To be used with the
2013/2014 Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence

Application forms are included at the end of this packet or available for
download at www.wisquality.org

WISCONSIN CENTER for
Performance Excellence
Better Organizations, Better Results
Recognizing great organizations with the Wisconsin Forward Award

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Wisconsin Forward Award—You Choose the Path

Applying for a Wisconsin Forward Award sets your organization a journey toward excellence. Whether returning as an applicant or just beginning your involvement with the WFA/Baldrige Criteria, the knowledge and insight you gain will help your organization improve efficiency, engage and satisfy students, parents, stakeholders and staff and helps demonstrate good stewardship of resources. Think of it as a low cost, high impact consulting service.

The Criteria are not a flavor-of-the-month management technique. They’re a comprehensive, proven approach to running your business. If you already use quality tools like Lean, Six Sigma or a Balanced Scorecard—great! The Criteria provide a framework for these tools and will help you align your improvement efforts so they work more effectively.

For organizations that are new to quality management, WCPE offers training and programming to address all levels of experience. We can help you launch a new era of performance and growth. No matter where you are in the process, the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence is here to help you along the way.

**Wisconsin Challenge Profile** is the perfect starting place for organizations new to WFA/Baldrige. The Challenger helps organizations get started by responding to straightforward questions about their organizational context and key results which will help lay groundwork for future improvement efforts—as well as future applications. Customized mentoring and follow up is available. Contact us for other quick, no cost assessment tools to jump start the conversation about WFA/Baldrige in your organization! Wisconsin Challenge Profile applications are accepted throughout the year.

**Wisconsin Fast Forward** is the beginning-to-intermediate-level application—it’s a stepping-stone for organizations aspiring to complete a full 50-page written Wisconsin Forward Award application. Wisconsin Fast Forward applications are accepted at any time throughout the year. Organizations submit a Fast Forward self-assessment narrative (there is no page limit) based on the basic and overall requirements of the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Organizations are welcome to submit a Fast Forward application whenever convenient for them. Fast Forward applicants are recognized at the annual awards gala to showcase their pursuit of advancing to higher levels of performance.

The Fast Forward application is most suitable for organizations that:
- Are new to internal organizational self-assessments and the Baldrige/WFA Criteria
- Want to engage employees in the organization’s management practices and related results
- Have some, but not most, of their key processes documented in some format
- Have favorable measures/results, and have started to trend data and use comparative data

**Wisconsin Forward Award** is a 50-page narrative application that is accepted twice a year—the Intent-to-Apply must be postmarked by October 31 or April 30 with applications being postmarked by January 15 or July 15. Organizations submit a 50-page self-assessment based on the seven categories of the WFA/Baldrige Criteria:
1. Leadership
2. Strategic Planning
3. Customer Focus
4. Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management
5. Workforce Focus
6. Operations Focus
7. Results

The Wisconsin Forward Award application is most suitable for organizations that:
- Conduct strategic planning
- Have a set of measures and targets
- Have identified, and are beginning to document, and measure the effectiveness of key customer, product, service, business and support processes
- Have human resource plans
- Have generally positive results over time (trends) in many to most key business areas and are using comparative and benchmark data to set targets
- Most importantly, are open to continued feedback for improvement, and want to celebrate their successes!
About the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence

In 1997, the Wisconsin Council for Workforce Investment established the Wisconsin Forward Award program to promote significant achievements in continuous improvement and performance excellence—practices that ensure the economic vitality of Wisconsin organizations and the communities they serve. Wisconsin Forward Award became an independent non-profit organization in 2000 and in 2009 expanded into the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence.

The Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence promotes continuous improvement and the use of a systems framework to help organizations maximize efficiency, profitability, quality, and sustainability through a variety of assessment tools, learning events, and benchmarking opportunities. It also recognizes great organizations with the Wisconsin Forward Award.

Organizations affiliated with the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence are committed to the achievement of high standards of excellence. Whether they are just beginning their journey by using one of our self-assessment tools or exemplify mature, productive quality management systems as outlined by the WFA/Baldrige Criteria, these organizations are distinguishing themselves as leaders in their field, enabling themselves to be as successful and innovative as possible—and keeping Wisconsin in a state of excellence.

Regardless of the performance measure and size of organization, the research is clear: the long-term impact of effective performance management continuous learning programs can be linked with positive financial performance, customer satisfaction, and improved employee involvement.

The Wisconsin Fast Forward and the Wisconsin Forward Award

Wisconsin Forward Award is pleased to introduce an application process for organizations in the early stages of using the Baldrige framework: the Wisconsin Fast Forward. Wisconsin Fast Forward applications include a 5-page organizational profile and narrative responsive to the basic and some overall Criteria items. Applications may be submitted throughout the year. There is no application deadline. There is no page minimum or limit, but we find most applications range from 15 – 25 pages.

Fast Forward applications are reviewed by at least two WFA or Baldrige Examiners in a two-stage process. In Stage 1 each Examiner conducts an independent evaluation of the application and creates feedback identifying strengths and opportunities for improvement. In Stage 2 the Examiners exchange feedback, come to consensus on strengths and opportunities for improvement, and create a feedback report. The feedback report is submitted to a WFA Judge for a final review in conjunction with the WFA office and then sent to the applicant. Organizations successfully completing the Fast Forward process are recognized at the Commitment Level of Achievement at WFA’s annual recognition event.

About the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program

Named after the late Secretary of Commerce, the Baldrige Program was established on August 20, 1987 as an Act of Congress (Public Law 100-107) to forge a private-public partnership that would promote and recognize the improvement of business performance, quality, and productivity among American businesses. Today, the original law has been expanded to include healthcare, education, and public organizations.
The Wisconsin Fast Forward Application

About the Fast Forward Application

The Fast Forward application is a shortened version of the Wisconsin Forward Award application process, which is administered by the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence.

The Fast Forward application adheres to the same Criteria used in the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) process. However, the Fast Forward addresses only the basic and some overall requirements of the seven Categories contained in the Criteria.

Here are our primary goals in offering the Wisconsin Fast Forward:

■ We wanted to offer a less time-intensive way for organizations to receive feedback to drive action planning and performance improvement.

■ Although the Fast Forward is a shorter and less rigorous application process, the feedback from external review will sharpen your focus and significantly help your organization move closer to mastering all of the requirements of the full Criteria.

■ As a successful applicant of the Wisconsin Fast Forward, your organization will be formally recognized at the Commitment Level during WFA’s annual award ceremony and reception.

The Benefits of Participating

Organizations that apply for the Wisconsin Fast Forward will realize many important benefits. They include:

■ A thorough self-assessment of your strengths and opportunities for improvement based on the most current Criteria from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. There is no higher standard for performance excellence than the Baldrige Criteria.

■ Recognition at WFA’s annual award ceremony and reception and public relations exposure for successfully completing the application process.

■ Increased opportunities for customer loyalty by demonstrating your commitment to excellence and quality service.

■ Accelerated change, growth, and improvement in your organization.

■ The opportunity for your people to be part of the solution as well as process improvement teams.

■ The opportunity to recommend candidates from your organization to serve as members of the WFA Board of Examiners.

■ An appearance by the Wisconsin Center for Performance Excellence Executive Director to personally present your award at your site for the benefit of those employees and stakeholders who are not able to attend the award ceremony and reception.
How to Apply
Each applicant of the Wisconsin Fast Forward must complete the Application form and submit it to WCPE six-eight weeks in advance of your application. The Application form requires the support of the applicant’s senior executive as evidenced by that person’s signature.

The purpose of completing your Intent to Apply form is to allow WCPE to assemble an impartial Examiner Team that will receive and review your application. Each application is treated confidentially. Each Examiner signs an affidavit stating he or she has no conflict of interest with your application or organization. Furthermore, each Examiner assigned to your application agrees in writing to hold all information in your application in complete secrecy and confidentiality. In this regard, WCPE follows the highest ethical standards regarding confidentiality of application and removing any direct conflicts of interest.

A $250 intent-to-apply deposit towards your application must be submitted with the application form. This deposit cannot be refunded if you choose not to submit an application.

Public Recognition
Each Fast Forward applicant who successfully completes this process can choose to be formally recognized at WFA’s award ceremony and reception. This recognition includes media exposure and an award plaque from WCPE signifying recognition at the WFA Commitment Level.

Application Fee
The application fee for the Wisconsin Fast Forward is $1,895. The fee for WCPE members is $1,695. This fee is due upon submission of your application. This fee covers all aspects of your application with the exception of an optional executive briefing following receipt of your feedback report.

Application Timetable
The Wisconsin Fast Forward timetable is as follows: applicants may submit an intent to apply at any time during the year, but at least 60 days before submitting the full application. A feedback report is completed and returned within eight weeks.

Application Length
The Fast Forward application has no page limit (typically the application is 15-25 pages) and should include a separate 5-page Organizational Profile. Please submit three (3) copies of your application to WCPE along with your application fee.

Questions or Comments
If you have any questions or comments about the Fast Forward Application program, please call us at (608) 663-5300 or fax us at (608) 663-5300. We can also be reached by e-mail at info@wisquality.org
# The Wisconsin Fast Forward Review Process

## Examination Team Review and Feedback Report

Upon receipt of your organization’s application, the WFA Examiner Team thoroughly reviews your application and prepares a written Feedback Report, which goes through additional review by the WFA Panel of Judges and staff. This process will take approximately six to eight weeks. The Feedback Report will include strengths and opportunities for improvement for each Criteria Item.

## Executive Briefing (Optional)

Upon request, the Senior Examiner or WFA representative who led your application review process will present an executive briefing lasting up to four hours to your organization’s application team. This service is optional to each applicant and the payment of reasonable and customary travel expenses for the Senior Examiner and/or WFA representative.
Organizational Profile

The Organizational Profile is a snapshot of your organization, the KEY influences on HOW you operate, and the KEY challenges you face.

P.1 Organizational Description: What are your key organizational characteristics?

Describe your organization’s operating environment and your KEY relationships with CUSTOMERS, suppliers, PARTNERS, and STAKEHOLDERS.

Within your response, include answers to the following questions:

a. Organizational Environment
   (1) Product Offerings/Educational Products and Services What are your organization’s main product offerings (see note 1 below)? What is the relative importance of each to your organizational success? What mechanisms do you use to deliver your products?
   (2) VISION and MISSION What are the distinctive characteristics of your organizational culture? What are your stated PURPOSE, VISION, VALUES, and MISSION? What are your organization’s CORE COMPETENCIES and their relationship to your MISSION?
   (3) WORKFORCE Profile What is your WORKFORCE profile? What are your WORKFORCE or employee groups and SEGMENTS? What are their education levels? What are the KEY elements that engage them in accomplishing your MISSION and VISION? What are your organization’s WORKFORCE and job DIVERSITY, organized bargaining units, KEY WORKFORCE benefits, and special health and safety requirements?
   (4) Assets What are your major facilities, technologies, and equipment?
   (5) Regulatory Requirements What is the regulatory environment under which your organization operates? What are the applicable occupational health and safety regulations; accreditation, certification, or registration requirements; industry standards; and environmental, financial, and product regulations?

b. Organizational Relationships
   (1) Organizational Structure What are your organizational structure and GOVERNANCE system? What are the reporting relationships among your GOVERNANCE board, SENIOR LEADERS, and parent organization, as appropriate?
   (2) CUSTOMERS and STAKEHOLDERS What are your KEY market SEGMENTS, CUSTOMER groups, and STAKEHOLDER groups, as appropriate? What are their KEY requirements and expectations for your products, CUSTOMER support services, and operations? What are the differences in these requirements and expectations among market SEGMENTS, CUSTOMER groups, and STAKEHOLDER groups?
   (3) Suppliers and PARTNERS What are your KEY types of suppliers, PARTNERS, and COLLABORATORS? What role do these suppliers, PARTNERS, and COLLABORATORS play in the production and delivery of your KEY products and CUSTOMER support services? What are your KEY mechanisms for communicating with suppliers, PARTNERS, and COLLABORATORS? What role, if any, do these organizations play in implementing INNOVATIONS in your organization? What are your KEY supply-chain requirements?
P.2 Organizational Situation: What is your organization’s strategic situation?

Describe your organization’s competitive environment, your KEY STRATEGIC CHALLENGES and ADVANTAGES, and your system for PERFORMANCE improvement.

Within your response, include answers to the following questions:

a. Competitive Environment
   (1) Competitive Position What is your competitive position? What are your relative size and growth in your industry or markets served? What are the numbers and types of competitors for your organization?
   (2) Competitiveness Changes What are any KEY changes taking place that affect your competitive situation, including opportunities for INNOVATION and collaboration, as appropriate?
   (3) Comparative Data What are your KEY available sources of comparative and competitive data from within your industry? What are your KEY available sources of comparative data from outside your industry? What limitations, if any, affect your ability to obtain these data?

b. Strategic Context
   What are your KEY business, operational, societal responsibility, and human resource STRATEGIC CHALLENGES and ADVANTAGES?

c. PERFORMANCE Improvement System
   What are the KEY elements of your PERFORMANCE improvement system, including your evaluation, organizational LEARNING, and INNOVATION PROCESSES?

Importance of Beginning With Your Organizational Profile

Your Organizational Profile is critically important because:

- It is the most appropriate starting point for self-assessment and for writing an application.
- It helps you identify potential gaps in key information and focus on key performance requirements and results.
- It is used by the Examiners and Judges in application review to understand your organization and what you consider important. You will be assessed using the Criteria requirements in relation to your organization’s environment, relationships, influences, and challenges as presented in your Organizational Profile.
- It also may be used by itself for an initial self-assessment. If you identify topics for which conflicting, little, or no information is available, it is possible that the Organizational Profile can serve as your complete assessment, and you can use these topics for action planning.

Page Limit

The Organizational Profile should be limited to five pages. This section is not counted in the overall application page limit of approximately 25 pages.
The Seven Categories of Performance Excellence

Directions:
Respond to the following seven Categories. Please focus on your key processes in Categories 1-6.
Typically, applicants will devote 2 to 3 pages per Category response in Categories 1-6. Your response to Category 7, Results, will require at least 3 or 4 pages.
Please note that it is not necessary to discuss specific results in Categories 1–6 since all results can be listed in Category 7.

1. Leadership
The Leadership Category examines how your organization’s senior leaders’ personal actions guide and sustain your organization. Also examined are your organization’s governance and how your organization fulfills its legal, ethical, and societal responsibilities and supports its key communities.

Issues to Address for business, non-profit, and education applicants:

1.1 Senior Leadership: How do your senior leaders lead?
Describe how senior leaders’ actions guide and sustain your organization. Describe how senior leaders communicate with your workforce and encourage high performance.

1.2 Governance and Societal Responsibilities: How do you govern and address your societal responsibilities?
Describe your organization’s governance system and approach to leadership improvement. Describe how your organization ensures legal and ethical behavior, fulfills its societal responsibilities, and supports its key communities.

Issues to Address for health care applicants:

1.1 Senior Leadership: How do your senior leaders lead?
Describe how senior leaders’ actions guide and sustain your organization. Describe how senior leaders communicate with your workforce and encourage high performance.

1.2 Governance and Societal Responsibilities: How do you govern and address your societal responsibilities?
Describe your organization’s governance system and approach to leadership improvement. Describe how your organization ensures legal and ethical behavior and fulfills its societal responsibilities. Describe how your organization supports its key communities and contributes to community health.
2. Strategic Planning
The Strategic Planning Category examines how your organization develops strategic objectives and action plans. Also examined are how your chosen strategic objectives and action plans are deployed and changed if circumstances require, and how progress is measured.

*Issues to Address for all applicants:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.1 Strategy Development: How do you develop your strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe how your organization establishes its strategy to address its strategic challenges and leverage its strategic advantages. Summarize your organization’s key strategic objectives and their related goals.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2.2 Strategy Implementation: How do you implement your strategy?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe how your organization converts its strategic objectives into action plans. Summarize your organization’s action plans, how they are deployed, and key action plan performance measures or indicators. Project your organization’s future performance relative to key comparisons on these performance measures or indicators.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Customer Focus
The Customer Focus Category examines how your organization engages its customers for long-term marketplace success. This engagement strategy includes how your organization builds a customer-focused culture. Also examined is how your organization listens to the voice of its customers and uses this information to improve and identify opportunities for innovation.

*Issues to Address for business and non-profit applicants:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.1 Voice of the Customer: How do you obtain information from your customers?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe how your listens to your customers and gains satisfaction and dissatisfaction information.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>3.2 Customer Engagement: How do you engage customers to serve their needs and build relationships?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe how your organization determines product offerings and communication mechanisms to support customers. Describe how your organization builds customer relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Issues to Address for education applicants:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3.1 Voice of the Customer: How do you obtain information from your students and stakeholders?</th>
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<td>Describe how your organization listens to your students and stakeholders and gain satisfaction and dissatisfaction information.</td>
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<th>3.2 Customer Engagement: How do you engage students and stakeholders to serve their needs and build relationships?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe how your organization determines educational programs and services and communication mechanisms to support students and stakeholders. Describe how your organization builds student and stakeholder relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Issues to Address for health care applicants:

3.1 **Voice of the Customer:** How do you obtain information from your patients and stakeholders?

Describe how your organization listens to your patients and stakeholders and gains satisfaction and dissatisfaction information.

3.2 **Customer Engagement:** How do you engage patients and stakeholders to serve their needs and build relationships?

Describe how your organization determines health care programs and services and communication mechanisms to support patients and stakeholders. Describe how your organization builds patient and stakeholder relationships.

4. **Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management**

The Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management Category examines how your organization selects, gathers, analyzes, manages, and improves its data, information, and knowledge assets and how it manages its information technology. The Category also examines how your organization reviews and uses reviews to improve its performance.

Issues to Address for business and non-profit applicants:

4.1 **Measurement, Analysis, and Improvement of Organizational Performance:** How do you measure, analyze, and then improve organizational performance?

Describe how your organization measures, analyzes, reviews, and improves its performance through the use of data and information at all levels and in all parts of your organization.

4.2 **Management of Information, Knowledge, and Information Technology:** How do you manage your information, organizational knowledge, and information technology?

Describe how your organization builds and manages its knowledge assets. Describe how your organization ensures the quality and availability of needed data, information, software, and hardware for your workforce, suppliers, partners, collaborators, and customers.

Issues to Address for education applicants:

4.1 **Measurement, Analysis, and Improvement of Organizational Performance:** How do you measure, analyze, and then improve organizational performance?

Describe how your organization measures, analyzes, reviews, and improves student and operational performance through the use of data and information at all levels and in all parts of your organization.

4.2 **Management of Information, Knowledge, and Information Technology:** How do you manage your information, organizational knowledge, and information technology?

Describe how your organization builds and manages its knowledge assets. Describe how your organization ensures the quality and availability of needed data, information, software, and hardware for your workforce, students and stakeholders, suppliers, partners, and collaborators.
Issues to Address for health care applicants:

4.1 Measurement, Analysis, and Improvement of Organizational Performance: How do you measure, analyze, and then improve organizational performance?
Describe how your organization measures, analyzes, reviews, and improves its performance as a health care provider through the use of data and information at all levels and in all parts of your organization.

4.2 Management of Information, Knowledge, and Information Technology: How do you manage your information, organizational knowledge, and information technology?
Describe how your organization builds and manages its knowledge assets. Describe how your organization ensures the quality and availability of needed data, information, software, and hardware for your workforce, suppliers, partners, collaborators, and patients and stakeholders.

5. Workforce Focus
The Workforce Focus Category examines how your organization engages, manages, and develops your workforce to utilize its full potential in alignment with your organization’s overall mission, strategy, and action plans. The Category examines your ability to assess workforce capability and capacity needs and to build a workforce environment conducive to high performance.

Issues to Address for all applicants:

5.1 Workforce Environment: How do you build an effective and supportive workforce environment?
Describe how your organization manages workforce capability and capacity to accomplish the work of the organization. Describe how your organization maintains a safe, secure, and supportive work climate.

5.2 Workforce Engagement: How do you engage your workforce to achieve organizational and personal success?
Describe how your organization engages, compensates, and rewards your workforce to achieve high performance. Describe how you assess workforce engagement and use the results to achieve higher performance. Describe how members of your workforce, including leaders, are developed to achieve high performance.
# 6. Operations Focus

The Operations Focus category examines how your organization designs, manages, and improves its key work systems and work processes to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success and sustainability. Also examined is your readiness for emergencies.

**Issues to Address for business and non-profit applicants:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Work Processes: How do you design, manage and improve your work systems?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Describe how your organization designs, manages and improves its work systems to deliver customer value, prepare for potential emergencies, and achieve organizational success and sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operational Effectiveness: How do you design, manage and improve your key work processes?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Describe how your organization designs, manages, and improves its key work processes to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success and sustainability.</td>
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**Issues to Address for education applicants:**

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<td>Describe how your organization designs, manages, and improves its key work processes to deliver student and stakeholder value and achieve organizational success and sustainability.</td>
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**Issues to Address for health care applicants:**

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<th>Work Processes: How do you design, manage and improve your work systems?</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Describe how your organization designs, manages and improves its work systems to deliver patient and stakeholder value, prepare for potential emergencies, and achieve organizational success and sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operational Effectiveness: How do you design, manage and improve your key work processes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Describe how your organization designs, manages, and improves its key work processes to deliver patient and stakeholder value and achieve organizational success and sustainability.</td>
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</table>
7. Results

The Results Category examines your organization’s performance and improvement in all key areas—product and process-effectiveness outcomes, customer-focused outcomes, workforce-focused outcomes, leadership and governance outcomes, and financial and market outcomes. Performance levels are examined relative to those of competitors and other organizations with similar product offerings.

**Issues to Address for business and non-profit applicants:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td><strong>Product and Process Results:</strong> What are your product performance and process effectiveness results? Summarize your organization’s key product performance and process effectiveness results. Segment your results by product offerings, customer groups, and market segments, and by process types and locations, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td><strong>Customer-Focused Results:</strong> What are your customer-focused performance results? Summarize your organization’s key customer-focused results for customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement. Segment your results by product offerings, customer groups, and market segments, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Issues to Address for education applicants:**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td><strong>Student Learning and Process Effectiveness Results:</strong> What are your student-focused and process effectiveness results? Summarize your organization’s key student learning and process effectiveness and efficiency results. Segment your results by student groups, by educational programs and services, by market segments, and by process types and locations, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td><strong>Customer-Focused Results:</strong> What are your student- and stakeholder-focused performance results? Summarize your organization’s key student- and stakeholder-focused results for student and stakeholder satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement. Segment your results by educational program and service features, and by student, stakeholder, and market segments, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Issues to Address for health care applicants:

7.1 Health Care and Process Results: What are your health care and process effectiveness results?
Summarize your organization’s key health care results and its key performance and process effectiveness and efficiency results. Include processes that directly serve patients and stakeholders, strategy, and operations. Segment your results by health care service offerings, by patient and stakeholder groups and market segments, and by process types and locations, as appropriate. Include and indicate your results for key measures that are publicly reported and/or mandated by regulatory, accredditor, or payor requirements. Include appropriate comparative data.

7.2 Customer-Focused Results: What are your patient- and stakeholder-focused performance results?
Summarize your organization’s key patient- and stakeholder-focused results for patient and stakeholder satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement. Segment your results by health care service offerings, patient and stakeholder groups, and market segments, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.

Issues to Address for all applicants:

7.3 Workforce-Focused Results: What are your workforce-focused performance results?
Summarize your organization’s key workforce-focused results for your workforce environment and for workforce engagement. Segment your results to address the diversity of your workforce and to address your workforce groups and segments, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.

Issues to Address for business, non-profit, and education applicants:

7.4 Leadership and Governance Results: What are your leadership results?
Summarize your organization’s key senior leadership and governance results, including those for fiscal accountability, legal compliance, ethical behavior, societal responsibility, and support of key communities. Segment your results by organizational units, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.

Issues to Address for business and non-profit applicants:

7.5 Financial and Market Results: What are your financial and marketplace performance results?
Summarize your organization’s key financial and marketplace performance results by market segments or customer groups as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.
### Issues to Address for education applicants:

**7.5 Budgetary, Financial and Market Results:** What are your budgetary, financial, and market performance results?

Summarize your organization’s key budgetary, financial and marketplace performance results by market segments or student or stakeholder groups as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.

### Issues to Address for health care applicants:

**7.4 Leadership and Governance Results:** What are your leadership results?

Summarize your organization’s key governance and senior leadership results, including those for fiscal accountability, legal compliance, ethical behavior, societal responsibility, support of key communities, and community health. Segment your results by organizational units, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.

**7.5 Financial and Market Results:** What are your financial and marketplace performance results?

Summarize your organization’s key financial and marketplace performance results by market segments or patient and stakeholder groups, as appropriate. Include appropriate comparative data.
2013-2014 Criteria Response Guidelines

The guidelines given in this section are offered to assist Criteria users in responding most effectively to the requirements of the 18 Criteria Items. For organizations writing a Fast Forward application for the Baldrige Award, responding involves addressing these requirements.

The guidelines are presented in three parts:

1. General Guidelines regarding the Criteria booklet
2. Guidelines for Responding to Process Items
3. Guidelines for Responding to Results Items

General Guidelines

1. Read the entire Criteria booklet.
   The main sections of the booklet provide a full orientation to the Criteria, including how responses are to be evaluated for self-assessment or by WCPE Examiners.

2. Review the Item format and understand how to respond to the Item requirements.
   Each Item is classified as either Process or Results, depending on the type of information required. Guidelines for responding to Process Items are given starting on page 17. Guidelines for responding to Results Items are given starting on page 19.

   Item requirements are presented in question format. Most of the Item overall requirements include multiple questions. Responses to an Item should contain information that addresses all questions; however, each question need not be answered separately. Responses to multiple requirements may be grouped, as appropriate to your organization.

3. Understand the meaning of key terms.
   Many of the terms used in the Criteria have meanings that may differ somewhat from standard definitions or definitions used in your organization. Understanding the terms in the glossary can help you accurately self-assess your organization and communicate your processes and results to those reviewing your responses and planning your improvement efforts.

4. Start by preparing the Organizational Profile.
   The Organizational Profile is the most appropriate starting point. The Organizational Profile is intended to help everyone—including organizations using the Criteria for self-assessment, application writers, and reviewers—understand what is most relevant and important to your organization’s business and mission and to its performance.

Guidelines for Responding to Process Items

Although the Criteria focus on key organizational performance results, these results by themselves offer little diagnostic value. For example, if some results are poor or are improving at rates slower than your competitors’ or comparable organizations’, it is important to understand why this is so and what might be done to accelerate improvement.

The purpose of Process Items is to permit diagnosis of your organization’s most important processes—the ones that contribute most to organizational performance improvement and contribute to key outcomes or performance results. Diagnosis and feedback depend heavily on the content and completeness of your Item responses. For this reason, it is important to respond to these Items by providing your key process information. Guidelines for organizing and reviewing such information follow.

1. Understand the meaning of “how.”
   Process Items generally ask you “how” your organization does something. Responses should outline your key process information that addresses approach, deployment, learning, and integration. Responses lacking such information,
or merely providing an example, are referred to as “anecdotal information” and may indicate a less mature organization or performance improvement system.

2. Understand the meaning of “what.”
Many questions for the Organizational Profile and for basic requirements begin with the word “what.” The first type of question requests basic information on key processes and how they work. Although it is helpful to include who performs the work, merely stating who does not permit diagnosis or feedback. The second type of question requests information on what your key findings, plans, objectives, goals, or measures are. These latter questions set the context for showing alignment and integration in your performance management system. For example, when you identify key strategic objectives, your action plans, some of your performance measures, and some results reported in Category 7 are expected to relate to the stated strategic objectives.

3. Write and review response(s) with the following guidelines and comments in mind.

- **Show that approaches are systematic:** Systematic approaches are repeatable and use data and information to enable learning. In other words, approaches are systematic if they build in the opportunity for evaluation, improvement, innovation, and knowledge sharing, thereby permitting a gain in maturity.

- **Show deployment:** Deployment information should summarize how your approaches are implemented in different parts of your organization. Deployment can be shown compactly by using tables.

- **Show evidence of learning:** Processes should include evaluation and improvement cycles, as well as the potential for breakthrough change. Process improvements should be shared with other appropriate units of the organization to enable organizational learning.

- **Show integration:** Integration shows alignment and harmonization among processes, plans, measures, actions, and results that generate organizational effectiveness and efficiencies.

- **Show focus and consistency:** There are four important considerations regarding focus and consistency: (1) the Organizational Profile should make clear what is important to your organization; (2) the Strategic Planning Category (Category 2), including the strategic objectives, action plans, and core competencies, should highlight areas of greatest focus and describe how deployment is accomplished; (3) the descriptions of organizational-level analysis and review (Item 4.1) should show how your organization analyzes and reviews performance information to set priorities; and (4) the Process Management Category (Category 6) should highlight the work processes that are key to your overall performance. Showing focus and consistency in the Process Items and tracking corresponding measures in the Results Items should improve organizational performance.

As much as possible, each Item response should be self-contained. However, responses to different Items also should be mutually reinforcing. It is appropriate to refer to the other responses rather than repeat information. In such cases, key process information should be given in the Item requesting this information. For example, workforce development and learning systems should be described in Item 5.1. Discussions about workforce development and learning elsewhere in your application would then reference but not repeat details given in your Item 5.1 response.
5. Use a compact format.
Applicants should make the best use of the application pages. Applicants are encouraged to use flowcharts, tables, and “bullets” to present information concisely.

Guidelines for Responding to Results Items
The Criteria place a major emphasis on results. The following information, guidelines, and example relate to effective and complete reporting of results.

1. Focus on the most critical organizational performance results.
Results reported should cover the most important requirements for your organization’s success, highlighted in your Organizational Profile and in the Strategic Planning, Customer Focus, Workforce Focus, and Process Management Categories.

2. Note the meaning of the four key requirements for effective reporting of results data:
   - Performance levels that are reported on a meaningful measurement scale.
   - Trends to show directions of results, rates of change, and the extent of deployment.
   - Comparisons to show how results compare with those of other, appropriately selected organizations.
   - Integration to show that all important results are included, segmented (e.g., by important customer, workforce, process, and product line groups), and, as appropriate, related to key performance projections.

3. Include trend data covering actual periods for tracking trends.
No minimum period of time is specified for trend data. However, a minimum of three historical data points generally is needed to ascertain a trend. Trends might span five or more years for some results. Trends should represent historic and current performance and not rely on projected (future) performance. Time intervals between data points should be meaningful for the specific measure(s) reported. For important results, new data should be included even if trends and comparisons are not yet well established.

4. Use a compact format—graphs and tables.
Many results can be reported compactly by using graphs and tables. Graphs and tables should be labeled for easy interpretation. Results over time or compared with others should be “normalized” (i.e., presented in a way, such as using ratios, that takes into account size factors). For example, reporting safety trends in terms of lost workdays per 100 employees would be more meaningful than total lost workdays if the number of employees has varied over the time period or if you are comparing your results to organizations differing in size.

5. Incorporate results into the body of the text.
Discussion of results and the results themselves should be close together in an Award application. Trends that show a significant beneficial or adverse change should be explained. Use figure numbers that correspond to Items. For example, the third figure for Item 7.1 would be Figure 7.1 -3. (See the example in the figure on the next page.)

The graph shown on the next page illustrates data an organization might present as part of a response to Item 7.1, Process Effectiveness Outcomes. In the Organizational Profile, the organization has identified Six Sigma as a key element of its performance improvement system. Defects per million opportunities is one of its measures.

The graph illustrates a number of characteristics of clear and effective results reporting:
   - A figure number is provided for reference to the graph in the text.
   - Both axes and units of measure are clearly labeled.
Trend lines report data for a key performance measure—defects per million opportunities.

Results are presented for several years.

An arrow indicates that an upward trend is good for this measure.

Appropriate comparisons are shown clearly.

The organization shows, using a single graph, that its three product lines are separately tracked.

The organization projects improved performance, including discontinuous or breakthrough improvement relative to prior performance for Product Line B. The text should explain this breakthrough change and might refer to critical learning from Product Line A as the basis for the projected change.

To evaluate this table, Examiners might conclude the following:

- The current overall organizational performance level is excellent. This conclusion is supported by the comparison with industry competitors and with a “world-class” level.

- The overall organization shows beneficial improvement trends sustained over time.

- Product Line A is the current performance leader—showing sustained high performance (at approximately 5 defects per million) and a slightly positive trend since 2005. Product Line B shows rapid improvement. Its performance is near that of the best industry competitor but trails Product Line A.

- Product Line C—identified in the application as a new product—is having early problems with defects but is projecting a turnaround. (The organization should briefly explain these problems.)

- The organization has projected improvements in the defect rates of all its product lines. Product Line C continues to lag behind the others; Product Line A is projected to meet its Six Sigma goals by the year 2012.