

Baldrige approach: Framework for the self-evaluation of support services

This draft document provides a framework for the evaluation of support services and may be adapted to address a particular environment's needs. It is based on the **Malcolm Baldrige approach** for the evaluation, planning and improvement of an organisation. The following areas are covered:

1. Leadership and management
2. Strategic Planning
3. Stakeholder focus
4. Information for improvement
5. Staff focus
6. Effectiveness of processes
7. Quality of outcomes/results

Judgements about each section are expressed using the following scale below:

- A.** Meet all the best practices listed in the evaluation framework. There is evidence / there are indications that there is success with regard to this area or process.
- B.** Meet most the best practices listed in the evaluation framework. There is evidence / there are indications that progress has been made in this area / process. Stakeholders indicate their satisfaction.
- C.** Meet some of the best practices listed in the evaluation framework.
- D.** Meet none of the best practices listed in the evaluation framework. The process is still in the pipeline or the current performance is unsatisfactory.

Each section is supplied with a sample definition, questions and examples of best practices.

1. Leadership and management

1.1 Definition

Define and actively communicate an appropriate vision and goals for the future, linked to the needs of the groups we serve and manage the processes for the effective implementation of the actions emanating from the vision

1.2 Questions

1. How is the leadership group of the division constituted?
2. Does our division have a clearly defined, documented and shared view of your mission, vision, values, plans and goals?
3. How do leaders guide our division, and clarify, build and sustain consensus on our directions and priorities? Describe the leadership and management style
4. How do leaders focus our division on understanding and addressing needs and expectations of stakeholders?

5. How do leaders use communication, performance review and other approaches to foster effective leadership systems and practices throughout the organization?
6. How effective are the management processes for implementation of the actions emanating from the vision?

1.3 Examples of best practices

1. Clearly defined, documented and shared mission, vision, values, plans and goals, aligned with those of the institution
2. Two-way communication is standard practice- leaders listen, build consensus and create a sense of community
3. Leaders are role models- personally involved, collaborative and tolerant of differing perspectives
4. Set improvement goals and motivate
5. Enthusiastic and effective advocacy with stakeholder groups
6. Encourage feedback on their performance - 360-degree approach
7. Visibly dedicated to the well-being of the organization, its employees and the community

2. Strategic Planning

2.1 Definition

Translate vision into plans with definite goals

2.2 Questions

1. How does our division translate its mission, vision and values into priorities, goals and action steps?
2. Does our division have a formal planning process and a plan?
3. How do we implement and evaluate our plans and goals?
4. Review the areas for improvement listed. Develop a one- sentence summary for each item that clearly conveys the improvement sought.

2.3 Examples of best practices

1. A formalized planning process, and short- and long-term plans exist, and are well understood by all
2. The planning process and plans synchronize with the mission, vision, values, goals and objectives, and are integrated with resource allocation
3. Attention to assuring coordination and alignment among all organizational levels
4. Planning process accommodates crises and unexpected events
5. Clear, measurable, aggressive goals and indicators based on trends and comparisons to peers and leading organizations
6. Comprehensive communication plan for all internal and external groups.

3. Stakeholder focus

3.1 Definition

(Stakeholders: Those whose interests are affected by the work of our division)

Stakeholder Focus:

- Listen to and understand the needs and perspectives of those we serve
- Identify and close gaps
- Develop a service ethic

3.2 Questions

1. For what groups does our division provide programs and services?
 - a. Those served by our department or division
 - In the institution:
 - Outside the institution:
 - b. Those who benefit directly from the work of our division
 - c. Those upon whom our existence depends
 - d. Those who can choose to use or not to use our programmes or services
2. How does our division learn about the needs and expectations of these stakeholder groups?
3. How do we build and enhance our relationships, communication and reputation with stakeholders?
4. How do we assess the satisfaction levels of our major stakeholder groups?
5. Review the areas for improvement listed. Develop a one- sentence summary for each item that clearly conveys the improvement sought.

3.3 Examples of best practices

Organization-wide service ethic

1. Shared view as to the priority of groups served by the division
2. Standardized and systematic approach to assessing the needs, expectations, priorities, perceptions, dissatisfiers and satisfaction levels of all major stakeholder groups
3. Organization-wide system for sharing information gathered through assessments
4. Information on needs and expectations of stakeholder groups used to develop service standards which are implemented and measured throughout the division
5. Leaders publicly recognized locally, within state, regionally and nationally for innovation and/or achievement in service excellence
6. Strong focus on infront-line, people-to-people encounters and enhancing relationship quality and reputation.

4. Information for improvement

4.1 Definition

Gather information on the achievement of our goals. Use information for improvement.

4.2 Questions

1. How do you select and use data and information to assess excellence levels and trends for your division?
2. How do you use information to coordinate and improve all aspects of the division?
3. How does your division select and use comparative information from peer, competitor divisions in other organizations?
4. Review the areas for improvement listed. Develop a one- sentence summary for each item that clearly conveys the improvement sought.

4.3 Examples of best practices

1. Systematic approach to information-gathering and use
2. Information used to develop excellence indicators/measures
3. Criteria and measures anchored in division and institutional mission, vision, goals and priorities
4. Indicators used to focus and lead the organization
5. Systems in place to assure organization-wide access to and use of excellence indicator information
6. Information gathered and used to improve efficiency and effectiveness
7. Measures link division performance to stakeholder needs
8. Information gathered and used to assess, monitor and improve employee satisfaction levels and trends

5. Staff Focus

5.1 Definition

Create a culture that encourages excellence, engagement, professional development, commitment and pride. Reward and recognize performance and synchronize individual and organizational goals

5.2 Questions

1. How is the staff encouraged to develop their full potential, and to link their efforts with the priorities of the division and institution?
2. How does our division build and maintain an environment that is conducive to excellence, engagement, appreciation of diversity and personal and organizational advancement?
3. How do we assess and monitor workplace climate and the satisfaction of staff?
4. How do we work towards greater diversity in the staff composition?
5. Review the areas for improvement listed. Develop a one- sentence summary for each item that clearly conveys the improvement sought.

5.3 Examples of best practices

1. Formalized human resources plans
2. Plans synchronize individual's work with mission, vision, plans, achievement goals and service excellence goals of the division and institution
3. Systematic efforts to address and assess staff needs, expectations and satisfaction/dissatisfaction levels
4. Professional development philosophy and program with continuous training and educational opportunities
5. Individual, group and department recognition programs linked with plans and goals

6. Effectiveness of processes

6.1 Definition

Identify, analyse, standardize and continuously improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes with all users and beneficiaries in mind.

6.2 Questions

1. What are your key processes for fulfilling your mission/vision? (Briefly describe each)
2. What group(s) are the beneficiaries of each process?
3. How does your division identify, monitor and assure the effectiveness and efficiency of your mission-critical work processes?
4. How does the division regularly review and improve mission-critical processes?
5. How are comparisons with other organizations used for process improvement?
6. Review the areas for improvement listed. Develop a one- sentence summary for each item that clearly conveys the improvement sought.

6.3 Examples of best practices

1. All mission-critical (core) and support processes identified, well- defined, standardized and appropriately documented
2. Improvement efforts focus on processes that are important to users and beneficiaries
3. Continuous improvements in effectiveness, efficiency, response/cycle time, cost, value and service
4. Problem prevention and error correction are addressed within normal work processes
5. Alliances / partnerships / relationships are monitored and evaluated
6. Comparisons and comparative information used systematically
7. Cross-functional and cross-department groups are created for processes involving more than one department

7. Quality of outcomes/results

7.1 Definition

Results count. Document, communicate and review progress toward vision and goals. Compare our outcomes/results to those of peers.

7.2 Questions

1. How successful is our division overall in achieving its mission, vision, plans and goals?
2. How successful are specific programs and services in achieving their goals?
3. How satisfied are our users and beneficiaries?
4. How satisfied is our staff?
5. How successful are our alliances, partnerships, relationships?
6. How does the quality of outcomes/results compare with those of peers?
7. Review the areas for improvement listed. Develop a one- sentence summary for each item that clearly conveys the improvement sought.

7.3 Examples of best practices

1. Quality levels are documented
2. Quality levels compare favourable with peers
3. Users, beneficiaries are highly satisfied with quality of services
4. High levels of divisional staff satisfaction
5. Positive alliance, supplier and partner relationships
6. Documented and favorable comparisons in all of the above areas in relation to peer, competitor and leading organizations
7. Record of significant achievement and continuous improvement of effectiveness, productivity, value and efficiency- particularly in mission-critical processes
8. A recognized institutional, regional and national /sectoral standard-setter