
*Minnesota Council for Quality Stakeholder Update
February 2003*

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1. A Message from the President: What Makes Organizations Successful?

Ah, the manager's (and investor's) ultimate rhetorical question: what makes an organization successful? Is it having an innovative product or service that satisfies customer or stakeholder needs better than your competition? Yes. Is it having trained, motivated, capable, and satisfied human resources? Yes. Is it having strong leadership that understands the organization's environment, sets and communicates direction and strategy, deploys and reinforces objectives and plans, and uses data to make decisions and adjustments? Yes.

Ok, well if it is all of the above, then what is it? What really enables organizations to sustain levels of performance over time?

The Criteria for Performance Excellence of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award begin to answer that question. First published in 1987, the Criteria outline validated best practices that leading organizations use to drive results. This is important: they are validated practices, meaning that have been proven over time by studying successful organizations. The Criteria are NOT theoretical and do not reflect academic hypotheses; rather, they are the "leading edge of validated management practice" in US organizations (Arnold Weimerskirch, former Baldrige Chief Judge and VP-Quality, Honeywell).

The Criteria are divided into seven categories: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; human resource focus; process management; and results. The specific Criteria under these Categories

change every year to reflect the changing drivers of organizational success. Given the changes in the American economy and the identification of new factors that drive performance excellence, the 2003 Criteria reflect several key changes, including an increased emphasis on leadership, ethics, governance, knowledge management, process management, and value creation.

If you are interested in learning more about the 2003 Criteria for Performance Excellence and the factors that drive organizational success, we invite you to attend a one-day overview on March 4 at Cargill in Minnetonka. The session will be conducted by Gary Floss and Jim Hill. Mr. Floss is on the MN Council for Quality Board of Directors and is Chief Judge on the Minnesota Quality Award Panel of Judges; he is the former Chairperson of the Baldrige Panel of Judges and the former VP-Quality at Medtronic and Ceridian. Mr. Hill is six-year Evaluator with Minnesota Quality Award, and is director of Performance Assessment at Nuclear Management Company. Training is \$250 for Council members, \$300 for the public, and is free (one seat) for those organizations participating in a 2003 assessment and for Evaluators completing training in April (see Article 2, below).

For more information, to register, or to obtain a copy of the 2003 Criteria, please contact the Council at mc4quality@aol.com

Yours in Improvement,

Brian S. Lassiter
President, MN Council for Quality

2. Seeking Applicants to the 2003 Board of Evaluators

The Minnesota Council for Quality is seeking qualified applicants to the 2003 Board of Evaluators, and has set the timeline for the spring training cycle. New Evaluator applications are due Wednesday, February 26 (extended) and orientation training is Tuesday, March 4. Applications for returning Evaluators are due Friday, March 21 and training for ALL Evaluators is scheduled for April 1-3. Both training sessions will be conducted at Cargill in Minnetonka.

There are many benefits to becoming an Evaluator, including strengthening your ability to use the Criteria for Performance Excellence for organizational assessment and improvement, networking with peers across the state and enhancing your own professional growth, forming relationships with evaluation team members that oftentimes last for years, reviewing performance of organizations throughout the state – possibly identifying best practices for your organization, and developing other skills such as analysis, consensus- and team-building, interpersonal, written communication, interviewing, and systems thinking.

But there's another reason to consider joining us in 2003. With the challenges currently facing Minnesota organizations, many are turning to our assessment process to identify improvement opportunities. In fact, we could have as many as 20-30 organizations that desire an assessment in 2003. Therefore, we could face the possibility of having to grow our Board of Evaluators significantly to satisfy that demand. Your contribution and expertise could be needed more this year than ever.

If you are interested in learning more about the benefits of becoming an Evaluator or would like a 2003 application, please email the Council at mc4quality@aol.com.

3. MN Council Welcomes Two Board Members: Meola and Nelson

The Minnesota Council for Quality recently announced the appointments of Jeri Meola and Dan Nelson to the Board of Directors. Ms. Meola is currently Vice President of Satisfaction Management Systems, Minnetonka. She will chair the Board of Advisors for the Performance Improvement Network, the education and networking arm of the Council. Mr. Nelson is General Manager of Hampton Inn in Rochester; he is also the Chair of the Rochester Area Quality Council (RAQC).

“Both of these resources add strength to our already high-quality Board,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality. “In addition to her experience running a small service business, Jeri brings a wealth of knowledge about measuring customer satisfaction and researching the marketplace that will serve the Council well. And Dan brings a valuable perspective from Rochester, a key market in this state. He also represents an important partner of ours, the Rochester Area Quality Council.”

The appointments both took place January 1.

4. PIN Announces New Board Members and March 13 Discussion

The Performance Improvement Network, a service of the Council, recently announced the following new appointments to its Board of Advisors: Michelle Coady, St. Paul Companies; Karen Hawley, Hillswick Group; Susan Link, Hazelden; and Craig Siiro, Virchow, Krause. These members join Louis Hill, Rockwood Capital; Jon-Karl Klietsch, Rockwood Capital; Brian Lassiter, MN Council for Quality; Gianna Lassiter, Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota; and Jeri Meola (Chair), Satisfaction Management Systems.

In addition, PIN is announcing its March 13 discussion: “Quality Improvement Payback: Why Is It So Hard to Make the Case?” Featuring Mr. Ron Bardal and Mr. Paul Grizzell, both of Medtronic, the discussion will focus on how to build the case of investing in quality and improvement in difficult times. The speakers will share a different perspective and an innovative reporting tool used at Medtronic to help translate planned quality improvement projects to business results that management can understand.

Whether you are a quality professional or a manager, this discussion will help you make the case of investing in improvement methods.

The discussion is from 8:15-9:15 a.m. on March 13 (networking and continental breakfast at 8:00) in at MTI in downtown Minneapolis. For more information, visit www.improvementnetwork.org or email lassiter_brian@hotmail.com.

5. Guest Article: Improving Process in Troubled Times

PREFACE

From time to time, the Minnesota Council for Quality is pleased to offer a member's perspective on organizational improvement. The article below is the first of a four-part series, which considers some tactics for making your improvement initiative bulletproof in budget-slashing times.

Improvements become easily deferrable under cost control's myopic focus. Our attention to the cost of our efforts can destroy any understanding of their underlying value. Which improvement initiatives are most likely to survive when the economy sours our expectations? The ones that the organization believes are valuable.

Your organization might assess your improvement program as a cost burden or a liberating value. Programs assessed as cost burdens become disembodied line items, easily slashed, while those efforts seen as delivering real value survive. What constitutes real value? If you're stuck on a sinking cost-burden effort, how might you transform it into a valued contribution?

Help your organization determine obvious, overwhelming value for your efforts. If your initiative cannot value-justify itself, help kill it. When the budget slashers are around, you're better off focusing on easily justified efforts rather than defending unjustifiable ones. If your funding authority quakes at the following questions, he's just flunked a dedication test. If he will engage in a conversation that could raise his value consciousness, everyone's potentially better off.

WHAT WILL IT COST IF YOU DON'T DO THIS?

Gently deflect those cost-estimate requests, shifting the conversation toward value. Deferring necessary improvement is never as free as the penny-wise budget slashers might believe. Help them see their actions' pound-foolishness.

WHAT IS THE INITIATIVE WORTH; WHAT VALUE WILL IT ADD?

Rather than focus on what resources the initiative will consume, zero in on what it will add. This quantity is much more easily and accurately determined than any cost estimate. It is also juicy and alluring, while cost is most often a dry, dead, encumbering figure.

Determining value isn't about creating a cost/benefit ratio. Value is not simply negative cost. Your organization might express value as an ethereal aspiration, a defining constraint, a conditioning regulator, or a focusing target, as well as viewing it as a traditional long-term benefit over cost. But be careful—your organization will not necessarily most highly value long-term benefit in difficult times. The key to helping your initiative survive lies in positioning it to deliver what your organization really values. Doing this requires that you know your organization in ways that cost accountants never consider.

THE VALUE OF ANYTHING

An organization might value its aspirations more than its targets, its constraints over its regulations, and any of these more than the long-term legacy effects from your efforts. If your initiatives are to survive these times, your job includes understanding which values your organization holds most highly and framing your initiative so that it easily satisfies that value orientation. In this way, you can help your organization enjoy the real value of your contribution rather than experience the burden of its cost.

The next installments of this series will look at two very different ways in which organizations value improvements and how to align your efforts with them. See the next installment here: <http://www.projectcommunity.com/preview/tt2>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David A. Schmaltz is the founder and a principled consultant with True North pgs (project guidance strategies), Inc., a strategic consultancy that helps people work well together and a member of the Council. His book, *The Blind Men and the Elephant: Mastering Project Work*, will be published by Berrett-Koehler in March. You can reach him at david@projectcommunity.com.

6. The Ideal CEO: MSLF Discussion on 2/25

The Minnesota Strategic Leadership Forum (MSLF), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce that Mr. Thomas Pritzker, a consultant with Spenser Stuart, will speak at their February 25 discussion. In his talk, "The Ideal CEO," Mr. Pritzker will discuss the profile of an ideal CEO for any organization.

The event will be held at the Minneapolis Campus of St. Thomas, Opus Hall Room 202. Registration is 7:00 a.m, buffet breakfast at 7:30 a.m., speaker begins at 7:45 a.m., and Q&A is at 8:45-9:00 a.m. Cost is \$25 (\$15 for MN Council members).

Minnesota Council members receive a \$10 discount. Space is limited. For more information or to register, please visit www.slf-minnesota.org or email keith@hornbacherAssociates.com.

7. Rochester Welcomes Pike Place Fish Market Fish Mongers from Seattle: 3/7

The Rochester Area Quality Council (RAQC), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is excited to welcome the original creators of the Fish philosophy – the Pike Place Fish Market Fish Mongers from Seattle – to Rochester on Friday, March 7th! Their exciting presentations "Loving What You Do...Doing What You Love" and "Beyond Customer Service - The Opportunity to Make a Difference" will be held at the University Center Rochester Regional Sports Center from 8 to 11 a.m. (registration 7:15 to 7:55 a.m.). Breakfast along with mid-morning refreshments will be included.

Early bird (before February 28) registration is \$75 for RAQC or MN Council for Quality members and \$85 for non-members. Fees after February 28 are \$85 for RAQC or MCQ members and \$99 for non-members. To register or for more information, please contact Kay Wiegert at 507-285-7560 or by email at kay.wiegert@roch.edu. Come join us for a great morning of learning, networking, and fun!

8. Using the Balanced Scorecard to Improve Your Organization's Performance: 3/25

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) has become one of the most popular management tools of the last decade. Thousands of organizations are using the framework and thousands more are considering it. The intrinsic value of the BSC is obvious: it helps organizations think about their business from a variety of stakeholders' perspectives including financial, customer and market, internal process, and learning and growth. The BSC also focuses on leading and lagging indicators of performance, helps align organizational activities by integrating planning, performance management, and rewards/compensation.

The University of Minnesota's College of Continuing Education is pleased to offer "Using the Balanced Scorecard to Improve Your Organization's Performance." Scheduled on March 25, this course will introduce the BSC as a strategic measurement and management framework and demonstrate how it can be used in any organization -- of any size, any sector, or any marketplace. Through a highly interactive discussion, this course will also provide the participant with tools that can be taken back to your job to help you design and use a Scorecard.

The course will be taught by Brian Lassiter, president of the Minnesota Council for Quality. Mr. Lassiter has worked with dozens of organizations in a variety of industries to help them improve their performance and competitiveness. Brian has assisted the implementation of the Balanced Scorecard in about 10 organizations, and has given talks on the topic around the U.S. and in Asia.

The cost is \$695 per person or \$595 per person for organizations sending three or more people. Minnesota Council for Quality members also receive the \$595 price. Tuition includes program materials, breakfast, lunch, and certificate of completion. Training is at the Earle Brown Continuing Education Center, St. Paul campus.

For more information or to register, please see
http://www.cce.umn.edu/business/using_scorecard.shtml or email aking@cce.umn.edu.

9. South Central Technical College/ASQ-Hiawatha Section Announce Courses; Council Members Receive 10% Discount

South Central Technical College and ASQ-Hiawatha Section 1214, southern Minnesota's leaders in providing affordable & professional quality training for local industries, are pleased to announce their Winter/Spring training schedule. Minnesota Council for Quality members will receive a 10% to all courses if you mention your membership at the time of registration.

The schedule includes day-time seminars for ISO 9001 implementation and skills development, as well as evening review classes for ASQ certifications. Highlighting the winter/spring schedule are four unique opportunities:

Applied Quality Fundamentals – This is a new course covering all the bases you need to implement an effective QA program. Ideal for those wanting the full set of tools, or newly assigned to quality assurance responsibilities. Consider it a “mini-masters in QA”.
2/17-2/21

Introduction to Six Sigma – Another new offering, sponsored in conjunction with the University of St. Thomas. This 2-day seminar will give you the full picture on the six-sigma methodologies and the financial returns possible. 3/10-3/11

Quality Audits & Corrective Action for Improving Performance – The Hiawatha Section of ASQ brings to you a nationally recognized expert, Mr. Martin J. Jaeger, to present this critical topic for effective quality systems. This is a must-attend session! Door prizes for early registration. Please call for a brochure. 4/24/03

Implementing Management Responsibilities of ISO 9001:2000 – A unique course to give you insights into effectively implementing ISO 9001 for continual improvement. Highly praised by attendees. Bring your top management with!! 3/18/03

South Central is also offering six ASQ Certification review classes and 11 quality systems and skill development seminars. Prices and dates vary. For more information or to register for any of these courses, please contact Laura Hardy at the Faribault Campus of South Central Technical College at 507-332-5802 or hardyl@sctc.mnscu.edu.

10. Minnesota Academic Excellence Foundation Offers Quality in Education Workshops

The Center for Educational Performance Excellence of MAEF is sponsoring three educational events this spring.

The first, "Gearing Up: No School Left Behind," is a mini-conference for educators and community members involved in education. It will be held March 31 from 8:30-4:40 in Thief River Falls. The mini-conference will offer participants 5-6 different session choices. These include: Lipstick on the Bulldog or Hard-Hats; Teacher Quality: Motivating and Rewarding High Performance; Reading Anything Anywhere: A Case Study and Panel; Scorecards for Success: Measuring and Reporting Performance Results. The cost for MAEF and MCQ members: \$200 per team of five; \$50 per additional team member. Cost for non-members: \$250 per team of five; \$60 per additional person

The second, also titled "Gearing Up: No School Left Behind," will be held April 2 from 8:30-4:40 in Fridley. Council members receive a \$50 discount for a team of five (see below). The program includes: Changemasters: Leading Education in Public Schools; Scorecards for Success: Measuring and Reporting Performance Results; How Well is Your Site Performing: Criteria for Education Performance Excellence. Cost for MAEF and MCQ members: \$175 per team of five; \$40 per additional team member. The cost for non-members: \$225 per team of five; \$50 per additional person

The third, "How Well is Your District Performing? Developing the Strategic Scorecard," will be held May 7 in Elk River from 5:45-8:00 (dinner included). The session is designed for district-level Senior Leadership Teams and/or elected Board teams. Teams will develop a Strategic Scorecard for their district to answer key questions about performance. Most districts have a Strategic Plan, but many districts have no method for reporting goal progress at the Board-level. To be effective, goal planning cascades implementation down into schools and classrooms and other operating units. Data streams report progress and results back up to the Board-level. The cost for MAEF and MCQ members is \$12 per person (\$55 for a team of 5); non-members is \$15 per person.

For more information or to register for any of these programs, contact MAEF at maef@MNAEF.org or 651-999-7345.

11. Century College Winter Quality Curriculum: Discounts for Council Members

Century College's Continuing Education and Customized Training, a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, has announced its winter course curriculum. Providing a full array of training for quality professionals, Century will offer the following courses:

- * ASQ Certified Quality Manager (CQM)
- * ASQ Certified Quality Auditor (CQA)
- * Quality 101: ASQ Foundations of Quality
- * ISO 9000-2000 Overview
- * Internal Quality Auditor
- * Print Reading for Manufacturing, Geometric Dimensioning & Tolerance (Basic and Advanced, two courses)
- * Certified Mechanical Inspector Review
- * Gage Calibration Methods

- * ISO 9000-2000 Transition
- * ISO 9001:2001 Lead Auditor Course
- * ISO 9001:2000 Internal Quality Auditor
- * ISO 14001 Accredited Environmental Systems.

The winter term runs through May. In general, all employees of Council member organizations are entitled to a \$40-50 discount on each course. For more information, including timing, course descriptions, instructor bios, and cost, please contact Elaine Wallin at 651-779-3270 or e.wallin@century.mnscu.edu.