

# The Baldrige Criteria...

The Baldrige Criteria provide a structured approach to balancing the needs of the customer and the needs of the organization. The criteria help organizations develop cycles of learning that lead to growth and improvement.

They are built upon a foundation of core values and concepts that set the context – behaviors and attributes – of organizations on their journey to performance excellence.

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Categories

The Criteria encompass seven interrelated, common sense (though not common practice) categories that drive organizational excellence:

- 1 Leadership
- 2 Strategic Planning
- 3 Customer Focus
- 4 Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management
- 5 Workforce Focus
- 6 Operations Focus
- 7 Results

## An Easy Way In

While it doesn't follow the order that the categories appear in the criteria, what follows is a logical way to think through this improvement system.

### Customer Focus

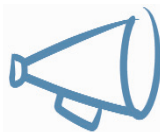
It starts with an organization's stakeholders – current customers, future customers and non-customers – and understanding what they want and need.



Knowledge gained by listening to customers and building long-term relationships provides intelligence for future needs. Customer knowledge is based upon facts and data that are gathered and analyzed to drive future direction.

### Leadership

Leadership sets the future direction, expectations and values based on customer needs. Organizational leaders are



responsible for developing employees to be the best that they can be. Leaders articulate and communicate why the organization exists today and how they wish it to exist tomorrow. They are responsible for the health and well-being of the organization.



### Strategic Planning

Leadership sets the future direction through Strategic Planning. Strategic Planning provides the road map to the future by establishing objectives, action plans and mile markers along the way.

### Workforce Focus

In order to implement a strategic plan, the organization needs the right people with the right skills at the right place at the right time. An engaged workforce is motivated to do its best for the customer and the organization.



### Operations Focus

The organization is now ready to run its business through management of its products, services, business and support from design through delivery of value to the customer.

### Measurement, Analysis and Knowledge Management



Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management includes allocation of resources to meet the organization's strategy. It helps the organization retain information, ideas, and knowledge that resides within its ever-evolving workforce. Organizations use, invest and grow this "know-how" to stay competitive.

### Results

This all leads to predictable Results that come from strategies developed to engage customers and meet their needs.



# ...Create Cycles of Learning