

APPLICATION GUIDELINES



P O. Box 609
Keyport, WA 98345
360-697-2444

Introduction

The Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence are about winning in your arena every day with a high-performing, high integrity, ethical organization. Every Baldrige Criteria user is a winner. The Criteria help organizations respond to current challenges and address all the complexities of delivering results while preparing effectively for the future. Whether your organization is large or small, the Criteria provide a valuable framework that can help you align resources with approaches such as ISO 9000, JCHO, Lean, Balanced Scorecard, Six SIGMA, and GMAP. The Criteria will help you improve communication, productivity and effectiveness and achieve strategic goals.¹

Regardless of whether or not you receive recognition, your organization will receive tremendous value from submitting an application. Every applicant receives a detailed Feedback Report and an Executive Briefing to review the key themes based on an independent, external review conducted by a team of specially trained and recognized experts. Every Feedback Report is the cumulative effort of hundreds of Examiner and Judge Mentor hours. The Washington State Quality Award's Feedback Reports are among the best in the country. These reports provide both strengths and opportunities for improvement. Applicants can then significantly improve their performance by acting on the opportunities that the Examiners identified.²

How do you begin? Take a few minutes and review the Organizational Profile in the Criteria booklet. A discussion of the answers to these questions will begin your journey to excellence. If your organization desires additional training, WSQA offers a broad spectrum of onsite and open forum workshops. WSQA is also available to provide a limited number of presentations at no cost³ and can support your organization through online self-assessment surveys and a free consulting referral service.

The Washington State Quality Award recognizes Washington State organizations for performance excellence. WSQA makes Washington a better place to live, learn, and work by helping organizations achieve superior results through the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence.

Vision

To be recognized as a premier resource for advancing organizational excellence.

Mission

Make Washington State a better place to live, learn, and work by helping organizations achieve superior results through the use of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence.

Sector Categories

There are five sector categories: For-Profit, Public, Healthcare, Education, and Not-for-Profit. The categories are divided further by organization size.

For-Profit

Organizations, subsidiaries, organizational units or divisions that produce and sell manufactured products or processes; conduct agricultural, mining, or construction operations; or sell or provide services.

Public

Organizations that are departments, commissions, or agencies of federal, state, county, or local government entities.

Not-for-Profit

Organizations that provide services and meet the guidelines of the Internal Revenue Code for not-for-profit enterprises.

Education

Accredited institutions that grant degrees or offer credit courses as defined by Washington law. This includes public and private elementary schools, secondary schools, school districts, and post-secondary institutions (colleges, universities, and vocational technical schools).

Healthcare

Organizations that provide health care directly to persons such as hospitals, HMO's and nursing homes. Organizations that do not provide health care directly to persons are also eligible.

¹ Harry Hertz, Director, Baldrige National Quality Program

² BaldrigeCoach.com, Glenn Bodinson. Three of the 2005 National Baldrige recipients have worked with Glenn. Glenn's organization has worked with a total of 10 National Baldrige recipients and 13 state award recipients in 6 states.

³ We ask that organizations utilizing free speaking engagements reimburse all speakers for their travel costs.

Level of Awards

There are four levels of the Washington State Quality Award that can be awarded for the Full Examination Application.

Commitment: This beginning level shows the organizations commitment to performance excellence. This is the starting point for organizations that are beginning to adopt and apply quality principles as defined by the Baldrige Criteria.

Achievement: This intermediate level is for those organizations that have demonstrated a serious commitment to excellence and a process for continuous improvement.

Leadership: This is an advanced level for organizations that have demonstrated significant progress toward excellence.

Excellence: This is the highest level award for organizations that have demonstrated the highest levels of excellence.

Two Application Alternatives:

Application Summary	Application Levels	
	Lite (Assessment) (See Assessment Application guidelines)	Full Examination
Application and associated fee Deadlines*	Quarterly. A limited number of applications are reviewed each quarter.	Annual cycle Visit www.wsqa.net for dates.*
Intent to Apply Form* and associated fee	Required. Accepted throughout the year. Applications submission request dates are accepted based on first receipt of request as done through the Intent to Apply form.	Required. See Web site for due date.*
Criteria used to create application	Two Page Lite (Assessment) Criteria A subset of questions from the Full criteria	Full Criteria for Performance Excellence
Version of Criteria Accepted	Application submitted must be in response to the current year or previous year criteria.	Application submitted must be in response to the CURRENT year criteria.
Organizational Profile	Required – up to 5 pages	Required – up to 5 pages
Depth of Application	Overall categorical	Category, Items, and Area Levels
Application Size (including Organizational Profile)	Up to 20 pages +5 page Organizational Profile and 1 page organization chart and a glossary of terms, (minimum font size 10 pt, charts and graphs minimum 8 pt)	Up to 50 pages +5 page Organizational Profile and 1 page organization chart and a glossary of terms, (minimum font size 10 pt, charts and graphs minimum 8 pt)
Site Visit	Not available	Contingent upon results of Phase 2 review. Upon acceptance, applicant agrees to pay all Site Visit expenses and fees.
Examiner Contribution	Required to commit one (1) examiners the year prior, during or post application submission.	Required to commit one (1) examiners the year prior, during or post application submission.
Award Level Eligibility	No recognition. Evidence of submission is provided through the Certificate of Submission sent with the Feedback Report.	Commitment Award Achievement Award Leadership Award Excellence Award * Award level is determined by Panel of Judges
Review Process	1-3 Examiners or Judges. Minimum of stage 1 review, up to 2nd stage.	Full Examination team (5-10 members) with Judge Mentors. Minimum of 2 review stages up to 3rd stage.
Determines Recommendation	Senior Examiner or Judge	Panel of Judges
Feedback to Applicant	5-10 page report at the Category level and Executive Briefing. Scoring bands provided at Category level.	Full Feedback Report including Item and key theme feedback and Executive Briefing. Scoring bands provided at Item level. Overall Scoring band provided.
Fees	Visit Web site for most current fees	Visit Web site for most current fees

*In the event that the due date falls on a non-working day for the US Postal Service, we will accept postmarks for the next business day.

Format Requirements

To help ensure equal treatment of all applicants, application reports and any supplemental sections must meet the page limit, type size and format requirements indicated below. If requirements are not met, excess pages may be omitted, your application may be returned or sections of your application may be omitted.

Page limit:

All applications must adhere to the page limitations stated above. Covers and divider pages/tab separators may contain only the title of the specified subject (i.e. Table of Contents, 2009 Intent to Apply form, Organizational Chart, Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations, Organizational Profile, Responses Addressing Criteria Items) and are not included in the page count. If Covers and tabs do contain additional information such as figures, charts, quotations, etc, they will be counted as part of the page count. Examiners must base their evaluations solely on information contained within the application report. Do not add links to information on intranet or web sites. Examiners are not permitted to follow any such links.

Paper size:

Standard 8 ½ x 11 inches

Text Format:

Applications are to be submitted with a minimum 10 point font size Times New Roman or equivalent. Line spacing should be a minimum of 2 points of lead between lines (2/72 or .0276 inches) Charts, graphs and diagrams must also meet the font and line spacing minimum size requirements, although graphs may have 8 point font size. The lines per page must not exceed 60, including the page headings. A blank line separating paragraphs is counted as a line. Margins of at least ¾” on the side of the page that is bound or fastened and at least ½” on the opposite side of the page are preferred. Pages set up in two-column format are preferred. Pages may be printed on both sides (with page count referring to printed side as 1 page). Text pages should have portrait orientation. Graphs, figures, charts and tables may have either portrait or landscape. All figures should be numbered in sequence within each Item and Category such as Figure P.1-1, Figure 2.1-1, or Figure 2.1-2.

Assembly:

All components of the application report and supplemental sections must be securely fastened to prevent separation during handling. The use of clips or binders with easily opened pressure-sensitive clips is discouraged. The use of bulky binders or similar heavy covers is discouraged.

Fees

Fees and expenses are listed on the Web site. These fees cover only a fraction of the cost of the review. Additional funding comes from the services provided, sponsors, and members. Application fees and administrative expenses are kept to a minimum through volunteer efforts. Fees include:

Intent to Apply Fee

Intent to Apply fee is due with the Intent to Apply Form. The Intent to Apply Form will not be dated as received until the Intent to Apply fee is received.

Application Fee

Application fee is due when the application is submitted. The application will not be accepted without receipt of the application Fee.

Site Visit Fees

In addition to the Site Visit Administrative Fee, all applicants are expected to reimburse for reasonable expenses of the examination team. Expenses include hotel or motel expenses, travel expenses, and per diem costs for off-site meals and supplies for each Examiner.

Assistance to support fees and expenses may be available to organizations that demonstrate need. Contact the Washington State Quality Award for a request for fee support.

Examiner Commitment

Applicants also agree to commit at least one individual from their organization as an Examiner in at least one of the following application cycles: the year prior to their application, during their application year or the year following their application year. Committing Examiners from your organization builds internal expertise and develops leadership and organizational development skills.

Award Recipients

Award recipients may publicize and advertise their specific level of Award in accordance with the WSQA Trademark policy. Recipients are expected to share information about their successful performance strategies with other Washington State organizations.

Feedback to Applicants

Each applicant receives a Feedback Report at the conclusion of the review process. The feedback contains strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Each applicant also receives an Executive Briefing which reviews the significant findings of the Feedback Report during a 90 minute meeting with WSQA and the applicant.

Criteria for Performance Excellence

The Criteria to be used are that from Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program. There are three from which the applicant chooses the most appropriate:

Criteria for Performance Excellence
Education Criteria for Performance Excellence
Health Care Criteria for Performance Excellence

Individual copies of the Criteria booklets can be obtained free of charge from

Baldrige National Quality Program
National Institute of Standards and Technology
100 Bureau Drive, Stop 1020
Gaithersburg, MD 20899-1020
Telephone: 301-975-2036
Fax: 301-948-3716
E-mail: nqp@nist.gov
Web Site: www.quality.nist.gov

Or by downloading them from www.wsqa.net.

Application Submission Requirements

Applicants need to submit an application package that consists of three parts:

Full Examination Applications

1. Twenty (20) copies of the Intent to Apply Form.
2. One copy of the letter or e-mail from WSQA showing that the Intent to Apply Form has been received by the required due date and identifying the due date for the application.
3. Twenty (20) hard copies and 20 electronic (CD) copies of an application report consisting of an Organization Profile, responses to the Criteria
4. Application fee

Lite (Assessment) Applications

1. Eight copies of the Intent to Apply Form submitted and a letter or e-mail from WSQA showing that the form has been received and identifying the due date for the application.
2. One copy of the letter or e-mail from WSQA showing that the Intent to Apply Form has been received by the required due date and identifying the due date for the application.

3. Eight hard and eight electronic (CD) copies of an application report consisting of an Organization Profile, responses to the Criteria.
4. Application fee.
5. Eight copies of the version of the Assessment Criteria used to complete your application.

Please mail your application to:

WSQA
PO Box 609
Keyport, WA 98345

Please call (360) 697-2444 if you need a physical address to mail your application.

The Examination Process for Examination Applications

The examination process includes three review stages, as follows:

- Stage One is the application review. All applications receive this review.
- Stage Two is the consensus review by the team of Examiners. All applications receive this review.
- Stage Three is a Site Visit to verify and clarify the information in the application. This stage is available only for the full examination application, for organizations whose score through Stage Two justifies proceeding through Stage Three as determined by the panel of judges.

The schedule for the examination process can be found on the Web site at www.wsqa.net.

Award Process Ethics and Confidentiality

Strict rules of conduct apply throughout the award process for Examiners, Judges, Board Members and administrative personnel -each is required to sign an Ethics Policy Statement. Examiners and Judges are also required to sign a Conflict of Interest Statement. Individual applications, commentary, and scoring information developed during the review of applications are regarded as proprietary and confidential. This information is accessible only to those individuals directly involved in the evaluation and application distribution processes. Board of Examiners members assigned to review applications follow strict conflict of interest rules and receive no information regarding the content or status of applications being reviewed by other Examiners.

Eligibility

Location

An applicant is eligible if:

- It is located in the State of Washington.
- It is applying as a division or subunit located in the State of Washington
- It is headquartered in the State of Washington or has major operational units located in the State of Washington. In such cases operational units outside of the State of Washington may be included in the application.
- Washington State accepts applicants located in states with no other Baldrige-based award program on a case by case basis as determined by available resources.

Subunits

Subunits or divisions of larger “parent” organizations may apply, but they must respond to all categories for the applicable criteria for which they are applying. A subunit or division and its parent may not apply for the same award during the same year.