SPSS) وخوارزمية ذكاء السرب (ACO)، وتوصل البحث الى مجموعة من الاستنتاجات اهمها "تبين ان الشركة المبحوثة تتعرض الى العديد من الضغوطات التنافسية من الشركات الاخرى في قطاع الاتصالات مما يتطلب الاعتماد بشكل رئيس على رأس المال المعرفي بوصفه القادر على تحقيق الاداء المتميز بصورة مستمرة، وعلى ضوءها قدم الباحث مجموعة من المقترحات أهمها: تمكين صناع المعرفة ومنحهم الصلاحيات، وهذا يتيح لهم فرص التفكير وطرح افكار جديدة ومناقشتها بحرية دون اي قيود، واعطائهم المرونة الكاملة في التعامل مع المتغيرات البيئية لبناء منظمة متكاملة متكيفة مع بيئتها مرنة في تعاملها وهذا يضمن افضل الاداء.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الاداء المتميز، صناع المعرفة، المرونة الاستراتيجية.

### 1. Introduction

The proactive concept of management today represents creative, long-term and deep-perspective processes, objectivity of vision and rationality of analysis, complementarity in work and the structure of survival, and comprehensiveness in perception, and since the contemporary business environment is witnessing large and rapid changes that require new methods that are consistent with its data and enable organizations to

achieve their goals The current and future, and there is no doubt that the knowledge workers are considered one of the most important pillars that seek to discover and innovate new and diverse ideas that achieve creativity and innovation, as well as their possession of the ability to transform them into a real reality that achieves great wealth and high status, and leads to a guarantee of survival and adaptation, and contributes to increased growth Geographical spread by introducing new competitive products and discovering new markets, and this would achieve outstanding performance, which has become one of the most important requirements for organizations facing the challenges of the contemporary environment, and that among the best things that organizations use in keeping up with environmental disruptions and changes is the strategic flexibility approach that achieves continuous adaptation Transforming changes into opportunities that enhance their success, and that the real problem is the strength of competition in the researched sector, which needs further efforts. Therefore, the research sought to explore the nature of relations between knowledge workers as an entry point to achieve outstanding performance through strategic flexibility and solve the problems that the researched company is exposed to, and to achieve this goal, the research has divided into four sections according to the following:

## 2. Intellectual framework

**First. The research problem:** The research problem crystallized in identifying the nature of the relationship between the variables through a major question: Do knowledge workers achieve outstanding performance through strategic flexibility in the researched company? A set of research implications emanate from it:

- What is the nature and type of correlation and influence relations between research variables in the researched company?
- What is the best way to achieve outstanding performance in the researched company?

**Second. The objectives of the research:** The objectives were as follows:

- Ensure the existence of correlation and influence relationships between the research variables in the researched company.
- Identify the extent of managers 'awareness of the importance of the availability of knowledge workers and their role in achieving the strategic flexibility required by the company to achieve outstanding performance.

- Presenting a set of proposals based on the results of the research that would support the process of strategic flexibility and interest in knowledge workers and their role in achieving the distinguished performance of the researched company.
- Determining the optimal path, relying on the Swarm Intelligence Algorithm (ACO), to reach the outstanding performance.

**Third. The importance of research:** The importance of research is embodied in the following:

- The importance of the research stems from providing the researched company with accurate information about the nature and level of each variable (knowledge workers, strategic flexibility, outstanding performance) in it and the extent to which these variables need to be strengthened and increased interest in them.
- The importance of the research is evident in providing a theoretical and practical framework for its main variables and the nature of the relations between them, which helps administrative leaders to realize their importance and understand their data.
- Determine which of the dimensions of strategic flexibility is most effective in increasing the influence of knowledge workers on achieving the outstanding performance of the company.

**Fourth. Hypothesis Research Scheme:** In light of the research problem, and in pursuit of goals, the hypothetical research scheme was designed that reflects the nature of the relationships between its variables, as knowledge workers represent an independent variable and its exclusion was determined based on a study (Cheng & Zhang, 2008), (Al-Shammari and others) While the strategic flexibility represents an Moderator variable and its dimensions were determined based on (Hussein, 2016), while the indicators of outstanding performance are an approved variable and its dimensions were determined based on a study (Esi, 2013), and Figure (1) shows the research outline as follows:

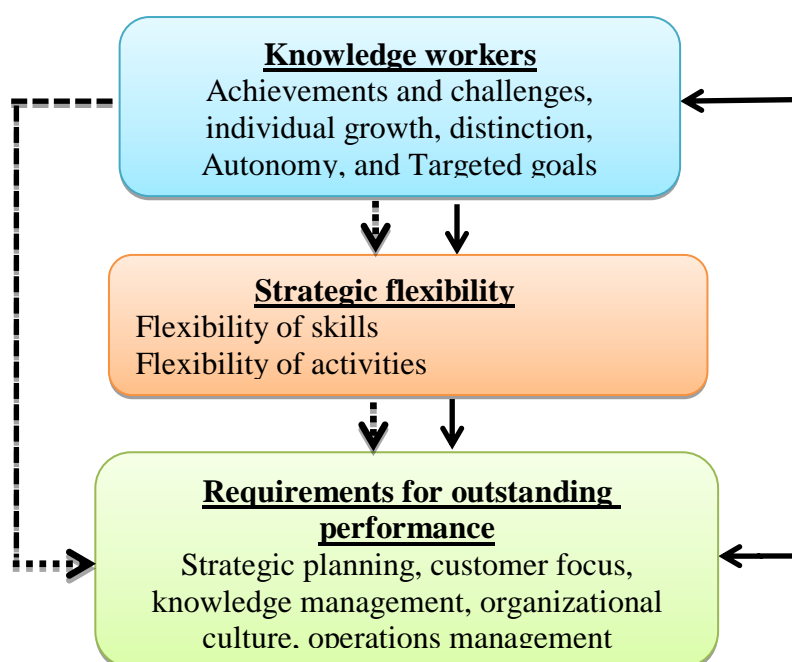


Figure (1): Hypothesis Diagram

**Fifth. Research hypotheses:** Within the framework of the research model, the following hypotheses emerge:

- There is a significant correlation between knowledge workers and strategic flexibility.
- There is a significant correlation between knowledge workers and outstanding performance.
- There is a significant correlation between strategic flexibility and outstanding performance.
- There is a significant correlation between knowledge workers and outstanding performance through strategic flexibility.
- There is a Significant impact relationship for knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance.
- There is a significant impact relationship with the strategic flexibility in achieving outstanding performance.
- There is a Significant impact relationship for knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance through strategic flexibility in the researched company.

**Sixth. Research methodology:** The analytical investigative approach based on (research, exploration, and evidence) was relied upon to measure the relationship between dimensions and the main and sub-variables, as it is characterized by bringing the researcher closer to reality and enabling him to accurately describe phenomena.

### **Seventh. Research Limits:**

- Spatial boundaries: represented by Zain Telecom Company in Iraq.
- Cognitive boundaries: It included three variables as the independent variable (knowledge workers), the Moderator variable (strategic flexibility) and the dependent variable (outstanding performance).
- Human limits: confined to (director, department manager, division manager, sales manager).

**Eighth. Methods of data collection:** The researcher relied on the following methods of data collection:

- Methods of the theoretical side: The researcher relied on the available Arabic and foreign sources and references in terms of books, studies, letters, scientific theses, periodicals and related researches, in addition to making great use of the international information network (the Internet).
- Methods of the practical side: in which the researcher relied on the questionnaire form as the main tool in collecting data and information because it is the most consistent method with the nature of the research. The questionnaire was designed according to the research's objectives and hypotheses, as it included the research's dimensions represented by (knowledge workers, strategic flexibility, outstanding performance.), And the (Likert triple) scale was used to determine the answer to the paragraphs of the questionnaire, and many studies have been relied upon in designing the questionnaire regarding research variables as scientifically controlled studies, in addition to distributing the questionnaire to a number of experts to ensure its suitability to measure the dimensions of the research and its compatibility with Privacy of the company searched.

**Ninth. Statistical analysis tools:** In order to reach accurate indicators, the program (SPSS Ver. 19) has been relied upon to determine the correlation and influence relationships between the research variables, and the (ACO) algorithm to determine the best way to reach the goal (Outstanding Performance).

### **3. intellectual framework for research**

#### **First. Knowledge workers:**

- **The concept of knowledge workers:** The concept of knowledge workers dates back to the American scientist Peter Drucker in the fifties of the current century, and what the famous Canadian scientist Frances brought up (Al-Shammari, and others, 2016, 10) and the table below shows the views of a group of researchers about the concept of knowledge workers:

Table (1): views of a group of researchers on the concept of knowledge workers

S	Researcher / year, page	Concept
1.	Denisi & Griffin, 2001: 51	Individuals who conduct research to discover, use and disseminate knowledge to add value, they are professionals in science, engineering, business, office work, and belong to professional organizations.
2.	Jesup & Valacicn, 2008: 7	The most important and valuable resource, and the reason for the continued success of the organization.
3.	Haihua & Zhanguo, 2011: 365	Basic workers who possess knowledge, skills and high ability to learn, to add real value, with knowledge, information and work to fully use the technical advantage to improve work efficiency.
4.	Al-Shammari, et al., 2016: 11	Workers who possess accumulated knowledge, as a result of learning and experience and practicing knowledge management processes, from generating, storing, distributing, and applying knowledge in the various work of the organization, and they are distinguished by creativity, innovation, Autonomy and work experience, which makes them add value to the organization not only through their creative solutions to various complex problems, but Also, by employing their talented expertise and capabilities in their participation in making strategic decisions for the organization.

S	Researcher / year, page	Concept
5.	Hebert, 2019: 141	Workers whose work involves processing or using information, and they are considered very valuable commodities through which the true value is realized.
6.	Lei & Lan, 2020: 62	Workers who have the ability to participate in the production of knowledge, creativity, innovation and their application in the organization, and they grow the knowledge capital of the organization, and they take it as their job.

Table: Prepared by the researcher based on the above sources.

- **The importance of knowledge workers:** Knowledge workers are an important source, not only in the present, but in the present and future, for their ability to add value to the work of organizations, and this is what was confirmed by the economist (Fritz Melchlop) since 1958, and that knowledge workers were a high percentage that constituted A third of the total number of workers in American industries, and that the knowledge work sector was growing at a speed equivalent to twice as fast as the rest of the economic sectors, but in the twenty-first century their number reached nearly half the number of workers, and even if they form the majority in relation to the workforce, their influence is the strongest in these economies. They earn the highest salaries as they produce the highest percentage of economic value and are the largest factor affecting the growth of the organization (Darenport, 2016: 58). Their importance lies in the actual fact that they are present in organizations where they are sensitive to change, as they constantly respond to changes in the environment through Collecting information and then arranging work according to it and with the simultaneous acceleration of the pace of change, and this is what distinguishes the knowledge workers and their role in the organization (Shuaib, 2008: 1), and (Shunkum & Yufeng, 2010: 11) indicated that knowledge workers consider The core resource of the organization necessary for its existence and development, relying on its knowledge capital and creativity as valuable strategic assets, and



emphasized (Margeryan, et al., 2018: 568) that they are responsible for stimulating creativity and growth in organizations, innovation of new products and services, designing marketing programs, and creating strategies in the economy. (Cao, 2019: 2) explains that the importance of knowledge workers lies in the fact that they are a rare and valuable talent, and they are the key to the survival and continuous growth of organizations, so organizations must maintain them, follow them up, attract them, and set effective conditions not to lose them, and added (Hassan and Salman, 2019: 166) Their importance is due to the fact that they lead to cooperation to share resources, strength, talents and knowledge and not to follow individualism or authoritarianism in making decisions.

- **Knowledge workers Dimensions:** The knowledge workers dimensions are represented according to the vision of (Wu, 2008: 56), (Al-Shammari and others, 2016: 14) (Cheng & Zhang, 2017: 3), (Dessler, 2019: 8), in the following dimensions :

- A. Achievements and Challenges: Knowledge workers who work for a long time have learned the knowledge and technological innovation they need to accomplish and define tasks, so they occupy skill positions to diagnose, accomplish, and re-solve problems, prioritize and reshape organizational decision-making and substantially influence the direction of organizational strategies.
- B. Individual growth: a knowledge maker is a person who is proficient in understanding and realizing most concepts and symbols and uses knowledge and information in his work. This is evident in the work of executives in organizations and makes full and extensive use of all modern technology to improve and develop his work efficiency and has the ability to learn and innovate and is a fundamental resource. It is essential for modern organizations.
- C. Autonomy: Knowledge workers are self-independent individuals who enjoy progress, professional capacity and commitment. Their commitment is more professional and less motivated by organizers, and their knowledge is a critical factor for long-term organizational success.
- D. Excellence: the excellence of the knowledge workers comes from the leadership, managers, and the organization as well as the team of colleagues, to achieve creativity, and excellence is the exclusivity in the

field of work and distinction from the rest of the individuals in time, skills, competence, effectiveness and values.

E. Targeted goals: Knowledge workers are distinguished by the great possibility of orientation in their jobs, and in some cases their career is longer than the life of the organization in which they work, so they desire their clearly Targeted work, as they are able to accept new tasks and new

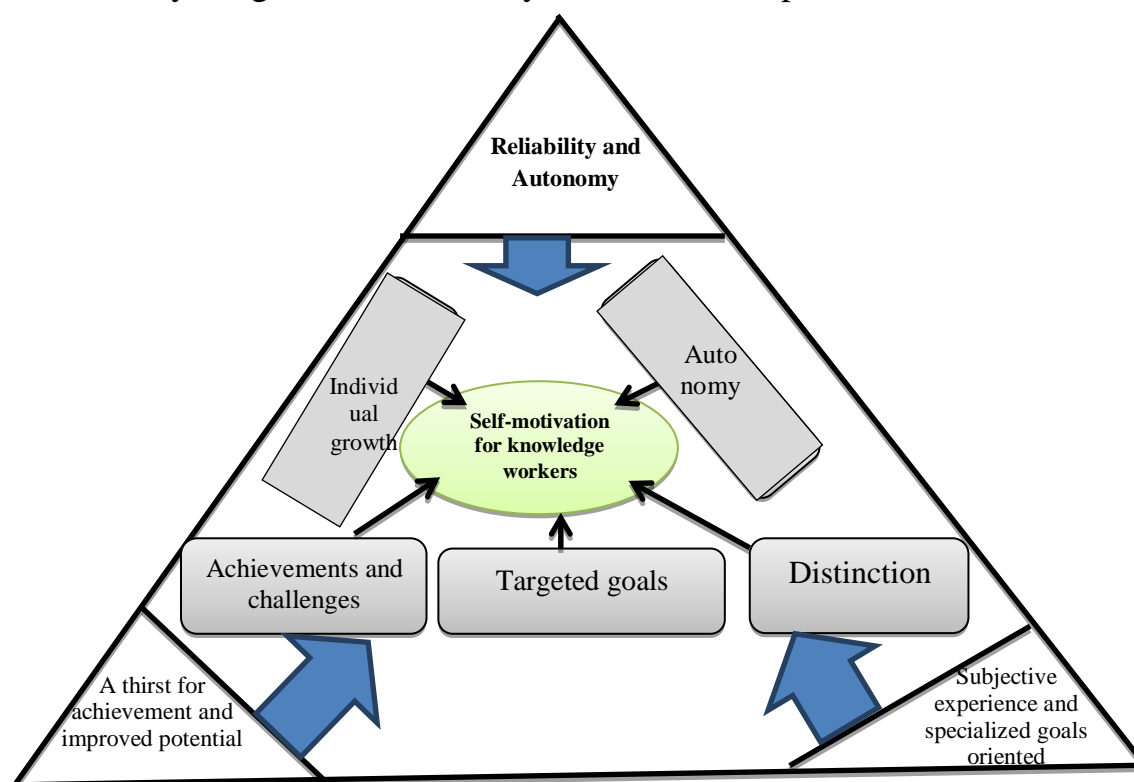


Figure (2): Dimensions of knowledge workers

job opportunities within the clear directions and goals of the organization, (Cnen, 2018: 3).

Source: Cheng, W, & Zhang G, (2008) "Selfmotirator factors of senior Knowledge Workers", LEEE.

### **Second. strategic flexibility:**

- **The concept of strategic flexibility:** its concept can be clarified through the table below, which includes a group of researchers' opinions on the concept of strategic flexibility:

Table (2): the views of a group of researchers on the concept of strategic flexibility

S	Researcher / year, page	Concept
1.	Shimizu & Hitt, 2004: 45	It is the organization's ability to identify changes in the external environment in order to use resources with new aspirations and a rapid response to these changes.
2.	Jansch, 2009: 62.	The ability of the organization to control strategic resources in an interactive and proactive manner, with cost parallel to the market and speed compared to the needs of the required strategic change.
3.	Anzi, 2014: 29.	The ability of the organization to meet the growth that occurs in the multiple needs and requirements of the beneficiaries while at the same time avoiding the losses that occur in cost, time and performance.
4.	Gosling, et al., 2019: 14.	It is a preemptive characteristic that aims to increase the organization's ability to keep pace with environmental changes to enable organizations to follow a proactive approach instead of adopting reactive approach that may actually lead to a deficiency in terms of effort, time, cost and performance.
5.	Ashram, 2019: 13	The Organization can adapt to the partial and fundamental changes through the willingness to amend and bring about the necessary changes and the ability to creativity and diversity to overcome difficult and sudden situations when making decisions and take advantage of unexpected opportunities in independent environments.

Table: Prepared by the researcher based on the above sources.

According to the foregoing, the researcher believes that strategic flexibility means the organization's ability to perceive and understand environmental changes and to choose the best strategic scenarios to adapt and maneuver to preserve its resources and use them promptly to achieve the success that they seek and ensure survival, renewal, growth and competitive advantage.

- **Dimensions of strategic flexibility:** It includes the dimensions according to the vision of (Combe & Greeniey, 2004: 4), (Awwad, 2009: 7), (Al-Abdi, 2012: 125), and (Hussein, 2016: 75) (Yannopoulos, 2020: 7-9) the following dimensions:

- A. Flexibility of skills: It is one of the most prominent dimensions of strategic flexibility, as it indicates that the employees of the organization possess the capabilities necessary to fully respond to the developments and future requirements that the organization needs to implement its various operations easily and as quickly as possible.
- B. Flexibility of activities: a basic dimension of the dimensions of strategic flexibility, which refers to the ability of the organization to adapt its activities across its various organizational levels to keep pace with the changes imposed by its internal and external environment and thus ensure the preservation of its competitive position and its continuity in work.

According to the foregoing, the researcher believes that, if these dimensions are available, the organization will have high strategic flexibility because it includes all the skills possessed by working individuals who are considered the basic element for the survival of the organization and achieving its goals through the creative ideas and basic skills that they possess, which enables them to face environmental changes and challenges. And adapting to it with the ability to innovate in its business and achieve the basic goals and distinction in its products, as well as it represents all the activities that the organization practices to provide its best in pursuit of its goals.

### **Third. Outstanding performance:**

- **The concept of outstanding performance:** The issue of outstanding performance is one of the important and contemporary issues, which has increased attention in the recent period by the organizations, and the reason is the environment characterized by continuous and rapid change with great competitive challenges that require the availability of many exceptional characteristics of these organizations to Achieving the best and surviving,

and Table (3) shows the opinions of many researchers on the concept of outstanding performance:

Table (3): illustrates the opinions of a group of researchers for outstanding performance

S	Researcher / year, page	Concept
1.	Armstrong, 2009: 13	Measures of improvement, motivation and employee containment processes.
2.	Johnston & Marshall, 2010: 398	Behavior evaluated on the basis of its contribution to the achievement of the goals of the organization, it reflects the behavior of employees if it is appropriate or inappropriate in light of the objectives of the organization.
3.	Esi, 2013: 324	A broad perspective that includes both financial and non-financial performance indicators that are output-oriented, and includes excellence in operational and financial performance.
4.	Masoudi, 2013: 91	That estimated experience that reflects the successful performance and competence of a complex non-structural (non-routine) task in a distinct manner.
5.	Jankal, 2017: 546	A self-evaluation framework to measure strengths and areas of improvement in all activities of the organization, as it focuses on what the organization does, or what it can do, to provide excellent service or products to customers and users of its services or stakeholders.
6.	Ab Hamid, et al., 2018: 284	Efficient and effective performance, which is achieved as a result of applying the concepts of total quality.

Table: Prepared by the researcher based on the above sources.

In light of the above and despite the disagreement among researchers about giving the exact concept of outstanding performance, it can be said that outstanding performance is an integrated system for all activities carried out by administrative and technical organizations, in order to have the ability to raise the level of their performance towards the best, to provide appropriate services The customer needs it, and the ability to achieve basic goals in an ongoing manner.

- **Requirements for outstanding performance:** Any organization that seeks to achieve excellence requires it to secure a set of basic requirements, which represent the basic structure of the organization's work system, and among the most prominent of these requirements are the following (Al-Azzawi, 2010: 64):

- A. Strategic planning: It is considered a dynamic continuous process related to decisions that have long lasting effects and which are difficult to disagree, so it is known as insight into the ideal form of the organization in the future (Hax, 2010: 15), as well as it is the organization's tool, by which results can be determined. To be achieved (goals), and how to prepare plans, and develop a set of integrated methodologies, by which the organization communicates these goals, within the present period with future aspirations for how to develop these goals and achieve them in the future (Sokovic, 2017: 479).
- B. Focus on the customer: the customer has become a competitive advantage, and an essential ability for the organizations that seek to survive and grow through them, and from the standpoint that the customer is the one who allows the organization to win, it was necessary to pay attention to managing customer relations because it is the most important element in any organization (Al-Obaidi, 2014 Distinguished organizations are those that work to provide added value to the customer, bypass the routine requirements of dealing with their customers, and have the ability to achieve benefits for all those dealing with them and the society at large (Standen, 2004: 4).
- C. Knowledge management: It is defined (Allen, 2003: 30) as the process by which the intellectual capital of the organization is extracted and invested, with the aim of reaching efficient, effective and innovative decisions in order for the organization to gain a competitive advantage, and emphasized (Weldy, 2016: 57) On the other hand, it is a system that includes a set of

processes represented in the generation of knowledge, its acquisition, storage, data analysis, search for, transmission, dissemination, and application, it is continuous, interactive and sequential processes, which requires that there be direct interaction between those who possess knowledge and experience and new workers who enter recently Work, which leads to raising their capabilities and providing them with new skills, and in a way that leads to the formation of new knowledge that results in distinct results for the organization, as the excellence of performance comes from the excellence in the knowledge possessed by the human resources of the organization (Al-Jubouri, 2013: 179).

D. Organizational culture: it is defined (Al-Issawi, 2013: 15) as the set of common values that the workers of an organization adhere to, to distinguish it from the organizations within the same community, so the distinct organizational culture is in which creativity and adaptation to the environment, and keeping pace with the times of beliefs Its employees and leaderships, and to translate these principles into policies and practices, and the successful organizational culture is that culture that adopts creativity as a strategy, and a work philosophy that enables it to face the new challenges brought about by the changing environment, specifically competition, and enhances the role of the organization and gives it value (Naranjo. et al., 2019: 58).

E. Operations Management: It has been described as an approach to design, manage and improve operations and simplify procedures to reach a distinguished service (Al-Hadi, 2013: 268), and that operations management is one of the criteria for the Baldray Award for Outstanding Performance by focusing on examining how the organization designs and manages And improving its work systems, work processes to deliver customer service, and achieving success and sustainability for the organization, (Martin, et al., 2017: 113).

According to the foregoing, it can be said that organizations that focus on these requirements can achieve the highest levels of performance, by focusing on their good future strategic plans, to provide the best services to their customers, and to manage their operations according to scientific, studied and effective foundations, while adhering to an organizational culture that encourages change for the better. In light of the mixture of knowledge, experiences, skills and abilities possessed by the individuals

working in it to continuously achieve creativity to reach what it seeks and achieve outstanding performance in its work.

- 4. The practical side:** This topic is concerned with describing the research community, testing research hypotheses to ensure their validity, and confirming their results via the (ACO) algorithm according to the following:

**First. Description of the company in question:** Zain Telecom started its business in Iraq after 2003 under the name (MTC) Atheer, and in 2007 it changed its name to Zain Telecom Company after it worked to buy Iraqna company and formed one company now called Zain Iraq Company, The company's work expanded after 2009 in all governorates of Iraq and obtained a large share of the market, and is currently the largest competitor in the telecommunications sector, and at the beginning of 2015 it began to provide large services to move from the broadcast network G2 to G3, and currently it is expanding its network broadcasting to G4, and because the telecommunications sector One of the strongest competing sectors is the appropriate field for the research variables. Therefore, an intentional sample was chosen from a group of branches of the company, so that the researched community represented (46) respondents.

**Second. Testing the research hypotheses:** The validity of the research hypotheses was verified according to the following:

- **Test the first hypothesis:** which states (there is a significant correlation relationship between knowledge workers and strategic flexibility), it is evident from the results in Table (4) that there is a positive significant correlation between knowledge workers and strategic flexibility, as the Spearman correlation coefficient reached The total between them is (\*\*0.863), which is a positive and significant relationship. This result is supported by what the researchers assumed in the first hypothesis and a justification for its acceptance:

Table (4): results of the correlation between knowledge workers and strategic flexibility

Moderator variable Independent variable	Strategic flexibility		
	R	P-Value	indication
Knowledge workers	**0.863	0.000	There is a correlation relationship

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program \*  $P \leq 0.05$  n= 46.



As for the partial level, the results of the correlation between the dimensions of knowledge workers and the dimensions of strategic flexibility, as in Table (5), which shows that there are positive significant correlations between the sub-dimensions, as shown below:

Table (5): Correlations at the micro level between the dimensions of knowledge workers and the dimensions of strategic flexibility

Dimensions		Strategic flexibility		Total	number	Relative importance
		Flexibility of skills	Flexibility of activities			
Knowledge workers	Achievements and challenges	**0.682	**0.583	**0.598	3	100%
	Individual growth	**0.690	**0.692	**0.692	3	100%
	Distinction	**0.643	**0.622	**0.668	3	100%
	Autonomy	**0.775	**0.658	**0.796	3	100%
	Targeted goals	**0.650	**0.726	**0.783	3	100%
Total				**0.863	15	100%
				* P ≤ 0.05 n= 46.		

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

- **The second hypothesis test:** which states (there is a significant correlation relationship between knowledge workers and outstanding performance) It is evident from the results of Table (6) that there is a positive correlation between knowledge workers and distinguished performance, where the value of the Spearman correlation coefficient reached the overall index between them (\*\*0.856), which indicates the existence of a positive and significant correlation relationship, and this result is reinforced by what the researcher assumed in the second hypothesis and a justification for its acceptance:

Table (6): results of the correlation between knowledge workers and distinguished performance

Independent variable Dependent variable	Knowledge workers		
	R	P-Value	indication
Outstanding performance	**0.856	0.001	There is a correlation relationship

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program. \* P ≤ 0.05 n= 46.

While the results indicate, at the micro level, the correlations between the dimensions of knowledge workers and the requirements of distinguished performance, as in Table (7), which shows that there are positive significant correlations between the sub-dimensions and as shown below:

Table (7): Correlation relations at the micro level between the dimensions of knowledge workers and the requirements of distinguished performance

		Outstanding performance						
Dimensions		Strategic Planning	Focus on the customer	knowledge management	Organizational culture	operations management	Total	Relative importance
Knowledge workers	Achievements and challenges	**0.582	**0.553	**0.671	**0.496	**0.643	**0.598	3
	Individual growth	**0.634	**0.552	**0.579	**0.555	**0.684	**0.632	3
	Distinction	**0.662	**0.652	**0.590	**0.572	**0.692	**0.778	3
	Autonomy	**0.685	**0.638	**0.519	**0.583	**0.639	**0.694	3
	Targeted goals	**0.644	**0.606	**0.541	**0.590	**0.681	**0.643	3
Total							**0.856	15
* P ≤ 0.05      n= 46.								

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

- **The third hypothesis test:** which states (there is a significant correlation relationship between strategic flexibility and outstanding performance) It is evident through the results in Table (8) that the total value of Spearman's correlation coefficient between the variables has reached (\*\*0.826), which indicates that The availability of a positive correlation relationship between the two variables, and this result reinforces the researcher's assumption in the third hypothesis and a justification for its acceptance:

Table (8): results of the correlation between strategic flexibility and outstanding performance

Moderator variable Dependent variable	Strategic flexibility		
	R	P-Value	indication
Outstanding performance	**0.826	0.000	There is a correlation relationship

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program. \*P ≤ 0.05      n= 46.

The results show, at the partial level, the correlations between the dimensions of strategic flexibility and the requirements of outstanding

performance, as in Table (9), which shows that there are positive significant correlations between the sub-dimensions, as shown below:

Table (9): Correlations of correlation at the micro level between the dimensions of strategic flexibility and the requirements of outstanding performance

Dimensions		Outstanding performance					Total	number	Relative importance
		Strategic Planning	Focus on the customer	knowledge management	Organizational culture	operations managment			
Strategic flexibility	Flexibility of skills	**0.576	**0.642	**0.563	**0.610	**0.622	**0.671	3	100%
	Flexibility of activities	**0.663	**0.631	**0.549	**0.582	**0.655	**0.635	3	100%
Total							**0.826	6	100%
* P ≤ 0.05      n = 46.									

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

- **Examining the fourth hypothesis:** which states (there is a significant correlation relationship between knowledge workers and outstanding performance through strategic flexibility), as we note from Table (10) that there is a positive significance relationship between knowledge workers, strategic flexibility and outstanding performance at the level The total correlation coefficient reached (\*\*0.892), and this result is reinforced by the researcher's assumption in the fourth hypothesis and a justification for accepting it, and we note that the correlation has increased and this indicates the role of the mediating variable:

Table (10): The relationship of correlation between knowledge workers and outstanding performance through strategic flexibility

The independent variable: the knowledge workers			The mediating variable: strategic flexibility	
The adopted variable:	R	P-Value	indication	
outstanding performance	**0.892	0.000	There is a correlation relationship	

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program. \*P ≤ 0.05      n = 46.

- **Examining the fifth hypothesis:** which states (there is a significant impact relationship for knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance)

as it is clear from Table (11) that there is a significant impact relationship for knowledge workers in achieving distinguished performance with an impact factor (R2) of (0.572), and this It means that (57%) of the effect is due to the knowledge workers, while the rest of the impact is due to random variables that are not included in the research model, and the value of (F) calculated (\*43.05) is greater than its tabular value of (3.18) at two degrees of freedom (1 This indicates that the regression model is acceptable in its interpretation of the relationship, and by following the beta coefficients it becomes clear that (1) is (1.243), which is a significant value in terms of (t) computed amounting to (\* 9.45), which is It is greater than its tabular value of (3.11) at the level of significance (0.05), and these indicators prove the acceptance of the fifth hypothesis:

Table (11): the relationship of influence between knowledge workers and outstanding performance

Independent variable Dependent variable	Knowledge workers			
	$\beta_1$	R <sup>2</sup>	F computed	Calculated T
Outstanding performance	1.243	0.572	*43.05	*9.45

n = 46 p ≤ 0.05 F-tabular = 3.18, t-tabular = 3.11, D.f = (1,45)

Table: The researcher's preparation based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

The results on the partial level show that there is a significant influence relationship between the dimensions of (X) and (Y) and that the dimensions of (Y) are available at a percentage of (0.765), but an increase of one dimension of (X) dimensions by one unit will increase the requirements of (Y) by (0.545, 0.441, 0.474, 0.452, 0.448) respectively for the multiple regression equation to be as follows:

$$Y = 0.765 + 0.545X_1 + 0.441X_2 + 0.474X_3 + 0.452X_4 + 0.448X_5 \dots (1)$$

And it turns out that the equation has a good strong explanatory power in terms of the value of the coefficient of determination (R2), which amounted to (0.572), and this means that about (57%) of the difference shown in the availability of the requirements of (Y) is due to the effect of the dimensions of (X) combined and that the equation has Significance is very high, as shown in the table (12) below:

Table (12): Multiple effect model for (X) dimensions in (Y)

Dimensions		Outstanding performance Y				
		B	Value of t	Calculated f	R <sup>2</sup>	Sig
Knowledge workers X	Constant	0.765	7.815	48.867	0.572	0.000
	Achievements and challenges	0.545	6.636			0.000
	Individual growth	0.441	5.590			0.001
	Distinction	0.474	6.927			0.000
	Autonomy	0.452	6.671			0.001
	Targeted goals	0.448	5.182			0.002
n = 46, p ≤ 0.05, F-tabular = 3.18, t-tabular = 3.11, D.f = (1,45).						

Table: The researcher's preparation based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

- **The sixth hypothesis test:** which states (there is a significant impact relationship for strategic flexibility in achieving outstanding performance), as the results of Table (13) indicate that there is a significant impact relationship for strategic flexibility in achieving distinguished performance, and with an impact factor of (R<sup>2</sup>) of (0.524) This means that (52.4%) of the effect is due to strategic flexibility, while the rest of the effect is due to random variables that are not included in the research model, and the value of (F) calculated (22.8\*) is greater than its tabular value of (3.94) at two degrees of freedom (1, 46) and with a significant level (0.05), and this indicates that the regression model is acceptable in its interpretation of the relationship, and by following the beta coefficients it becomes clear that (1) is (0.872), which is a significant value in terms of (t) calculated of (9.69 \*), It is greater than its tabular value of (3.11) at a significant level (0.05), and these indicators indicate acceptance of the sixth hypothesis.

Table (13): the impact relationship of strategic flexibility in achieving outstanding performance

Moderator variable Dependent variable	Strategic flexibility			
	β <sub>1</sub>	R <sup>2</sup>	F computed	Calculated T
Outstanding performance	1.243	0.572	*43.05	*9.45

n = 46, p ≤ 0.05, F-tabular = 3.95, t-tabular = 3.11, D.f = (1,45)

Table: The researcher's preparation based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

The results on the partial level indicate that there is a significant influence relationship between the dimensions of (Z) and (Y) and that the dimensions of (Y) are available at a percentage of (0.643), but increasing one dimension of (Z) dimensions by one unit will increase the requirements of (Y) by (0.462, 0.456) respectively to be the multiple regression equation as follows:

$$Y = 0.643 + 0.545X_1 + 0.441X_2 \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

And it turned out that the equation has a good strong explanatory power in terms of the value of the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), which amounted to (0.643), which means that (64%) of the difference shown in the availability of (Y) requirements is due to the effect of (Z) dimensions combined and that the equation is significant To a very high degree, as shown in the table (14) below:

Table (14): Multiple effect model for (Z) dimensions in (Y)

Dimensions		Outstanding performance Y				
		B	Value of t	Calculated f	R <sup>2</sup>	Sig
Strategic flexibility Z	Constant	0.643	6.713	44.614	0.524	0.000
	Flexibility of skills	0.462	5.226			0.000
	Flexibility of activities	0.456	5.101			0.001
n = 46, p ≤ 0.05, F-tabular = 3.95, t-tabular = 3.11, D.f = (1,45).						

Table: The researcher's preparation based on the results of the (SPSS) program.

- **Examining the seventh hypothesis:** which states (there is a significant impact relationship for knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance through strategic flexibility). Table (15) indicates that there is a significant positive significant impact relationship, with a direct impact factor of (0.56), which is an impact Strong and high morale, for the influence of knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance, and an indirect impact coefficient of (0.79), which is a strong influence with high morale, for the influence of knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance through strategic flexibility, and this effect confirms the total coefficient of direct and indirect influence of the adult (0.795), and this result indicates strong evidence for the validity of the

seventh hypothesis and a positive indication of acceptance of this hypothesis, so accept this hypothesis.

Table (15): the relationship of the influence of knowledge workers in achieving outstanding performance through strategic flexibility

Y = dependent variable Outstanding performance	Impact trends	Impact value	R <sup>2</sup>
Other variables			
X = the independent variable (knowledge workers)	Direct effect	0.56	0.795
Z = Moderator variable (strategic flexibility)	Indirect effect	0.79	

Table: Preparation of the researcher based on the results of the (SPSS) program. \* $P \leq 0.05$  n= 46.

**Fourth: The Swarm Intelligence Algorithm (ACO):** SI is one of the characteristics of systems whose components or simple parts interact with their environments through the characteristic of collective behavior (Collective Behavior) in a way that results in general, solid functional models that are useful in solving optimization problems, and since it has been completed Relying on Ant Colony Optimization (ACO), which promises to be one of the targeted search techniques that provide optimal solutions to solve many optimization problems, relies on several forms of random search to improve the performance of the search process (reaching the target) in the event of barriers. Or obstacles, the ants begin to examine the path in which the concentration of the acid is more, so the ants gradually begin to follow the path of the stronger acid until it crosses that barrier, from the side where the length of the road is shorter, and the colony begins its journey again, but this time the colony prefers the routes that The acid concentration in it is high, as well as it prefers the shortest methods and the least time and effort to reach the specified goal. Therefore, this algorithm has been relied on to clarify the process of reaching the goal (outstanding performance) with the lowest error rate, effort and time. The results are divided into two parts according to the following:

- In this section, the relationship between the independent variable (Knowledge workers X) and the dependent variable (Outstanding Performance Y) was tested based on the following function (equation):

$$Y = X + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

For the following information:

$$Y = 1.2520 + 0.0372 + 0.2720$$

As the parameters ( $X, \beta_1, \dots, \beta_3$ ) were evaluated in order to obtain the lowest value of the fitness function, which is the RMSE function, the least effort and the least cost, and the result was (0.0330).

- In this section, the relationship between the independent variable (knowledge workers  $X$ ) and the dependent variable (outstanding performance  $Y$ ) was tested through the Moderator variable (strategic flexibility  $Z$ ), depending on the following function (equation):

$$Y = XZ + \beta_1 X^2 + \beta_2 X^3 + \beta_3 X^4 + \delta_1 Z + \delta_2 Z^2 + \delta_3 Z^3 + \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

For the following information:

$$Y = 0.9821 + 0.0008 + 0.1892 + 0.0673 + 0.0320 + 0.0061 + 0.00321$$

In order to obtain the lowest value of the fitness function, the result was (0.0104).

As the results of the (ACO) algorithm indicate that the best solution to reach the goal (outstanding performance) is the interactive way between the independent variable and the mediating variable, considering the reciprocal participatory relationship that leads to achieving the goal (outstanding performance) in the shortest way and with the least effort, costs and time, and with the least possible error, i.e. the second section Within the third figure, which indicates motivating knowledge workers and giving them the flexibility necessary to achieve outstanding performance in the researched company, which means confirming the validity of the seventh hypothesis, and figure (3) below illustrates that algorithm:

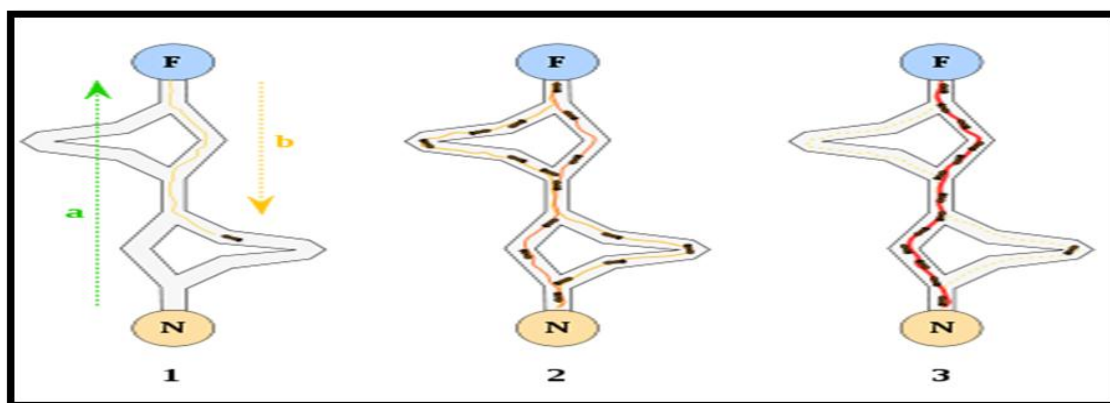


Figure (3): the behavior of ants in choosing the best way to reach the goal  
Source: Dorigo M, et al., (1991), the Ant System" Technical Report, Milano, Italy, P. 56.



## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

### First. The Conclusions:

- It was found that the researched company is exposed to many competitive pressures from other companies in the telecommunications sector, which requires reliance mainly on knowledge capital in a capacity that is capable of continuously achieving outstanding performance.
- It has been shown through the intellectual and philosophical propositions of researchers the importance of knowledge workers as they are one of the important pillars that need high motivational factors at various levels to raise their level of performance and activate their knowledge capabilities in pursuit of the goals that the organizations seek.
- The working methods and methods of the researched company indicate that it gives sufficient attention to (knowledge workers) its workers and gives them flexibility in activating and implementing their ideas by giving them responsibilities and great confidence because it is aware of the positive results that they achieve.
- The results of the research show that there is a direct and indirect impact of knowledge workers and strategic flexibility in achieving distinguished performance, and that the mediating variable interacts with the independent variable in a large way in that.
- The results show that there are high correlations between research variables, especially at the macro level. This indicates the importance of the mediating variable in those relationships as an important dimension that gives freedom to perform tasks in effective ways.
- It is evident from the results of the (ACO) algorithm that interactive and flexible work in a specific way leads to not wasting efforts and time and with little costs to reach the specified goals.
- Knowledge workers are among the best assets and resources within the organization because they are the driving force to form the wealth base, and their possession of the ability to put forward knowledge, strategic, innovative and development ideas that contribute to achieving what the organization seeks now and in the future.

### Second. The Recommendations:

- The need to pay attention to and preserve the knowledge workers because they are among the best resources in it and work more to raise the level of this variable in it to a higher level than it is, because it has a vital and

effective role in all aspects of the company as a source of new knowledge, creativity and innovation and one of the most important pillars of achieving outstanding performance And enhance it.

- The researched company should increase its interest in the variable (individual growth, distinction, and Autonomy) while not neglecting its interest in the variable (Targeted goals, achievements and challenges) in order to be able to increase the availability of the level of knowledge workers in it, and the importance of these variables as individual growth works to develop individuals for their work And their performance, and excellence works to achieve the best and innovation, and Autonomy works to enhance the commitment of employees and make them more professional and the ability to creativity.
- The need to maintain the level of the strategic flexibility variable in it, and work more to raise the level of this variable in it to a higher level than it is, in order to be able to keep pace with the rapid change in the environment in which it operates and to face the environmental uncertainty that interferes with the achievement of its strategies, plans, goals and performance.
- The necessity to spread the culture of participation, exchange knowledge, define the advantages of working with it, and activate ideas in tangible assets because they represent a source of value, especially as it is the strength of the company in question.
- The researched company must adopt the flexibility of skills in carrying out its tasks and work more than relying on the flexibility of activities because it has a greater impact than the flexibility of activities in knowledge workers to achieve outstanding performance.
- The organization in question must pay close attention and careful attention to knowledge workers in it and keep them, and search for others in the labor market and attract them, because of their importance to it and considering them the entrepreneurial resources and the essential and strategic capabilities necessary for its continued development, superiority and survival.
- The necessity of working to involve administrative leaders and workers in training courses that clarify the dimensions of knowledge workers, how to achieve them, and how to use them to achieve outstanding performance through strategic flexibility to enhance their awareness of it and realize its importance to the company.

- Empowering knowledge workers and granting them powers, and this gives them opportunities to think, present new ideas and discuss them freely without any restrictions, and give them complete flexibility in dealing with environmental variables to build an integrated organization adapted to its environment, flexible in its dealings, and this ensures the best performance.

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### Questionnaire form

Honorable Director .....

After Greetings

In line with the scientific contexts for completing the requirements of the scientific research project marked "**Knowledge workers an Entrance to Achieve Excellent Performance through Strategic Flexibility / Zain Telecom in Iraq as a Model**" We put in your hands the questionnaire form for the study, and we ask your honor to answer it objectively and accurately that reflects the reality of what is actually there Note that the answer is used for scientific research purposes only, and it will be dealt with in confidence by not mentioning your names on the form.

With sincere thanks and gratitude to you .....

**Researcher**

#### Some concepts of basic search variables:

1. **Outstanding performance:** It is the highest level of performance that the organization can reach. Outstanding performance will be measured through a set of dimensions, namely (strategic planning, customer focus, knowledge management, organization culture, operations management).
2. **Knowledge workers:** Basic workers who possess knowledge, skills and high learning ability, to add real value, with knowledge, information and work to fully use the technical advantage to improve work efficiency.
3. **Strategic flexibility:** the organization's ability to respond to all unexpected developments in its internal and external environment in which it operates.

#### First: banishing knowledge workers

1. Achievements and Challenges:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	I face work challenges with my experience and knowledge in our company.			
2	Work hard to get things done without direction from our company.			
3	I control my self-challenges to find new ideas to serve our company.			

## 2. Individual growth:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	My individual work increases my work experience.			
2	My individual capabilities and capabilities provide new ideas that serve our company.			
3	Individual growth contributes to increasing work efficiency and people's ability.			

## 3. Excellence:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	My scientific experiences distinguish me from other workers in our company.			
2	The excellence of individuals contributes to the efficient and effective achievement of the company's goals.			
3	Our company relies on the excellence of individuals in solving business problems.			

## 4. Autonomy:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company gives workers more freedom to complete their work.			
2	There is flexibility in procedures in order to enhance my own abilities and talents.			
3	Our company allows the application of creative individual ideas.			

## 5. Goals Targeted:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company encourages a culture of creativity and innovation mainly in its work.			
2	Our company develops the culture of its workers towards providing everything new and innovative.			
3	The company's creative and innovative culture is the core of its competitive edge.			

## Second: Dimensions of strategic flexibility:

### 1. Flexibility of skills:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	The management in our company works to diversify the skills of workers to keep pace with changes in work completion.			

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
2	Our company has enough diversity of skills to meet the requirements of the changing work environment.			
3	Our company works on rotating workers between jobs.			

## 2. Flexibility of activities:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	The flexibility in our company's activities helps to adapt to the requirements of a changing environment.			
2	Our company is working on adjusting its systems to keep pace with the changing work environment.			
3	Our company's activities are remarkably adaptive to changing business scenarios.			

## Third: Outstanding Performance Requirements: To be achieved through

### 1. Strategic Planning:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company adopts various ways of thinking in developing business plans and strategic objectives.			
2	Our company looks forward to developing the best renewable strategies, based on modern ideas and experiences, to achieve outstanding performance on a holistic level.			
3	Our company embodies its strategic plans based on organized thinking and Targeted by creative people to achieve excellence.			

### 2. Focus on the customer:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company keeps listening and taking everyone's opinions and ideas and employing the best ones to serve the work and achieve the best in performance.			
2	Our company provides the appropriate environment to improve performance to the required levels.			
3	Our company constantly urges us to provide services to its beneficiaries in an elaborate scientific manner.			



### 3. Knowledge Management:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company adopts all modern means and methods to facilitate the exchange of information and ideas.			
2	Our company uses information technology thinking and innovation to create better knowledge solutions			
3	Our company always seeks to convert tacit experiences and knowledge into reliable knowledge.			

### 4. Organizational Culture:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company constantly strives to instill a culture of excellence in us.			
2	Our company applies an integrated work methodology that enhances the supportive culture towards achieving distinguished performance.			
3	Our company is constantly striving to increase new ideas and develop learning that leads to outstanding performance.			

### 5. Operations Management:

S	Phrases	Agreed	neutral	I do not agree
1	Our company adopts modern working methods and technologies aimed at improving its performance and ease of transferring and communicating ideas.			
2	Our company defines indicators and measures of performance in order to improve the processes and cognitive activities (patents, scientific research, authoring, publishing).			
3	Our company coordinates cognitive activities and different processes and works on their integration with each other.			