

The Baldrige Excellence Framework

Complete information about the program can be found at <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige>

In the United States, the highest quality recognition a company can receive is the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, presented by the nation's president. The award is named in honor of a former Secretary of Commerce who promoted high quality as a business standard.

The evaluation process follows the Baldrige Excellence Framework, which views the organization as a system. Plans, processes, measurement systems, and activities must be integrated with a holistic approach.

The Framework recognizes **Seven Critical Areas** to improve performance and achieve excellence:

1. Leadership
2. Strategy
3. Customers
4. Measurement, analysis, and knowledge management
5. Workforce
6. Operations
7. Results

There are **core values of high-performing organizations** that align with these areas. **In Stage 1 of the evaluation, you pick the core values that align with critical areas:**

- Systems perspective
- Visionary leadership
- Customer-focused excellence
- Valuing people
- Organizational learning and agility
- Focus on success
- Managing for innovation
- Management by fact
- Societal responsibility
- Ethics and transparency
- Delivering value and results

Then, in Stage 2, you determine the company processes that support the core values and evaluate your processes along four dimensions:

1. Approach: how your organization gets things done
2. Deployment: how consistently you use those processes across the company
3. Learning: how much you have improved and how well you share this
4. Integration: how well your processes are integrated throughout the organization

Last, you look at the results of your improvements and evaluate them along four additional dimensions:

1. Levels: determine your current level of performance.
2. Trends: determine if you're improving or not.
3. Comparisons: compare your performance with competitors and benchmarks.
4. Integration: ensure your results align with the interests of key stakeholders and that you use the results when making decisions.

The Baldrige evaluation process is one of the best assessments your company can do. It focuses on how well you satisfy your customers and stakeholders by continuously improving your ability to deliver products and services.

You don't have to evaluate all the core values or every critical area. The Baldrige Excellence Framework lets you choose the criteria that applies best to your organization. This flexible structure is ideal for companies that need to assess their overall program.