

Baldrige National Quality Program

# Getting Started with the

Baldrige National  
Quality Program

*Criteria for Performance Excellence*



*A Guide to Self-Assessment and Action*

*Baldrige integrates all  
the key drivers of  
organizational performance  
management within  
one holistic framework,  
allowing you to manage  
your organization as a  
system instead of  
a collection of  
individual parts.*

Joseph Muzikowski,  
Chair,  
Baldrige Panel of  
Judges, 2000–2002

Vice President,  
Business Processes  
Solvay America  
Houston, TX

## *A Guide to Self-Assessment and Action*

**Whether large or small,  
in business, education, or health care,  
in one locality or with sites worldwide,**  
your organization can benefit from conducting  
a self-assessment using the appropriate version  
of the *Baldrige Criteria for Performance  
Excellence* (Business, Education, or Health Care)  
and taking action for improvement.

Yet, you might hesitate to take advantage of this  
opportunity because you are uncertain how to  
get started, and it takes effort to begin.

This booklet is a step-by-step guide for your  
leadership team on how to use the Baldrige  
process as a tool for conducting a self-assessment  
and developing an action plan for your  
organization. The Baldrige process provides the  
atmosphere for leaders, managers, and all staff  
to better recognize successes within your  
organization and to implement valuable  
improvements where needed.

Read further, and accept the Baldrige challenge  
of excellence—to “enable your organization to  
be more successful than you ever imagined.”

*Baldrige National Quality Program*



## *Why Self-Assess?*



### ***It is never too early to begin using the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence.***

You do not have to wait until you are ready to apply for the Baldrige Award. Your organization may use the Criteria in the early stages of your journey toward performance excellence. In fact, most organizations begin by using the Criteria as a source of information on understanding and managing for excellence, guiding organizational planning and opportunities for learning, building a common language, and facilitating communication about performance excellence and sharing best practice information within their organizations. Some draw on the Criteria to guide the development of processes focused on performance excellence. Others use the Criteria for self-assessment and action.

# Why Self-Assess?

## *Why consider self-assessment?*

Organizations cite many reasons for undertaking a self-assessment and action initiative:

- Customers and competitors are driving a need to change.
- Your industry is changing.
- Your organization is among the best, and you want to make sure you stay that way.
- Business is good, and you want to keep it that way.
- Your leadership team has committed to conduct a self-assessment to enhance organizational learning.
- Your organization's values are aligned with the Core Values of the Criteria.
- You see a clear connection between your key issues and the systematic approach embodied in the Criteria for improving organizational performance practices.
- You could capitalize on one or more of the following benefits of conducting a self-assessment and implementing action plans for improvement:
  - jump-starting change initiatives
  - energizing improvement initiatives
  - focusing your organization on common goals

*Self-assessment can provide an impetus for learning, a stimulus for growth, and a trigger for action.*

**Susan Williams, Member, Baldrige Panel of Judges, 2000–2002**  
**Professor, Jack C. Massey College of Business**  
**Belmont University**  
**Nashville, TN**

## *Are You Ready?*

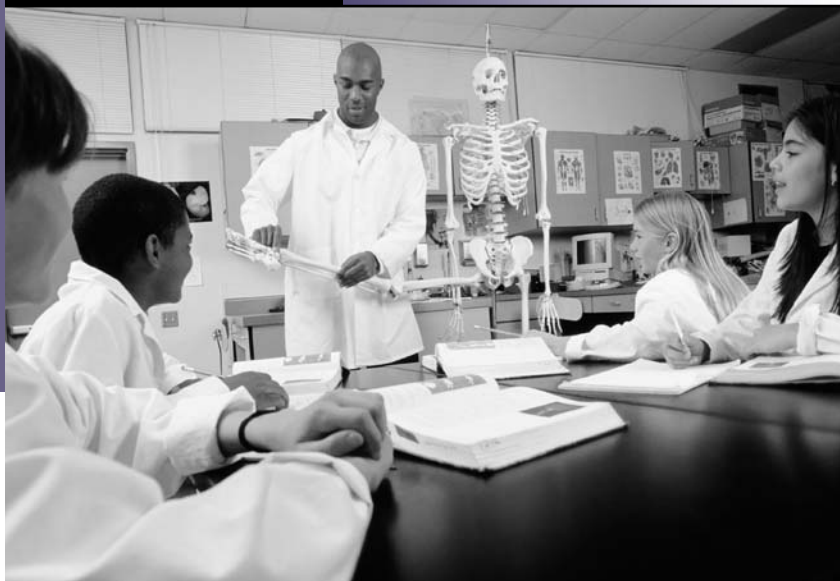
### *Are you ready for self-assessment?*

*Indicators of readiness include the following:*



- Senior leaders are aware of the key issues facing your organization but need communication and employee “buy-in” to take action.
- Senior leaders support a self-assessment, action, and improvement initiative.
- You have talked to the organization’s opinion leaders to identify possible objections to self-assessment and action, and their feedback increased your interest in starting the process.
- A champion for self-assessment and action is on your leadership team.

# Introduction



## *Introduction to Ten Steps for Self-Assessment and Action*

Organizations describe different approaches for applying the Baldrige Criteria in their self-assessment and action exercises. For example, some engage all staff in the process, some select participants from a cross section of functions and levels, and some appoint a small group to represent all of their colleagues. Some organizations start with *Are We Making Progress?*, an easy-to-use questionnaire to check perceptions and communication. Others use the Organizational Profile for their first self-assessment. Some look at the Criteria requirements in all seven Categories simultaneously, while still others focus on specific elements within a single Category before moving on to assess other Categories. While there is merit and demonstrated success associated with all of these different approaches, this booklet describes one effective approach that has been used frequently in a variety of small and large organizations.

This ten-step approach will guide you through a process for using the Baldrige Criteria as a self-assessment and action tool. The first step is to identify whether the whole organization or a specific part of it will be assessed. Next, you will select champions for each of the seven Baldrige Categories. Then you will prepare an Organizational Profile describing your

organization and its challenges. In some cases, the Organizational Profile may be used by itself for an initial self-assessment; if you identify significant information gaps, you may wish to pause the remainder of the self-assessment phase and move to Step 9 in order to address these gaps through action planning and implementation. Otherwise, your Category champions will complete an exercise to become familiar with the Baldrige self-assessment and action process.

Next, your champions will select Category teams, and together they will collect information and data for assessing their respective Categories. They then will create and communicate an action plan for improvement. In the final step in the process, your senior leaders, champions, and teams will evaluate what has been done and think about how to improve the process in the future.

Please note that your organization's experience with and prior use of the Baldrige Criteria may determine whether you follow all ten steps in a somewhat formal approach or if your organization would benefit more from an informal assessment. If you decide on an informal assessment—which many have found a good way to start—you can complete the exercise in a one- to two-day meeting.

*Are you ready to learn more about applying the ten steps to self-assessment and action in your organization? Let's begin with Step 1.*



## Step 1

**Action:** Identify the boundaries of the organization to be assessed.



**PURPOSE:** This step should ensure that all appropriate areas are included and that data and information are consistently collected from those areas throughout the self-assessment and action activities. In addition, it should ensure that self-assessment and action champions and team members are selected who are representative of these areas.

**PROCESS:** Determine if the self-assessment and the action planning and implementation will cover the full organization, a subunit, a division, or a department. Clarify what is included and what is not to determine what will be evaluated. Indicate what will be included in the self-assessment and action plan. An organization chart is a useful tool for making this determination.



## Step 2

**Action:** Select seven champions, one for each *Criteria for Performance Excellence* Category. In the Business Criteria; the Categories are Leadership; Strategic Planning; Customer and Market Focus; Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management; Human Resource Focus; Process Management; and Business Results. Similar Categories are included in the Education and Health Care Criteria.



**PURPOSE:** The champions will participate in preparing the Organizational Profile and responses to Category Item questions.

**PROCESS:** Select champions with leadership and facilitation skills who have widespread knowledge of the organization. Champions with enthusiasm and Criteria knowledge are assets in the self-assessment, planning, and action processes.

*The self-assessment process is an eye-opening experience for all involved. It clarifies your starting point and enables leaders to establish improvement priorities that make sense to employees. The discipline of the process not only identifies gaps, but also points out key strengths that can serve as the foundation of your strategic priorities.*

**Kathy Yeu, Member, Baldrige Panel of Judges, 2001–2002**  
**Senior Vice President, Results Management**  
**Providian Financial**  
**Pleasanton, CA**

## Step 3

**Action:** Decide on the format for and scope of your self-assessment and action plan.



**PURPOSE:** This step should clarify expectations for what is to be accomplished and the resources needed to complete the task. Selecting a format to easily communicate the self-assessment results sets the stage for future steps. Communicating the results of the self-assessment and implementing an action plan enable the organization to enhance its alignment and better achieve common purposes.

**PROCESS:** Decide on the scope of the self-assessment and the format for capturing and communicating the assessment and action. You may choose to write only an *Organizational Profile*, as suggested in Step 4, if you are just getting started. You may decide to use portions or all of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*. At anytime you may choose to administer *Are We Making Progress?* to check perceptions and communication. Whatever the scope of the self-assessment, your format may be an oral discussion and report, a written bulleted report, or a full written application as used in the Baldrige Award evaluation and feedback process.

The format you select should allow all participants to provide their perspectives about the organization. In an oral discussion, participants might agree on which questions they can answer now, which questions they need to gather information to answer, and which questions require some work to develop answers. If you use a bulleted or full written report, capture agreed upon information and identify issues for which there is not yet a consensus response.

## Step 4

**Action:** Senior leaders and champions prepare the Organizational Profile.



**PURPOSE:** The Organizational Profile is a statement of your operating environment and what is relevant and important to your organization and its performance. It will help ensure a common understanding about what is important, the key influences on how your organization operates, and where your organization is headed. The Organizational Profile will guide your self-assessment participants in selecting and sorting the most useful data and information for the assessment.

Many organizations start with the Organizational Profile and progress gradually to more detailed levels of self-assessment and action. Developing the Organizational Profile may help you to identify gaps in information, lack of consensus, and/or inconsistent or incomplete deployment (communication or implementation throughout the organization).

**PROCESS:** Review the questions in the Organizational Profile found in the back of this booklet. These questions are also included in the Criteria booklet on the pages entitled "Preface: Organizational Profile." Prepare a response to the two parts, "Organizational Description" and "Organizational Challenges." The Organizational Description addresses your organization's business environment, your governance system, and your key relationships with customers, suppliers, and other partners. The Organizational Challenges section calls for a description of your organization's competitive environment, your key strategic challenges, and your system for performance improvement. (Similar points are covered in the Organizational Profiles for education and health care organizations.)

*Step 4 continued on next page*

## Step 4 continued

**Action:** Senior leaders and champions prepare the Organizational Profile.

Depending on the extent of the gaps uncovered, it may be valuable to move to Step 9, “Develop and implement an action plan for improvement.” Developing an action plan and implementing improvements to close identified gaps will prepare you to complete a full self-assessment in the future.

*Completing the Organizational Profile allows an organization to explore its “identity” in a structured, probing way to generate new ideas and to challenge old assumptions. The process builds consensus among senior leaders, which is the first step in creating alignment throughout the entire organization.*

**Kay Kendall, Member, Baldrige Panel of Judges, 2002  
Vice President of Corporate Quality  
Brooks-PRI Automation, Inc.  
Chelmsford, MA**

## Step 5

**Action:** Practice self-assessment techniques with your seven Category champions, using Item 1.1 in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* as a guide.



**PURPOSE:** Practicing these techniques will help you learn how to use the *Criteria* for self-assessment and action.

**PROCESS:** Using the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*, read and follow the “Criteria Response Guidelines,” especially the “Guidelines for Responding to Approach-Deployment Items.” Read the *Criteria* and the “Category and Item Descriptions” for Item 1.1. Collect information and data to outline your key processes in response to Item 1.1 questions. Based on the information collected by the champions, prepare your response. Describe approaches, including methods and measures, and explain how and where the approaches are used in your organization. Also include how approaches are evaluated and improved. Next, identify gaps. Gaps may be incomplete responses in which methods, measures, cycles of improvement, and deployment are unknown or unclear. To maintain a focus on what is relevant and important, identify inconsistencies between your Item 1.1 response and what you identified as important to your organization in the Organizational Profile. Finally, agree on your organization’s key strengths and opportunities for improvement related to Item 1.1.

Although you might start with an oral discussion or a bulleted report in your first self-assessment and action plan, in future self-assessments you can progress to a full written response.

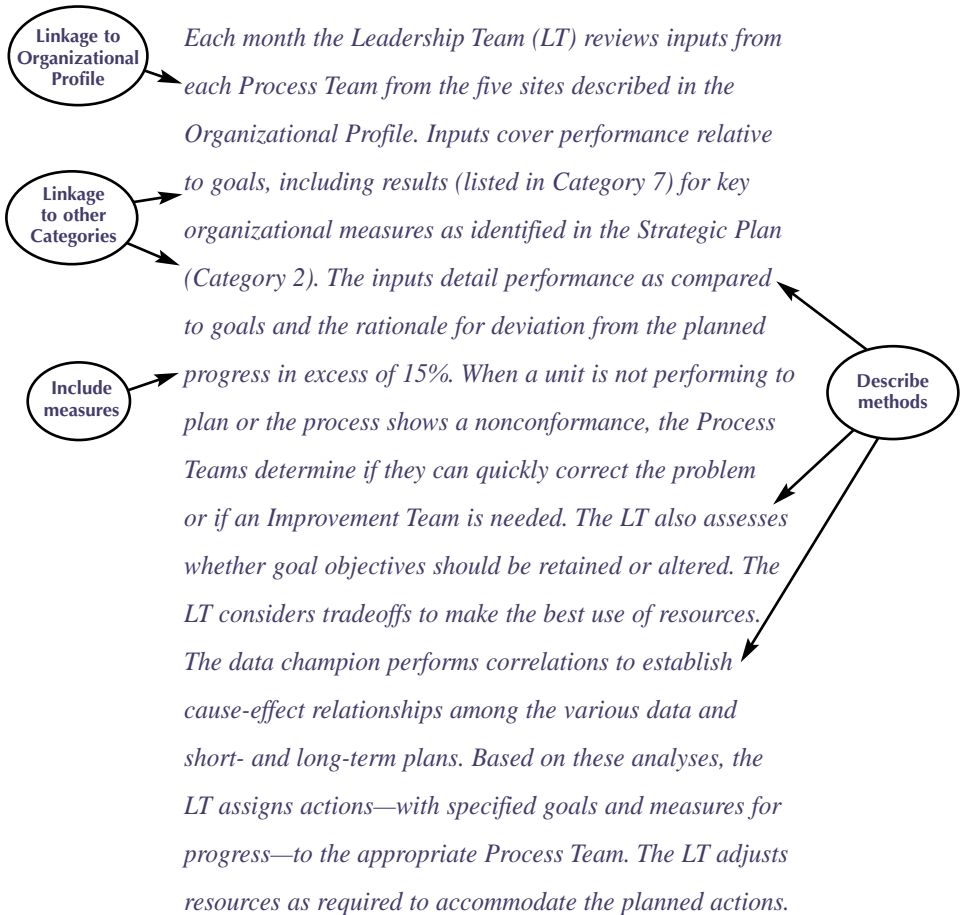
*Step 5 continued on next page*

# 10 Steps

## Step 5 continued

**Action:** Practice self-assessment techniques with your seven Category champions, using Item 1.1 in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* as a guide.

The following is an example of a written response to one of the questions—1.1c(1):



## Step 6

**Action:** Champions select Category teams.  
Champions and teams prepare a response for their assigned Items.



**PURPOSE:** Each champion will guide a team through the next steps of the self-assessment and action planning process. Using its members' expertise, each team provides or obtains data and information to respond to the questions in each Category Item of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence*.

**PROCESS:** Advise the champions to select three to five enthusiastic team members with knowledge of the organization's activities and/or the Criteria for their Category. Team members may serve as leaders of and/or participants in the Category teams. Selecting team members from different levels of the organization to be assessed adds valuable perspectives and information. Adding members who are external to the organization to be assessed can provide the perspective of customer and supplier units.

Provide the champions and team members with copies of this booklet so they may review the self-assessment and action-planning steps. Also, provide copies of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* (see page 25) so teams can review the full Criteria.

*Step 6 continued on next page*

## Step 6 continued

**Action:** Champions select Category teams. Champions and teams prepare a response for their assigned Items.

Read and follow the “Criteria Response Guidelines,” especially the “Guidelines for Responding to Approach-Deployment Items” for the teams working on Categories 1 through 6 and “Guidelines for Responding to Results Items” for the Category 7 team. Each team reads the Criteria and the “Category and Item Descriptions” for its assigned Category. Teams collect information and data to outline the key processes or results in each Item.

For Categories 1 through 6, describe approaches and explain how and where the approaches are used in all parts of the organization being assessed. The Category 7 team works with each of the other teams to link results to approaches. Prepare a response to the Criteria based on the information collected.

*Self-assessment creates an extraordinary organizational learning process. It enables organizations to learn about themselves as systems and to focus on key priorities for development.*

**Kathleen Goonan, M.D., Member, Baldrige Panel of Judges, 2000–2002**  
Senior Scientist, Center for Health System Design & Evaluation  
Massachusetts General Hospital  
Boston, MA



## Step 7

**Action:** Share responses among teams and finalize the findings. Identify key strengths and gaps in Category responses.



**PURPOSE:** Sharing responses should help you arrive at a common understanding of what the organization is doing.

**PROCESS:** Each team presents its findings to the other teams. Teams clarify findings and add or delete information based on the broader expertise among all teams and the linkages across Categories and Items. Together, teams reach consensus on the strengths and gaps in the organization's approaches; deployment of approaches; sharing, learning, and improvement processes; and results for each Category. Teams identify overall themes that cut across Categories.

*Self-assessment without communication provides no value to the organization. When findings are disseminated, it provides a common understanding of your organization's performance, what is necessary to improve performance, and can add value to the improvement process.*

Raymond Alvarez, Member, Baldrige Panel of Judges, 2000–2002  
Retired  
Honeywell Corporation  
Shepherdstown, WV

## Step 8

**Action:** Prioritize your organization's key strengths and opportunities for improvement.

**PURPOSE:** Prioritization will help you develop an action plan that most effectively uses available resources.

**PROCESS:** Using the Organizational Profile to maintain a focus on what is relevant and important, the teams decide on factors for prioritizing opportunities for improvement, including any resource constraints. Decision factors could include linkage to strategic directions, impact throughout the organization, cost, time to implement, and people available. Using the decision factors, the teams prioritize opportunities for improvement and identify those most important to include in the action plan.



## Step 9

**Action:** Develop and implement an action plan for improvement.



**PURPOSE:** The outcome of self-assessment is a road map for improving your organization. An improvement action plan will include steps for achieving improved results.

**PROCESS:** The champions develop an action plan for improvement that addresses the top priorities and includes some short-term actions to keep the momentum for improvement alive. The plan should indicate who is accountable for leading each step, what is to be accomplished and how, as well as, key progress dates, and how progress will be measured. Senior leaders communicate the plan to the rest of the organization. Champions obtain feedback on the plan and revise the plan based on the feedback. Senior leaders deploy the revised plan to everyone in the organization. Staff members assigned to lead action steps then implement the plan and track results. Senior leaders communicate progress frequently and celebrate successes.

*Using the Baldrige Criteria for self-assessment and action planning makes you a winner even if you never apply for the Award. You win because you learn. You learn about what you do well and what you can do better. You win by using that learning to drive improvement and continuously achieve higher levels of performance.*

Harry Reedy, Member, Baldrige Panel of Judges, 2002  
Vice President, Director of Quality  
State Street Corporation  
Boston, MA

## Step 10

**Action:** Evaluate and improve your self-assessment and action process.



**PURPOSE:** Regularly scheduled self-assessment and action are key to ongoing improvement. By improving the self-assessment and action process, teams can reduce cycle time, gather more useful information, improve action plans, and achieve better results.

**PROCESS:** Senior leaders seek input from champions, teams, and action plan leaders on what worked well and what could be improved the next time that a self-assessment, action planning, and implementation cycle occurs. Typical areas to explore might include your selection of participants, the timeliness of communications, cycle time, and task and role clarity. Use this input to improve the self-assessment and action process.

The last step in the evaluation and improvement of your self-assessment and action process is to schedule a reassessment of your organization. Many organizations conduct self-assessment and planning cycles and implement key improvements annually or biennially. In addition, consider conducting a more in-depth assessment. If you used only the Organizational Profile for your first self-assessment, consider using the Category Items in the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* for your next self-assessment. Once you complete the Category Items, your next self-assessment could include use of the “Scoring Guidelines” found in the *Criteria* to assess your rate of improvement.

## Next Steps



Now that you are familiar with one approach, you'd like to conduct a self-assessment and take action for improvement. What steps can you take to prepare yourself and your organization?

1. Share this starter booklet with others in your organization.
2. Have one or more people from your organization attend the Baldrige Quest for Excellence Conference or the Baldrige Regional Conferences to learn more about the Baldrige Criteria.
3. Contact your state or local award programs to learn what resources they can provide.
4. Have someone from your organization apply to become a Baldrige Examiner or state Examiner and learn from others within and outside your industry.

More information on these opportunities follows (see pages 25–28).

# Organizational Profile

*(The Organizational Profile is taken from the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Organizational Profiles for education and health care organizations are found in the Education Criteria and Health Care Criteria, respectively.)*

The **Organizational Profile** is a snapshot of your organization, the key influences on how you operate, and the key challenges you face. It is the most appropriate starting point for self-assessment and helps you to identify potential gaps in key information and focus on key performance requirements and results.

## P.1 Organizational Description

**Describe your organization's business environment and your key relationships with customers, suppliers, and other partners.**

Within your response, include answers to the following questions:

### **a. Organizational Environment**

- (1) What are your organization's main products and services? What are the delivery mechanisms used to provide your products and services to your customers?
- (2) What is your organizational culture? What are your stated purpose, vision, mission, and values?
- (3) What is your employee profile? What are their educational levels? What are your organization's workforce and job diversity, organized bargaining units, use of contract employees, and special health and safety requirements?

- (4) What are your major technologies, equipment, and facilities?
- (5) What is the regulatory environment under which your organization operates? What are the applicable occupational health and safety regulations; accreditation, certification, or registration requirements; and environmental, financial, and product regulations?

## **b. Organizational Relationships**

- (1) What is your organizational structure and governance system? What are the reporting relationships among your board of directors, senior leaders, and your parent organization, as appropriate?
- (2) What are your key customer groups and market segments, as appropriate? What are their key requirements and expectations for your products and services? What are the differences in these requirements and expectations among customer groups and market segments?
- (3) What role do suppliers and distributors play in your value creation processes? What are your most important types of suppliers and distributors? What are your most important supply chain requirements?
- (4) What are your key supplier and customer partnering relationships and communication mechanisms?

*Organizational Profile continued on next page*

## Notes:

**N1.** Product and service delivery to your customers (P.1a[1]) might be direct, or through dealers, distributors, or channel partners.

**N2.** Market segments (P.1b[2]) might be based on product lines or features, geography, distribution channels, business volume, or other factors that allow your organization to define related market characteristics.

**N3.** Customer group and market segment requirements (P.1b[2]) might include on-time delivery, low defect levels, ongoing price reductions, electronic communication, and after-sales service.

**N4.** Communication mechanisms (P.1b[4]) should be two-way and might be in person, electronic, by telephone, and/or written. For many organizations, these mechanisms might be changing as marketplace requirements change.

Frequently, several questions are grouped under one number (e.g., P.1a[3]). These questions are related and do not require separate responses. These multiple questions serve as a guide in understanding the full meaning of the information being requested.

Item notes serve three purposes: (1) to clarify terms or requirements presented in an Item, (2) to give instructions on responding to the Item requirements, and (3) to indicate key linkages to other Items. In all cases, the intent is to help you respond to the Item requirements.



## P.2 Organizational Challenges

**Describe your organization's competitive environment, your key strategic challenges, and your system for performance improvement.**

Within your response, include answers to the following questions:

### **a. Competitive Environment**

- (1) What is your competitive position? What is your relative size and growth in your industry or markets served? What are the numbers and types of competitors for your organization?
- (2) What are the principal factors that determine your success relative to your competitors? What are any key changes taking place that affect your competitive situation?
- (3) What are your key available sources of comparative and competitive data from within your industry? What are your key available sources of comparative data for analogous processes outside your industry? What limitations, if any, are there in your ability to obtain these data?

### **b. Strategic Challenges**

What are your key business, operational, and human resource strategic challenges?

*Organizational Profile continued on next page*

## c. Performance Improvement System

- (1) What is the overall approach you use to maintain an organizational focus on performance improvement and to guide systematic evaluation and improvement of key processes?
- (2) What is your overall approach to organizational learning and sharing your knowledge assets within the organization?

### Notes:

**N1.** Factors (P.2a[2]) might include differentiators such as price leadership, design services, e-services, geographic proximity, and warranty and product options.

**N2.** Challenges (P.2b) might include electronic communication with businesses and end-use consumers, reduced cycle times for product introduction, mergers and acquisitions, global marketing and competition, customer retention, staff retention, and value chain integration.

**N3.** Performance improvement (P.2c) is an assessment dimension used in the Scoring System to evaluate the maturity of organizational approaches and deployment. This question is intended to help you and the Baldrige Examiners set a context for your approach to performance improvement.

**N4.** Overall approaches to process improvement (P.2c[1]) might include implementing a lean enterprise system, six sigma methodology, use of ISO 9000:2000 standards, or other process improvement tools.

## *Resources on Self-Assessment and Action*

**The Baldrige National Quality Program (BNQP) provides the resources listed below.**

### **1. The *Criteria for Performance Excellence* (Business, Education, and Health Care)**

Single copies of the Criteria booklets are provided free of charge by the Baldrige National Quality Program upon request. Each booklet includes Category and Item requirements, Core Values and Concepts, and a glossary of key terms. The Criteria booklets also can be downloaded from the Baldrige National Quality Program Web site at **[www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)**.

### **2. e-Baldrige**

Organizations can use e-Baldrige, a Web-based self-assessment tool that uses the Organizational Profile

- to help determine their readiness for a full self-assessment
- to possibly reveal gaps in information and opportunities for improvement
- to compare themselves to others who already have completed the e-Baldrige challenge
- to assist with developing an action plan for improvement or continue with a more complete self-assessment

Visit **[www.baldrige.nist.gov/eBaldrige/Step\\_One.htm](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/eBaldrige/Step_One.htm)** to take the e-Baldrige self-assessment challenge.

### 3. *Are We Making Progress?*

This easy-to-use employee questionnaire can help you assess how your organization is performing and learn what can be improved. Organized according to the seven Baldrige Criteria Categories, the questionnaire will help you to focus your improvement and communication efforts on areas needing the most attention. It can also help you to check your progress toward meeting your organizational goals and will improve communication among your employees and your leadership team. *Are We Making Progress?* is available in both English and Spanish and can be downloaded from the Baldrige National Quality Program Web site at **[www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)**.

### 4. Case Studies

Baldrige case studies are used to familiarize Examiners with the Criteria and the Scoring System. The case studies, when used with the appropriate edition of the Criteria, illustrate the responses to the Criteria requirements and findings of the review process. The case study packet illustrates an application for the Baldrige Award and is useful in understanding the benefits of the Baldrige process, as well as for self-assessment, planning, and training. A case study packet is developed each year and can be downloaded from the Baldrige National Quality Program Web site at **[www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)**. Packets developed before 2000 are available for purchase from the American Society for Quality.

## 5. Information on the following:

### State and Local Baldrige-Based Award Programs

Many of these programs provide consulting assistance in the area of self-assessment and action in addition to their award program functions. Located in nearly every state and in some communities, these award programs offer networking opportunities, more extensive award eligibility opportunities than the national Baldrige program (extending to not-for-profit and for-profit organizations alike), and multiple application levels that enable recognition of organizations early in their improvement efforts, as well as those organizations with more mature approaches, deployment, and results. All programs provide review and feedback. Visit [www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov) for contact information for the state and local programs.

### Baldrige Examiners

Examiners can help you understand the Criteria and how to apply them in your self-assessment and action efforts. Baldrige Examiners, leading business, education, and health care experts, receive training each year on the Baldrige Criteria, using a case study learning methodology. In addition to evaluating Award applications and preparing feedback reports, Examiners serve as “ambassadors,” often speaking about the Baldrige Criteria, the Award Program, and the value of self-assessment and action in organizational improvement. You can apply to be an Examiner. If accepted, you will receive training and network with others interested and experienced in organizational self-assessment and action. Visit [www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov) for information on how to apply to be a member of the Board of Examiners.

## Baldrige Award Recipients

Recipients honor their responsibility to serve as performance improvement advocates, share their strategies, and serve as role models. Many undertake ongoing self-assessments of their organizations, using the Baldrige Criteria, and can share their experiences with you. Contact the Baldrige National Quality Program office or visit **[www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)** for Award recipient contact information.

## Upcoming Conferences

The Baldrige National Quality Program annually sponsors the Quest for Excellence Conference and Regional Conferences. At these events, current and past Baldrige Award recipients discuss their role model approaches for addressing the seven Baldrige Criteria Categories. These conferences also provide the opportunity to learn about the Award recipients' self-assessment and action practices. Visit **[www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)** for up-to-date conference information.

## The Baldrige National Quality Program welcomes your inquiries:

Baldrige National Quality Program  
National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Administration Building, Room A600  
100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1020  
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-1020

Phone: (301) 975-2036  
E-mail: [nqp@nist.gov](mailto:nqp@nist.gov)

Fax: (301) 948-3716  
Web address: **[www.baldrige.nist.gov](http://www.baldrige.nist.gov)**

The American Society for Quality (ASQ) provides additional resources relating to the Baldrige Program and self-assessment and action, including the following items.

## 1. Videotapes

Baldrige videotapes featuring Baldrige Award recipients include *Quest for Excellence* and *Take the Journey: A Baldrige Invitation to Small Business*. *A Journey Worth Beginning* addresses the benefits of applying for the Baldrige Award and receiving a feedback report on strengths and opportunities for improvement. *A Uniquely Rewarding Experience* discusses the benefits of being a Baldrige Examiner.

## 2. Bulk Orders

Multiple copies of the *Criteria for Performance Excellence* (Business, Education, and Health Care) may be ordered in packets of 10.

### To order, contact ASQ:

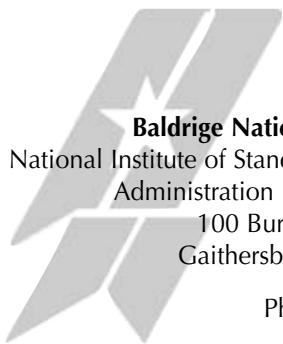
American Society for Quality  
600 North Plankinton Avenue  
Milwaukee, WI 53203  
or  
P.O. Box 3005  
Milwaukee, WI 53201-3005

Phone: (800) 248-1946  
E-mail: [asq@asq.org](mailto:asq@asq.org)

Fax: (414) 272-1734  
Web address: [www.asq.org](http://www.asq.org)

NIST0056

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**Baldridge National Quality Program**

National Institute of Standards and Technology  
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100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1020  
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Phone: (301) 975-2036

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