



Foundation Update

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Vision

What we're striving to do
By helping our customers develop successful organizations, we improve our communities, our state, our country, and our world.

Mission

Why we exist

We help create excellent businesses, hospitals and schools by sharing knowledge about the Baldrige process and other methods that drive organizational efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability.

Values

How We Work

Service to the Public, Fairness and Honesty, Teamwork for the Common Cause, Untiring Effort for Improvement, Courtesy and Humility, Accord with Natural Laws, Gratitude.

NOTES FROM THE CEO



Bill Denney
Quality Texas Foundation

Dear Fellow Travelers on the Road to Excellence:

If you haven't signed up to be an examiner it's not too late but time is running out. We're looking forward to another growth year, and from what we know so far there are some exciting organizations applying for feedback. I started as a Quality Texas examiner in 1996 and it has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. No other training or educational opportunities have prepared me for leadership as much as the experience of being a Texas and Baldrige examiner. Go to the examiner page on our website to learn more - www.texas-quality.org.

See page 19 for the members of our 2010 Training Faculty. This is the strongest group of trainers I have seen in the 12 years I have been involved with the Baldrige process.

If you're in an organization in pursuit of excellence, see page 15 on dates for feedback applications.

Also, please note our new vision, mission and values. During a recent planning cycle, the Board of Directors and the Quality Texas staff revised these key drivers to reflect the changes in our customer base, our market and our business. You can also see our Organizational Profile on the Quality Texas Website.

As all organizations do, Quality Texas has evolved to better meet the needs of our customers.

If you missed the Baldrige Recipient Healthcare conference in Dallas last March, it is being repeated in Chicago November 10. See page 18 for more information. This is an incredible opportunity to learn how Baldrige recipients have transformed their organizations.

WHO WE ARE

What We Want The World To Know About Us

The Quality Texas Foundation helps businesses, hospitals, schools, government agencies and non-profits improve performance. We educate, train, assess, provide feedback and recognize organizations committed to a journey of excellence. Quality Texas encourages use of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence and other methods that drive efficiency and effectiveness. Our work saves jobs, improves communities and creates a stronger state and nation, and ultimately a better world for mankind.

Pigskin Playbook For Baldrige



**Dale Hershfield, Senior Consultant
ValuMetrix Services ; Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics Inc.**

Texans have a mighty big affection for football. But did you know that the gridiron is also a great place to study Baldrige? Grab your team jersey, pack the cooler and let's take a look!

Start by opening the Baldrige playbook to Chapter 5, Workforce Focus:

- * "How do you recruit...new members of your workforce? How do you ensure your workforce represents the diverse ideas, cultures, and thinking of your hiring and customer community?"
- * "How do you manage...your workforce to...reinforce a customer and business focus [and] exceed performance expectations...?"

College football provides an excellent case study for these requirements. Want your team to "exceed performance expectations?" How about a national championship!

What does it take to win the national championship? Consider one sportswriter's view on the challenge faced by teams in the Big Ten Conference:

"To win a national championship today in college football, a school must have certain building blocks. A massive fan base that buys tickets and makes donations. A legacy of success that attracts recruits. An administration willing to pay for top-flight coaches and facilities.

But it's become clear that one element trumps them all: local talent. The best players, increasingly, come from the South and West, and that's a problem—potentially a permanent one—for the Big Ten Conference."

His diagnosis:

"The main problem seems to be rooted in the population growth of the South and West, and the greater zeal for high-school football in those regions."

Elite players are the chief focus for top college recruiters. These are players who can tilt the balance in favor of the home team by their natural, extraordinary abilities. Finding them is a numbers game. The more kids who play, the more top notch players there are, thus the benefit of population growth and well-stocked high school programs.

How are college football programs addressing this challenge and what can we learn from them? Let's put the X's and O's up on the chalkboard.

The University of Oregon and Oregon State, while located in the high growth West, reside in a state with a relatively small population of 3.8 million people. Their answer? California, population 37 million. Yet, because California has its own powerhouse schools like USC and Cal that recruit primarily within the state, the Oregon schools need to dig deeper. They recruit underrated California high-school players that the in-state schools pass over. Both Oregon and Oregon State have built successful programs as a result, e.g. the Oregon Ducks went 10 - 2 last season and played in the Rose Bowl.

Notre Dame pairs an established national reputation with a solid Midwest location. They recruit nationally: 97% of their players last season came from outside of Notre Dame's home state of Indiana, with 36% of the players hailing from Southern or Western states. (Just 5% of the University of Texas team, in contrast, came from outside of Texas.)

Notre Dame uses unique recruiting tools. Over the next several years, Notre Dame will play one "home" game each year at a site outside of Indiana. Last Fall they played in San Antonio at the Alamodome. In 2011 and 2014 they will play at the Citrus Bowl in Orlando. Their thinly veiled objective: recruit local talent.

Let's move off the chalkboard and onto the playing field to apply these learnings. First, identify the key workforce capability and capacity needs in your organization. Common challenges include the shortage of key skills, such as skilled trades in manufacturing and certain specialty professionals in health care. Changing customer demographics also present a challenge. For service industries, including health care, serving a diverse population of varied cultures and native languages presents distinct workforce capability requirements. In the manufacturing sector, ensuring that product designs respond to highly heterogeneous customer preferences often requires diversity of experience among designers and marketers.

Next, build the systems and processes that will allow you to recruit a great team.

- * Integrate your knowledge of customer requirements and expectations with the workforce capabilities you need to develop. What does a winning season look like for your customers and what staff talents do you need to provide it?
- * You may need to journey far from home (far from traditional sources) to find the talent you need. Do you have a means to identify fertile grounds for recruiting, like the high growth South and West for college football? How will you build relationships with key contacts in those areas, like a network of high school coaches?
- * You may need to use unique and unconventional approaches to reach recruits, like Notre Dame's outreach at the Alamodome. How do you scan the environment to identify new venues for reaching recruits? Do you have the skills to take advantage of new communication approaches, like social media?

All right, it's time to suit up and head to the stadium. So put on your game face, grab a beverage from the cooler and let's go to the game!

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A Systems Perspective Model For The National Housing Quality Award



DENIS LEONARD, PH.D.

A key driver of quality management in the US homebuilding industry is The National Housing Quality Award (NHQA). The NHQA which is based on the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, is open to all US homebuilders, remodelers and trade contractors. The NHQA consists of a set of eight criteria:

1. Leadership
2. Strategic Planning
3. Performance Management
4. Customer Satisfaction
5. Human Resources
6. Construction Quality
7. Trade Partnerships
8. Business Results

The criteria can be used to drive business excellence throughout all aspects of an organization. The criteria can be used to conduct an evaluation of your organization to identify the key areas for improvement; however, the most productive approach is to write an application report, detailing how your organization addresses each of the criteria. The application is reviewed by a team of judges who are experts in both the homebuilding industry and quality management. Those that are approved by the judges receive a site visit by a judging team that may last several days. In either case the applicant receives a detailed actionable feedback report to support continued improvement. The NHQA has three levels of recognition, honorable mention, silver and gold. Since the start of the NHQA in 1993 through 2009, 69 builders have received recognition, of which 8 builders have earned awards multiple times. These organizations range from small family owned to large national builders, building custom, production, single and multi-family homes of a wide price range. In addition 6 remodelers and 5 trade partners have been awarded recognition.

The 'House of Quality' Model

The criteria does not consist of isolated stand alone elements, they interact and support one another in a systems approach. The criteria has not, like the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence, had a model to describe the interaction or functioning of the criteria as a whole. The following model (Diagram 1) has been developed to articulate how the NHQA criteria functions and interacts. The model follows the logical flow already used in the order of the criteria. Leadership is placed at the top of the model, the apex. It is from here that the owner, CEO and senior management face the future, motivate and direct the organization.

However, it is critical that leaders are not isolated from the rest of the organization or the competitive environment in which it functions. Two-way communication is essential for leadership with all its stakeholders including internal customers (employees), external customers (homebuyers), trade partners and suppliers (and other stakeholders), so that information about the organization's performance and the changing marketplace is constant. This communication allows the organization to not simply react quickly but to become proactive. Leadership also needs to have an effective way to gather this information and coordinate the operational and tactical plans to achieve the mission and vision of the organization. To achieve this, a strategic process is essential.

The strategic process coordinates with all of the departments and functions in the organization and ensures that a silo effect or isolation within departments does not occur. In this regard the strategic process effectively focuses all efforts on the mission and vision of the organization, ensuring that the operational and tactical goals align to support the strategic goals. It is also important that two-way communication of information is conducted throughout the strategic process. In the model the strategic process sits below leadership acting as a coordinator with all other aspects of the organization and therefore, all other aspects of the criteria. Without this strategic process, leadership is isolated and can only attempt to drive their beliefs through individual departments with little coordinated or aligned impact. Often organizations either ignore this process or do not use it effectively with the result that they are basing strategic decisions on nothing but instinct, hunches and trial and error. While hard data, real time information, insights from business partners, competitors and from talented industry experienced employees who are dealing with your market, customers and competitors everyday are ignored or disregarded.

Below the strategic criteria are the core elements or building blocks of the criteria that focus on the functioning of the organization and incorporate performance management, customer satisfaction, human resources, construction quality and trade partnerships. This in effect impacts every function and department in an organization. The critical issue here and which is reflected in the arrows used in the model, is that these are not individual isolated functions. They must interact in two-way communication with each other to function effectively. At the base of the model is the foundation, where the impact of the successful interaction and functioning of an effective and efficient organization produces the results. These results may be both financial and non-financial in nature and will relate to all of the core elements of the model. Two-way communication of the monitoring and measuring of these results is as essential here as in the other elements. These results reflect the success of the strategy and ultimately, leadership. The strength of this model and its impact in running an effective organization is in how all of the elements of the organization interact and depend on each other just like the structural elements in a house. The question of course is, how strong is your 'House of Quality'?

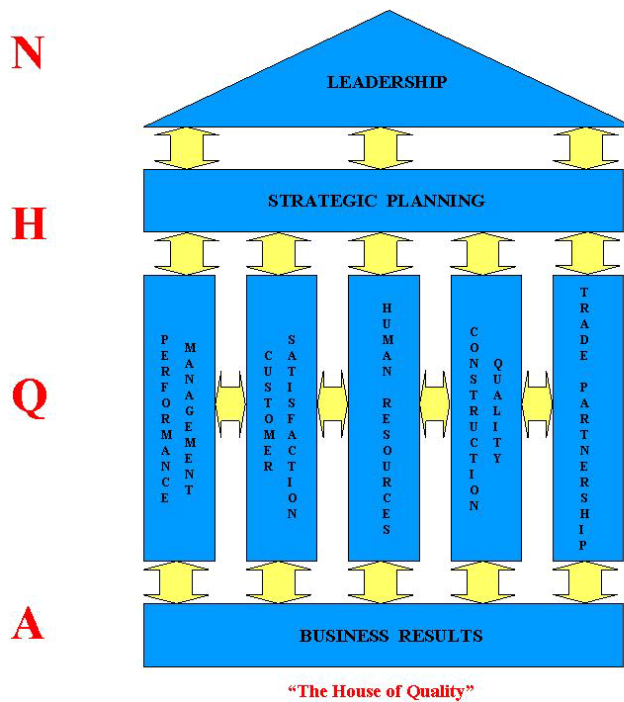


Diagram 1

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Organizational Change Starts With You



Elisabeth Parker
Texas Nameplate Company, Inc.

When I read something about Baldrige it is always about organizational change. Everything starts with the sage advice, "If your CEO isn't on board, Baldrige won't work." I would like to take this opportunity to say, in my humble opinion; Baldrige is missing the trees for the forest. Turning the leaves on just one tree can start changing the color of the forest. Texas Nameplate Company, Inc. recently submitted an application to become a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient this past May. If we receive the award, it will be our third. We know we are a role model business; we have been one for 15 years. Continuously applying for the award gives us the feedback we need to sustain ourselves as a role model business. Writing our application gave me insight about what Baldrige could offer individual employees to increase job satisfaction and engagement, and in turn create organizational change. Using Baldrige I can now better help others develop and grow as employees. I learned about the big picture of our business and how individual contribution fits in to make a difference. And I learned to be patient and the little things do not matter if all the systems are in place and working – everything else will eventually fall in to place. Happiness at work starts with the individual and if you turn those criteria questions around and ask yourself the same questions, there is a lot one person can do to create organizational change whether they are the CEO or the housekeeper.

I started at Texas Nameplate Company, Inc (TNC) in January 2008 as a Human Resources Manager. My basic duties included administrative tasks, facilitating the Employee Survey, creating and maintaining training and Employee Benefits programs and in general, mediating any issues between employees and supervisors. In April 2008, Dale's father, our founder and Chairman of the Board passed away. In May 2008 our Vice President left with her family to the east coast. Now the funny thing is, with all these events happening in a short period - everything still ran smoothly; production goals were met, spending was within budget, and there were no major disturbances within the plant. Everything ran by itself and everyone just knew what to do and did it well. I'll be honest, I didn't know that at the time. Hindsight showed me that. Pesky thing that hindsight.

Dale Crownover, CEO/President, spent time over that summer at home grieving the passing of his father with the rest of his family. When Dale would come into the office, I would sit to talk with him about different incidents I thought needed attention. In turn, what Dale taught me was not to worry. "As long as you've got good people, good systems in place, a little money in the bank and you're good to your customers . . . everything else will be okay. It does not matter what it is. It's fine." I thought he was nuts. Being from the school of "doing" I thought if something went wrong, you did something about it. Baldrige teaches about the big picture. Most employees focus on what is right in front of them, what we need to teach them is how what is in front of them affects the whole. Most problems just need a little patience.

In the fall of 2008, we began the process to apply for Baldrige again. This is when my business education really began. My formal education began in psychology and human development. Around the same time, I started to study Buddhism and Yoga. Taking my education a step further, I became a Marriage and Family Therapist. After graduate school, I specialized in child therapy using Family Systems and Play Therapy as my guiding theories. I worked with families who, for one reason or another, had to be separated by the state and then needed to work with Child Protective Services to be reunited. After five years, I moved to the business world as a Human Resources Manager. All of the work I had done previously was clinical in nature, meaning I focused on patients and clients. When I began writing the application, I was as far away from Baldrige as a person could be. I have never had a business class. I did not know what P&L meant. I did not know how to measure productivity or supplier performance. Moreover, I certainly did not understand what made an organization successful and what did not. Baldrige teaches how organizations can succeed or fail. Most employees know what their boss expects out of them, but employees need to know what the organization needs from them.

When I volunteered to write the application, I had no idea what I was getting myself into. Dale reassured me, "It's not that hard, just answer some questions, make up a couple charts now and then – they really like those charts so make them pretty, and throw in some results. No big deal." And who was I to question him? TNC had already been down this road a few times and not much had really changed since the first two awards. Answer some questions, make some pretty charts, throw in some results – I could do that. How hard could it be? Boy, hindsight can really make you cringe sometimes, can't it?

In Buddhism there is a story about the 84th problem. The story goes, the farmer had many complaints. He told the Buddha how difficult his life was. It seemed the weather never cooperated and it was either too wet or too dry, so his crops often failed. Also, while his wife was a good woman, she was much too critical of him, and lately his children were showing no gratitude for anything he did for them. Furthermore, his neighbors were much too nosy and seemed to always be interfering in his affairs by spreading gossip about him.

The farmer, finishing his list of complaints, looked expectantly to the Buddha for a solution and was surprised when the Buddha said he could not help him. Instead, he explained all human beings have 83 problems and that is just the way life is. While you can work hard and solve a few problems, once you do, others will soon take their place. Upon hearing this, the farmer, in exasperation, asked, "Then what is the good of all your teaching?" The Buddha replied, "My teaching can't help you with the 83 problems, but perhaps it can help with the 84th." "What's that?" the farmer asked. "The 84th problem," the Buddha said, "is you don't want to have any problems."

Here is what I really learned from writing our Baldrige application. Every company has 83 problems (Baldrige calls them gaps). Employees believe their job satisfaction rests with the resolution of these 83 problems. What the organization already knows, and employees need to embrace is the 84th problem – there will always be problems or gaps. Many times employees believe leaving the company is the answer. Changing organizations will change the types of problems, but all organizations have them. If employees can understand these problems and see how their own individual contribution can make a difference, employees will worry less about the little things, have more patience with the big things, and find a sense of purpose within their own position, therefore becoming more satisfied and more engaged.

Baldrige can do this. I'll prove it to you. Think of yourself as a business. Organizational Profile – Who are you? What is your personal vision and mission? What are your strengths and weaknesses? What are you responsible for, and even more importantly, what are you not responsible for? Who is your competition – i.e. how many and who would apply for your job? Leadership - You are the leader. How do you make key decisions within your job? How do you hold yourself accountable to those decisions? How do you inform others about the decisions? How do you incorporate feedback? Strategic Planning – What are your career goals? What are your short and long-term plans? How are you going to ensure the financial resources to attain them? Customer Focus – Your co-workers, employer and anyone you meet while on the job is your customer. How do you know your customers are satisfied with you? How do you gather their feedback? What is your method or system to communicate with them? How do you know it is effective? Measurement and Data Analysis - How do you know what you know? What are the facts to which you make decisions? How do you know they are accurate? Human Focus – You are your own employee. What are the key factors to your job satisfaction and engagement? What is your capacity and capability? Process Management – What is the process to do your job on a daily basis? How do you know it is effective? How much rework do you do? How do you identify areas to improve? How do you ensure you have met the requirements of the task?

Makes your head hurt, doesn't it? If you are a CEO, then by all means take the criteria and make a better company. However, if you are like me, just a regular employee, you can take the criteria and become a better, stronger employee. Baldrige will increase your job satisfaction and show the leaders at your company you are a key person adding value to the organization. Something else I learned from Baldrige – you can talk about a process, but a result to show effectiveness will get someone to listen. So don't tell people about Baldrige, show it through your performance and get them to ask you. They listen better that way.

Starting and Sustaining A Complete Quality System



Grace L. Duffy and John W. Moran¹

Organizations must continuously improve or become obsolete. This effort requires constant monitoring of the environment, market place, customers, stakeholders, and employees to detect any shift in priorities. The organization must anticipate these shifts to keep their stakeholders satisfied. When changes are detected, the organization's critical processes must be improved or redesigned to meet these shifts. This is basic organizational survival. A complete quality system helps an organization continually focus on what is important from a customer's perspective.

A complete quality system, as shown in Figure 1, illustrates the integration of three principles and seven elements which are the basics of any successful organization.² These three principles are customer focus, process improvement, and total involvement. The elements in Figure 1 are taken from the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria.

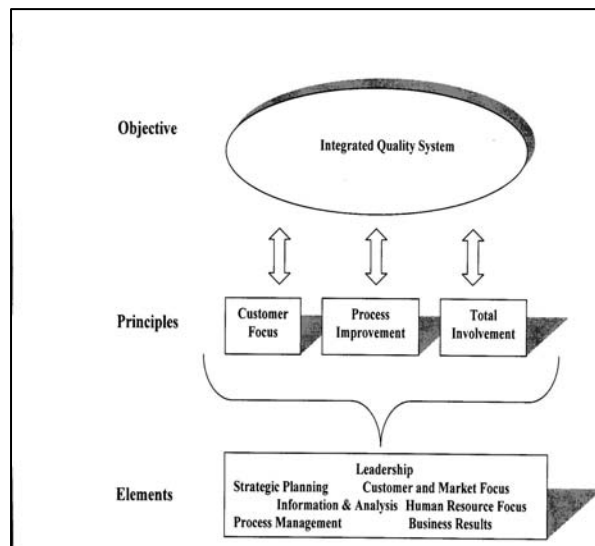


Figure 1: Complete Quality System

How And Where To Start:

If you are leader of an organization and want to implement a complete quality system to improve performance, be willing to commit your full time and energy to make it work. It has to be your number one priority. This is not something that can be delegated. It takes committed leadership to integrate a complete quality system into an organization. It is difficult and time consuming to do, but transforms an organization to one that is customer centric.

The leadership of the organization chooses areas needing the most improvement. These improvement areas could be prioritized from a Baldrige or State Quality Award self-assessment, a SWOT analysis, the strategic plan, or other indicators derived from measures of operations and customer feedback. The areas selected to be improved should be aligned to the future strategic direction of the organization, improve customer satisfaction, and be recognized by the internal staff as high priority areas worthy of investment of the time and energy that it will take to improve them.

How to Improve:

Once the organization has prioritized what to improve it needs to adopt an improvement model to guide the process. Figure 2 illustrates a five-phase methodology that supports a systematic process of improving how work is done in organizations.³ This methodology supports the whole organization; not a subset of activities labeled “quality”. Quality must be integrated into every phase of the business to be totally effective.

The methodology asks two key questions at every phase:

1. Does the process under study support the organization’s strategic mission?
2. Is the process under study necessary to meet the demands of our customers?

Phase 1: Focus	Phase 2: Assessment	Phase 3: Negotiation	Phase 4: Redesign	Phase 5: Implementation
Form Team	Map Process	Identify unmet customer needs	ACT * Analyze * Conclude * Test	Analyze implications Seek approval
Focus Team Mission Scope Objectives Strategic ties Measures	Assess and validate customer needs	Negotiate valid requirements Set improvement targets and success measures	Test and measure potential improvement possibilities	Refine Implement Monitor and measure
Outcome: Establish the change imperative and guiding principles	Outcome: Understand the current business situation	Outcome: Define real requirements and gaps in performance	Outcomes: Develop the change plan Pilot testing Refinements	Outcome: Dramatically improved performance

Figure 2: A Core Process Redesign Pathway (Waks and Moran, © 2003)

The Baldrige model can be easily integrated into this methodology. Each element of the complete quality system becomes a mega-process for design under the Core Process Redesign methodology.

Senior leadership must be active in the *focus* phase of each element. As identified in Figure 1, total involvement is a critical principle of an effective quality system.

Implementing an improvement model like the one in Figure 2 requires an investment in training for all levels of the organization; from the basics to advance tools and techniques of quality. Training is an expensive upfront investment, but well worth the expense since it gets everyone started on the same page and makes implementation smoother.

Customer and Stakeholder:

Assessing *customer needs* is critical to measuring the success of a process. This assessment component involves identifying the customers of the process, documenting what the team knows these customers currently need and might expect in the future, and planning how to close any gaps in knowledge and understanding.

These two dimensions of assessment should be performed concurrently to align process capabilities with customer needs. There are two risks in aligning these two dimensions. One is in missing performance gaps that occur when a process is not meeting customer needs. The other is missing growth opportunities or risks critical to the business. These risks may occur when a process delivers beyond what customers need. An organization should leverage this second situation. When a process delivers in anticipation of true, future expectations, this performance can be an organization’s competitive advantage.

Indicators of Success:

To be successful, any complete quality system must measure and report its performance on a routine basis. When designed and implemented effectively, performance measurement provides the following benefits⁴:

- * Supports the organization’s strategic plan by providing management with tangible indicators and goals relevant to daily activities.
- * Provides executives with sufficient and timely information regarding the effectiveness of operations before significant financial impacts are experienced.
- * Creates a work environment that supports and rewards cooperation among key functional areas to attain desired results.
- * Drives change by focusing resources and shaping behaviors toward specific, tangible results.
- * Establishes a mechanism for assigning and enforcing accountability, as well as for recognizing and rewarding outstanding performance.

Total Involvement:

Involve all levels of the organization in design and implementation of the complete quality system. Use the “top to bottom and back to the top” concept of establishing a senior management vision, sharing it with the whole organization, listening to the ideas of those impacted by the changes, and revise as necessary. Figure 3 shows the vertical alignment of strategic to operational planning that directs objectives and policy throughout the organization. The front line workforce assesses operational requirements to meet organizational requirements and returns action plans to senior management for review and scheduling.

Alignment “Vertically” Within the Organization

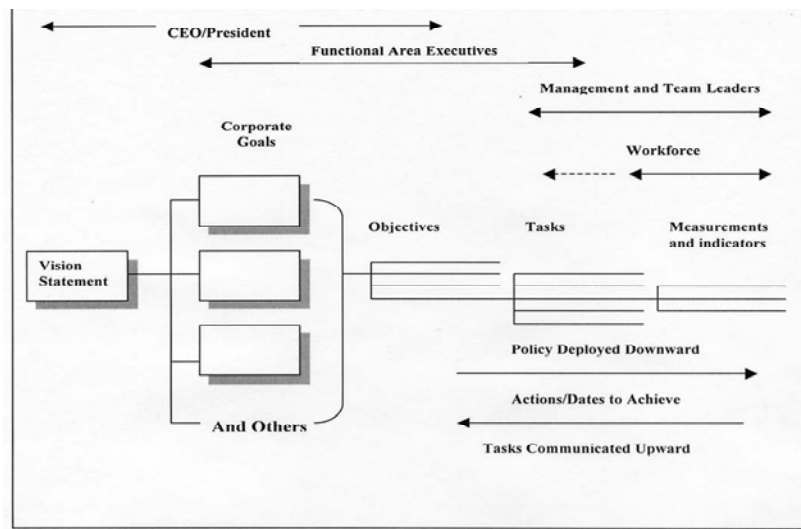


Figure 3: Vertical alignment for total involvement in Quality Improvement

Senior leadership has the responsibility of strategic planning, SWOT analysis, customer and market research and the development of an organizational vision. Once senior management has identified the general direction of the organization, functional managers are involved to take the vision to the tactical level. Goals are identified in support of the organization as a whole, and in support of the functions that comprise the total enterprise.

Functional areas work with middle and first-line managers to identify specific tactical objectives. First-line managers, team leaders and the general workforce address each of these objectives in terms of specific outputs to meet customer needs.

Conclusion

It cannot be emphasized enough - the importance of the organization's leadership total involvement in designing, implementing, nurturing, and sustaining a complete quality system. Many leaders have made the mistake that a complete quality system will take root on its own and maintain hands off approach with minimal interest. These leaders are always surprised when it fails. Employees look to the organization's leadership for direction. When they see leadership having only a passing interest in the quality program, the workforce does likewise and the whole effort becomes lip service and finally fails. Using the three principles of Customer Focus, Quality Improvement and Total Involvement is an effective way to design and implement a new system of quality within the organization.

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² Tenner, Arthur R. and Detoro, Irving J.; Total Quality Management: Three Steps to Continuous Improvement, Addison Wesley, 1992

³ The Executive Guide To Improvement And Change, G. Beecroft, G. Duffy, and J. Moran, ASQ Quality Press, 2003, Chapter 6.

⁴ The Executive Guide To Improvement And Change, G. Beecroft, G. Duffy, and J. Moran, ASQ Quality Press, 2003, Chapter 14

The Ben Hogan I Knew by Valerie Hogan



"Of all the attributes my husband had, the one that I admired most was his integrity. When the Ben Hogan Company's first batch of irons came out in 1954, he took one look at those golf clubs and said, "Throw 'em away." To him, the irons weren't right.

When that first batch of irons came out wrong, Ben knew he couldn't put them on the market. Not with his name on them. But one of his partners, Pollard Simon, a Dallas businessman and close friend, reminded Ben that they would be throwing away \$100,000 worth of irons.

"We can fix them up," Pollard said.

"We cannot fix them up," Ben said.

When Pollard kept objecting, Ben bought him out right there and then. When Ben came home that night, he told me, "I lost a partner, but I kept my integrity. I would never put those clubs on sale. I can't do that to people and I'm not going to do it."

But that was the best \$100,000 he ever threw away. It made the Ben Hogan Company all the better because people knew they could trust Ben to put out a golf club that was up to his standards, which everyone knew were very high."

**"There are no shortcuts in the quest for perfection"
Ben Hogan**

The Importance Of Baldrige To The US Economy

Previously Published: Journal for Quality and Participation – July/August 1996



Pat Townsend and Joan Gebhardt

Pat Townsend and Joan Gebhardt have written more than 400 articles and eight books.
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To fully appreciate the impact of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award keep in mind two things: the mood among American businesses in the early-to-mid 1980's and the number of "Baldrige clones" now in existence.

Memory of the business mood in the 1980's underlines the importance of the Baldrige to the American economy; recognition of its clones testifies to the versatility and strength of the award worldwide. If there was ever any doubt as to which quality award is the *first among equals*, Japan ended the discussion by rolling out a Baldrige based Japanese Quality Award in 1996.

The wake up call

Students of American business history can relish the irony. Less than two decades earlier, the 1980 NBC television white paper, *If Japan Can do It, Why Can't We?*, sounded an alarm over the magnitude and nature of the Japanese challenge to the American economy. By the mid-1980's, American business people were being told by customers, analysts, and journalists that they were in serious trouble – clueless as to how to stem the flow of Japanese automobiles and electronics into American markets. Pilgrimages to Japan to learn how they do it were a regular feature on the calendars of American business executives.

Concurrently, the private sector made several attempts to establish a national quality award along the lines of the Deming Prize, first awarded in Japan in 1950. Seen as a key element in Japan's meteoric rise from being the source of *all-things-cheap-and-breakable* to being the acknowledged leader in quality, the Deming Prize had rallied the Japanese business community, providing a common vocabulary and an agreed-upon model.

Moreover, Deming Prizes were announced on national television, reportedly drawing large viewing audiences and making the award a major commercial plus.

Other Americans looked closer to home for inspiration. Tom Peters and Bob Waterman wrote *In Search of Excellence*, the first serious (and popular) effort to tell the American business community that all was not lost and that there were American exemplars to excellence that could serve as models for rejuvenating the economy.

And then came the Baldrige

The basic legislation for the Baldrige was introduced in Congress in early 1986, quickly relegated to a committee and, equally quickly, pigeonholed. The proposed legislation wasn't, however, completely abandoned. By spring of '87, occasional discussions on how to implement the idea resulted in the decision to have the National Bureau of Standards design and administer a national quality award – if the legislation ever became law.

Sadly, the death of Secretary of Commerce Malcolm Baldrige proved to be the catalyst for making the award a reality. Baldrige was both liked and respected by members of both political parties, besides being a highly effective member of the Cabinet and a personal friend of President Reagan. In his 60's, he was – to use an old phrase no longer in favor – a man's man who still occasionally competed as a rodeo cowboy.

On July 25, 1987, he was mortally injured in a riding accident (he had been inducted as a Great Westerner by the Cowboy Hall of Fame in 1984). Soon after his death, the half-forgotten legislation, resurrected with Baldrige's name attached, swept through Congress on a voice note.

The role of NIST and Curt Reimann

Suddenly, the nation had the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award with the National Bureau of Standards as its administrator. NBS (now called NIST, the National Institute for Standards and Technology), a branch of the Commerce Department, was an inspired choice: Its employees are, undeniably, the least political group of civilians on the government payroll. In addition, the organization had in recent years begun to wrestle with the fact that the use of measurement in industry appeared to be moving from finished product inspection to in-process prevention and correction.

And, most fortuitously, Dr. Curt Reimann was at NBS. He had become a member of the American Society for Quality Control a couple of years previously and had been instrumental in getting NBS enrolled as an institutional member of the ASQC. As a result, he had some knowledge of the players in the burgeoning field of quality, and he was aware of their range of preferences with regard to criteria for a na-

tional quality award. Happily, the fact that Reimann had no known allegiance to any one guru or methodology allowed him to be an honest broker in the discussions that followed.

When the legislation passed, NBS and Reimann could be sure of three things:

1. President Reagan could most likely be counted on to present the award named after his good friend.
2. Reagan was leaving office at the end of 1988.
3. There was little or no agreement about how to proceed.

Speed bumps along the implementation path.... To complicate matters, there were at least two major types of rifts in the quality community: one between the *quality people* and the *productivity people*; and a series of divisions between the disciples of the various recognized gurus. To complicate matters even further, the president of the ASQC had blasted the idea of a national quality award in an editorial in the ASQC's journal, *Quality Progress*, in March 1987. There was even a minor battle between the *quality control people* and those who preferred the term *quality assurance*. And the incredibly short time frame meant that everyone was going to have to cooperate- with Reimann and with each other.

Calling on Dr. Deming

In the end, it was impossible to satisfy everyone – especially Dr. W. Edwards Deming. During the process of inviting everyone in under the big tent he was constructing, Reimann personally called virtually everyone who had been active in some attempt to build a national quality award and/or was a known voice in the field. One of the first people he called was the redoubtable Dr. Deming.

Within a minute of telling him who he was and what was going forward as a result of the new law, Reimann was informed in no uncertain terms that:

- * There was no organization in America good enough to receive such recognition....
- * And even if there were, there was no one in America knowledgeable enough to make such a judgment.

Deming never changed his mind and he never accepted the award's views on goals and benchmarking and recognition – to name just a few.

Juran, Feigenbaum and Crosby.... The two other major gurus (Doctors Joseph Juran and Armand Feigenbaum) supported the award from the outset, offering constructive ideas and their personal endorsements.

Phil Crosby withheld his endorsement, objecting to - among other things – the idea of self-nomination/application. He proposed that customers nominate recipients, overlooking the fact that customers are not in a position to evaluate the processes that create customer satisfaction. Self-assessment and feedback are major benefits of the award; neither result from a customer nomination. While Crosby continued to snipe at the Baldrige, several Baldrige winners – including the two 1995 winners – point to him as part of their “quality roots”.

Getting the Baldrige on the street

By the time that he convened his first official meeting on September 24, 1987, Reimann already had a basic outline of the award application, to include the seven categories that have become one of the distinguishing characteristics of all Baldrige clones.

The criteria had to be on the street by mid-January if a full cycle was to be possible before Reagan left office. To make the rush for the first award cycle more palatable, Reimann promised that the award's criteria and procedures would themselves serve as a role model of continual improvement through an annual review and modification procedure. If a particular faction was unhappy over a specific detail, they knew they would get a crack at revising it the following year. (The 1996 Improvement Day was scheduled for June 21.)

Reimann's personal schedule was keyed to a meeting in late October with the new Secretary of Commerce William Verity, who proved to be a true advocate of the award, offering invaluable support. Prior to October, Reimann, a senior member of the NBS staff, had never made a presentation to the Secretary of Commerce, much less on a topic that had presidential interest. He has since said, “Terror helps to set priorities”. The only reason that he and his small staff only worked seven days a week was that they couldn't manufacture an eighth day.

The NBS and Reimann succeeded

The Baldrige Award Criteria was available in January, 1988; 12,000 applications were requested that first year, and President Reagan made the presentations that fall.

Reimann's role can not be overestimated... As mentioned above, Reimann defined the seven categories which have proven so durable. He credits his background as a chemist and scientist for having trained him to look for fundamental truths that would not ebb and flow with changing opinions and personalities. When asked, “Why seven?”, Reimann paraphrases an old Volkswagen commercial explaining why the VW had four forward gears by saying, “Because six was too few and eight seemed like too many.”

And Reimann built lasting bridges between people... The fact that there is a coherent quality community in the United States and a good share of the world, a community with a fairly consistent view of what is meant by the word *quality* and how to achieve it, is directly attributable to Reimann's Baldrige efforts.

From negotiating the original definition of the Baldrige to winning near-unanimous support to guiding the growth of the award through its first several years, he was of extraordinary importance.

Reimann has since retired, although he is still hanging around NIST, answering questions and offering opinions. (Dr. Harry Hertz, a friend and colleague, is the current Director of the Baldrige program.)

Growth and strength of the greater Baldrige

One of the signs of growth and strength of the Baldrige is the number of Baldrige clones throughout the United States in states, counties, cities, businesses, and non-profit organizations such as the United Way of America – not to mention foreign countries.

While skeptics question why the number of applicants for the Baldrige remains flat over the years, Reimann points out that the number of applicants for Baldrige-based awards in the United States continues to grow.

Self-assessments grow... Last year between 700 and 800 organizations went through a process of self-assessment by filling out an application and received feedback from a minimum of three outside examiners/consultants. The implications are enormous. Even if an organization applies only once and drops out after the first examiner assessment, they have a much better idea of what they don't know and/or don't do.

Combine the growing number of Baldrige and Baldrige clone applicants with the number of organizations who have signed up for classes by Baldrige winners and you have the *American Quality Revolution*.

Other measures

The Baldrige is not, of course, the only formal, outside-measured, public recognition for quality. The Deming Prize and ISO 9000 are also universally acknowledged. While all intend to focus on customer satisfaction and continual improvement, the three can be compared briefly:

- * The Deming Prize lays down a set of prescriptive criteria, a road map of the only route to quality
- * The Baldrige criteria relies on a descriptive criteria, a combination destination and compass with a request for information about which routes have been chosen.
- * ISO 9000 requires evidence that a trip, almost any trip, is made without requiring assurance that the destination has been reached.

The contrast between the three explains why Baldrige winners are invaluable to the rest of the business community: The Baldrige encourages a wide variety of approaches to reach the common goal of customer satisfaction, as long as the emphasis is on processes that insure continual improvement. After eight years of winners, the selection of lessons-to-be-learned is a virtual smorgasbord of ways to make money – assuming the listener is willing to put in the necessary work.

The financial impact of quality is beyond reasonable challenge

After Dr. Juran made a casual comment that he was sure that buying stock in Baldrige winners was a solid investment, several journalists decided to check it out. Using 20-20 hindsight calculations, no matter how the answer was computed (just whole company winners such as Motorola and Federal Express; companies whose subsidiaries won, such as AT&T or GM; everyone who received site visits), the results were consistent: Earnings were significantly ahead of the Standard & Poors average for the stock market as a whole.

A cynic would observe that for an American business executive not to know that pursuing quality is financially sound requires a willful misinterpretation of widely available data. (Unless you confine your reading to the Wall Street Journal: which has figured out that quality makes money.)

The Baldrige quickly established itself as a major force in American business

Early winners such as Motorola and FedEx became passionate corporate missionaries for the cause, spreading the word to anyone who would listen. While the original law specified that winners would be required to teach, no one dared to dream that the winners would take to that task so enthusiastically.

The role of the examiners

Reimann, his NIST team, and the various members of the quality community also made a pivotal decision when they opted for a rotating group of award examiners rather than a stable of in-house experts. In practice this has meant that trained examiners go back to their own firms and continue educating the American workforce. Since the primary objective of the Baldrige is to spread information about the concepts of quality, this ripple effect is exactly what the legislators had in mind.

Each year, there are approximately 2,500 volunteers trained as examiners for the Baldrige and all the Baldrige clones in the United States, creating a pool of quality experts. Other nations that have adopted Baldrige-based national quality awards have reported a similar ripple effect.

Deming may well have been right in thinking that the average JUSE (Japanese Union of Scientists and Engineers) consultant who works full-time as a professional consultant is more knowledgeable than the average Baldrige examiner who holds a part-time position for two years. JUSE consultants, however, typically determine winners of the Deming Prize from among the three-to-five Japanese companies who apply each year.

Given their year-round status as outside consultants and their relatively small numbers, they are incapable of having a long range impact equal to that of the Baldrige examiners.

Your Boss Is A Jerk. So What?

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Scott Paton
President of Paton Professional

You've just been to a big conference (or small one, more likely these days) and you're psyched. You've heard a couple of great keynotes, sat in on some terrific sessions, and maybe spent a day in a workshop that really got your juices flowing. These people were speaking to you. They understand how you feel. They pushed all your buttons. Then, reality hits. You realize that you've got to go back to work.

If only real life were like the gurus told you it was... Reality usually hits you after lunch on the last day of the conference or maybe as you're sitting on your flight home: "My boss will never let me do this," the voice inside your head says. "He's more interested in his next business trip, or meeting quota, or kissing up to his boss than he ever will be about all the great stuff I've just learned." In short, your boss is a jerk.

What to do? Deal with it. Rather, continue to deal with it. Chances are you've been doing it for quite some time. You know that a robust corrective action system will reap benefits beyond belief. You just know that if only you could implement a lean process, your organization would make money hand over fist. Alas, management often just doesn't get it.

Of course, we all know that truly effective change comes from the top, and that without senior management leadership, any improvement initiative is bound to fail. Right?

Well, maybe not.

I'm always amazed at the deep devotion most quality professionals have to their profession. (And I'm equally amazed at how little credit these good folks receive in most organizations.)

A lot of good work comes from the middle, from the people who make change and improvement happen *despite* their boss and their boss' boss. This may be a heretical point of view, but I think it's true. I've met thousands of quality professionals during my many years in this field, and I see the fire, the passion, and the devotion to excellence. I see the unwillingness to accept things as they are. These people have an uncanny way of making things happen even when they don't have "official" support.

During the recent American Society for Quality's World Conference on Quality and Improvement in St. Louis, an interesting woman came by our booth several times. The first day of the conference, she stopped by the booth and bought a few books. She was obviously a dedicated quality professional. The second and final day of the conference, she stopped by the booth again late in the afternoon, and she was discouraged. She told us that her boss was more interested in his next trip to Asia than he was about quality improvement. She had sat in on some great sessions, had done some networking with her peers and exhibitors, and bought some books.

"I am so depressed," she said. She told us that what she really needed was some real-world sessions on how to make her boss understand how important quality improvement was. "I sit through all these sessions and meet all these wonderful people, and then I have to go back to the office. None of this will make any difference." She never said her boss was a jerk, but he certainly didn't seem to be very interested in quality improvement.

At first, I felt sorry for her. Then, as I listened to more of her story, I thought of what a tremendous asset she was to her organization. She was willing to tilt at windmills even though she wasn't getting any support. She obviously wanted to make a difference. I smiled to myself as she was talking, because I knew she was doing good work and that she was making a difference to her organization, even if she didn't think she was.

One of Isaac Newton's laws of motion is that every action has an equal and opposite reaction. The same law applies to people. You may think that your efforts are in vain and that you're not having a positive effect, but in most cases, you are. Keep on tilting at windmills. You are making a difference. Your boss may be a jerk. So what? What matters is that you are doing your best and your efforts are making a difference (even if it isn't immediately apparent to Mr. Big).

"The highest reward for your work is not what you get for it, but what you become by it."

John Maxwell



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