

Pursuit of  
Excellence



## ON THE PATH TO ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE?

Congratulations! You've decided to advance your organization's performance and value. Getting your team & processes there efficiently is what we do best. Let us show you how...



PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE LLC

# Beginning on the Excellence Journey requires a plan and an expert guide.

Would you climb a mountain for the first time without a mountain guide, who knows how to keep you safe and have the best experience and result? Of course not.

Beginning the excellence journey *effectively* requires cutting edge skills in organizational leadership and strategy, coupled with project management skills, data analysis and management, process optimization, and customer and workforce engagement. It takes a continued focus on these elements over the course of the journey, to avoid the dreaded 'flavor of the month' perception. Making continued progress can be a daunting time commitment during the process, as you tap into precious resources yet again... Get to the goal with better organizational health. Get guidance.

If you're new to the journey, you can save time and effort by working with an experienced consultant to guide your team's efforts toward the goals in a timeline that supports your organization's health, maturity, and strategy. With the right consultant, organizations can save years on their excellence journey, while improving processes that deliver exceptional

customer value. The first benefit is simply having a solid work plan that provides a successful framework across the organization for the project. It takes experience to know what pieces fit together and when, for the best results. Failure to plan is to plan to fail...

## Where is the right starting point for your organization?

There are many ways to begin your journey. Which one is right for you? An assessment of your organization's readiness and strengths is a great foundation to measure progress and levels of success.

Some organizations start with a questionnaire of their workforce, leaders and key stakeholders. Others start with a short-form application. Still others start with a Baldrige Assessment process. Which method is best suited to your needs and budget? If your team is not familiar with these, or experienced in the process, you may begin down one path only to realize limited benefits, feedback or success.

Your leader's time and reputation are key to your success. A conversation with a Baldrige-based consultant can help you find the best route for you, the first time, while allowing progress on other organizational priorities and needs. It's common sense.

It's not easy, yet the experience is incredibly valuable!

- ✓ Establish key work processes that ensure effective communication, workforce, customer and stakeholder engagement, and alignment with your mission, vision and values.
- ✓ Evaluate your work systems for short and long-term planning, workforce and leader development, and sustainability for the future.
- ✓ Identify and improve your most important results, as key to success in your industry and market.

## Advance your leadership talent and skill set

Examiners and leaders that are new to the Baldrige framework and criteria typically report that it is overwhelming and yet extremely valuable as a skillset.

Baldrige updates their criteria every two years, in order to ensure that it captures the leading edge of validated management practice. In fact, participation in the Baldrige Examiner Training has been considered a top 10 leadership training process for over ten years. What that means for your organization is that working through the process will not only help you to achieve high level performance results, but will also build your talent bench strength in proven leadership skills and abilities. That's additional value for now and for the future, to advance your capabilities!

Applied learning in organizational leadership is the best way to build talent and abilities. Whether your team embarks on an internal excellence journey with a member or two who have served as state or national Baldrige examiners, or you decide to use an experienced consultant to guide your progress, the application of the criteria will open the eyes of your team to the untapped potential for process refinement, optimization, learning and integration of best practices. It's time to seize the value...

# Create a role-model organization, or a *Community of Excellence*, right at home

As you embark on the excellence journey, something amazing happens around you. Other entities tend to rise to a higher level too.

Embarking on the excellence journey clearly helps your organization to ultimately be viewed as a world-class leader, and it also raises the bar for other organizations in your community. Does that add value to your business and others? You bet it does. Bring greatness home too.

Imagine a school system, a non-profit health care system, a small business, and a city government all working toward the excellence journey. That's the concept of communities of excellence, another route that high-performing organizations may explore, to advance an entire community! An unlimited variety of organizations can come together, to get better together.

Specific *Community of Excellence* Baldrige criteria provides the mechanism to bring together the right team members of the various organizations. As representatives begin to see the benefits, it's natural for them to view their own organizations differently. That becomes the impetus for an internal excellence corollary journey.

**What's the ROI for the excellence journey? How about 820:1 dollar-for-dollar return! Amazing? Yes, and it's real.**

When organizations begin on the excellence journey, their stakeholders notice. Customers pay attention, raise their expectations, and when you meet or exceed them, you gain market share. When you deliver exceptional value consistently, suppliers notice too...

When you are looking for new talent and share with prospects that you're on the excellence journey, they get excited, and they want to join you! High performing organizations are a talent magnet. Many Baldrige recipients report a *waiting list* for employees in their organizations. This could be your experience too.

As you advance your work processes, and a system of process improvement across the organization, you begin to work smarter, with better margins on every product and service. That translates to a very solid bottom line, to support growth. Showing key results of your performance compared to competitors helps you gain financing for growth, as well as a better credit rating. Lastly, leadership's growth through the process with performance metrics, organizational learning, and stronger customer relationships builds the future.



# Performance measurement matters

Nearly half of a Baldrige application's points relate to metric results; that's not by accident.

Measurements based upon accurate and reliable data help leaders to make better, informed decisions. That practice always beats our instincts or past history. Using the Baldrige process to identify what is most important strategically and operationally helps organizations to become laser-focused for lasting success.

Result categories include core work process results, customer, workforce, leadership and governance, financial and market performance results. You select the results that fit the criteria questions, and as you improve them, you begin to compare your performance to comparison sources and benchmarks. Over time, your performance becomes the benchmark for others!



- ✓ Identify the most meaningful results in each of the criteria areas.
- ✓ View your results through key customer or market segments. Where should you focus and improve?
- ✓ Evaluate your performance against relevant comparisons or competitors.
- ✓ Evaluate your performance against industry best practice benchmarks.
- ✓ Learn how to identify appropriate targets and action thresholds for improvement.

## Who can help?

- ✓ Consultants are available on the Baldrige website, as well as through your state Baldrige Alliance Programs (state Baldrige programs).
- ✓ Choose a consultant who has both state and national program experience with demonstrated excellence journey success. This is a significant undertaking – quality matters.
- ✓ Expect a two year engagement, with an initial work plan, including cycles of improvements.
- ✓ Some consultants will write your application using your team's content.

## Why should Pursuit of Excellence (PoE) LLC be your consultant of choice, and guide your organization's journey?

- ✓ PoE has over ten years of experience at the national Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) level, leading teams of examiners in evaluating top performing national and recipient organizations. PoE has the skills and experience to skillfully evaluate each category item in view of the criteria and industry, across sectors and levels of maturity, while providing balanced guidance to move your organization to your goal.
- ✓ At the state level, PoE has served for years as an applicant, examiner, organizational lead, trainer

and consultant. Experience matters, and delivers more value to your team.

- ✓ PoE is a highly recommended consultant within the Wisconsin/WFA program, and has guided several organizations to the highest level award, Excellence recognition.

**PoE brings leadership, strategic alignment, knowledge management, data analysis, process execution, and quality management to your team, while managing the project from end to end.**

- ✓ If you don't have an available team member with these skills your journey to excellence is at risk. Without leadership skills and accountability, the plan won't happen.

- ✓ Using PoE as your Baldrige-based consultant keeps your team accountable, the quality of your application top notch, and timeline deliverables on schedule.
- ✓ Your leaders can focus on moving existing strategic priorities forward.

**Your vision, values and organizational health matter as you advance your journey. PoE reflects your values through team and leadership actions.**

- ✓ Let's be honest, advancing on the organizational excellence journey means creating lots of change. Your team will be challenged at times, and will need to learn new behaviors and skills. Wouldn't you prefer to have an expert lead that?

- ✓ Advancing performance means aligning and working through your processes and results with key stakeholders, like your board, and key community members. You need a consultant who reflects your leadership positively when working with these key contacts. PoE reflects your leadership behaviors and values seamlessly.

- ✓ One of the biggest failure points in organizational excellence is to expect change too quickly. Cultural change takes time, as major organizational processes and systems evolve. PoE leads your changes at a pace suited to your capabilities, while streamlining the entire process, often by years. If you're serious about excellence, PoE is your preferred choice.



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