

**BALDRIGE EXPRESS LEADERSHIP
ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

**Prepared for the
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development**

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BALDRIGE EXPRESS LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

In 2005, the Council on Workforce Investment (CWI) approved monies for each Wisconsin Workforce Development Board to conduct a self-assessment of board leadership effectiveness. The CWI recognizes the importance of WDB leadership to advancing a coordinated and effective workforce development system and building a skilled workforce. WDBs that assess their leadership effectiveness and identify and address key improvement opportunities will be in a better position to achieve their leadership goals.

The CWI-approved project required use of the Baldrige Express survey administered through the Wisconsin Forward Award (WFA), Inc., in partnership with the National Center for Performance Excellence. The "Baldrige Express" is an electronic (or paper) survey that is built from the National Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence.

The Baldrige Criteria provide an assessment approach that has been used for 17 years by tens of thousands of public and private organizations across the nation (and internationally) to increase organizational effectiveness. The Criteria represent the leading edge of validated management practices. It is comprised of seven functional categories: leadership; strategic planning; customer and market focus; measurement, analysis, and knowledge management; human resource focus; process management; and business results. Together, the Criteria describe an integrated management framework that addresses all factors that define an organization, its operations, and its results. The Criteria are not prescriptive; rather, they focus on common requirements rather than specific procedures, tools or techniques.

IMPLEMENTATION

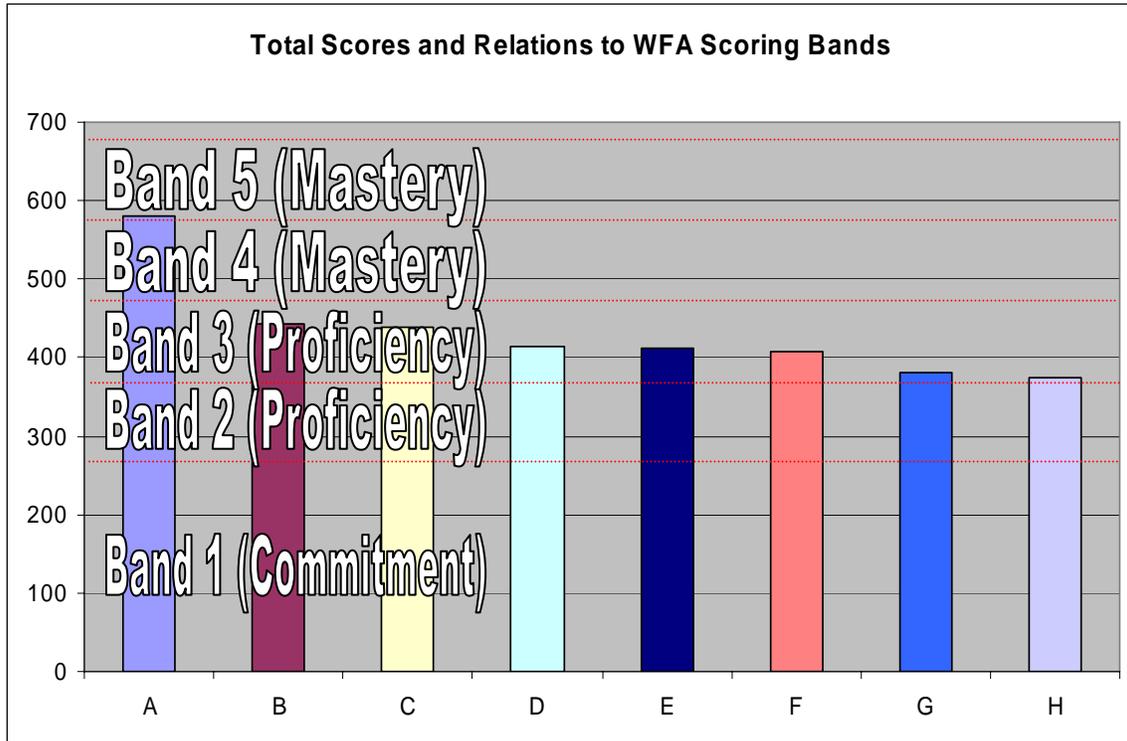
A small workgroup of DWD/DWS, WDB, and WFA, Inc. staff developed a survey implementation plan and revised some survey questions to increase their relevancy to WDBs. The workgroup also conducted an orientation session for interested WDBs and established a few implementation guidelines to provide basic consistency across WDBs.

Seven Wisconsin Workforce Development Boards used the Baldrige Express Survey tool administered by Wisconsin Forward Award to conduct a Board Leadership Assessment during the first quarter of 2006, with one additional Board participating later that year. Survey respondents could chose to complete an online e-survey or a paper version, and all were asked to provide some basic demographic information about their affiliation with the local Workforce Board (private or public Board member, staff, or other stakeholder) and their years of association with public Workforce Boards for the purpose of gaining a deeper understanding of overall survey responses and comments.

The Baldrige Express survey included 49 questions or "themes" organized into seven sections, one for each of the Baldrige Criteria categories. The questions were in the form of behaviorally anchored descriptions; respondents rated each question in one of five categories (from "not done" to "role model"). The survey also offered survey respondents an opportunity to identify questions/themes that they believe are most important to the organization and suggest ways to improve. Respondents were typically given two weeks in which to complete the survey. Some WBDs held "group" sessions in computer labs to facilitate implementation. WBDs that participated in the survey received a written feedback report, usually within three weeks of survey completion, an executive summary highlighting next steps, and the option of holding a half-day debriefing session with WFA, Inc. staff, during which the feedback report is reviewed and explained. Meetings were held with four Boards, with another session scheduled for early 2007.

RESULTS

Based on overall scoring analysis, scores for participating Workforce Development boards ranged from 380 to 580, out of a possible 1,000 points.



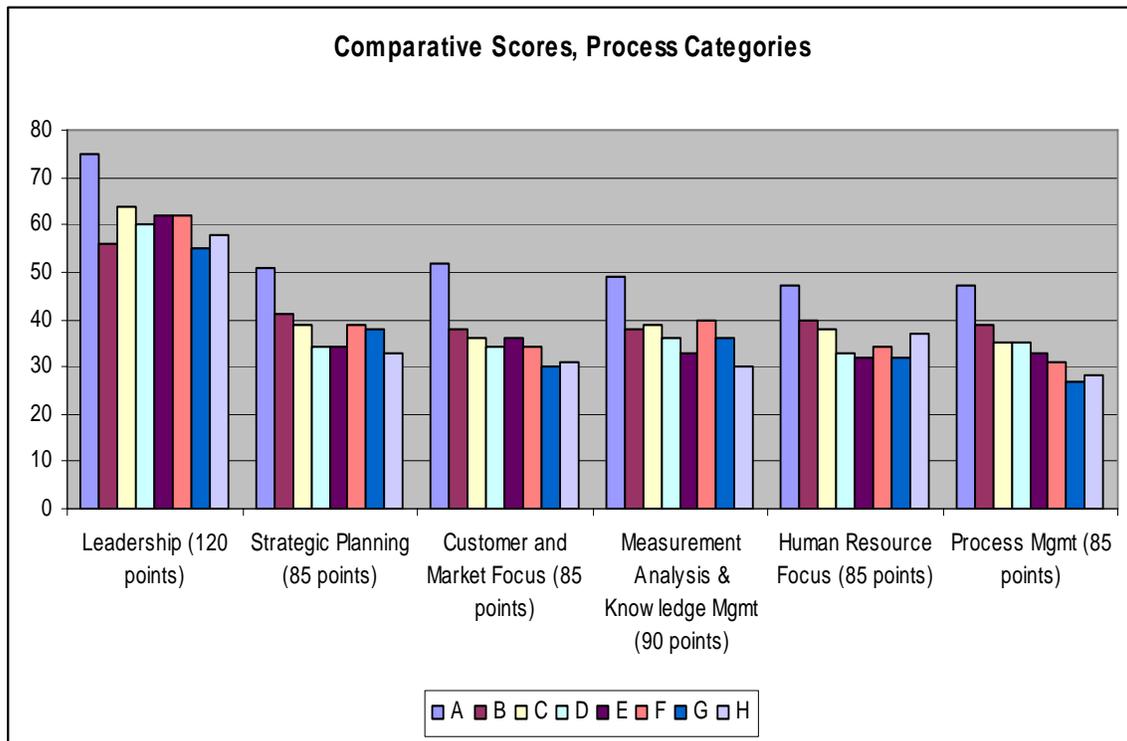
The majority of WDBs' overall scores placed them in Wisconsin Forward Award Scoring Band Three, Proficiency Level, and one would be placed in WFA's Band Five, Mastery Level.

At the proficiency level, an organization is making significant progress in successful implementation of quality management practices as defined by the Criteria for Performance Excellence. Organizations scoring at this level demonstrate systematic approaches to the primary purposes of most Items in the Criteria and show early improvement trends resulting from organizational approaches.

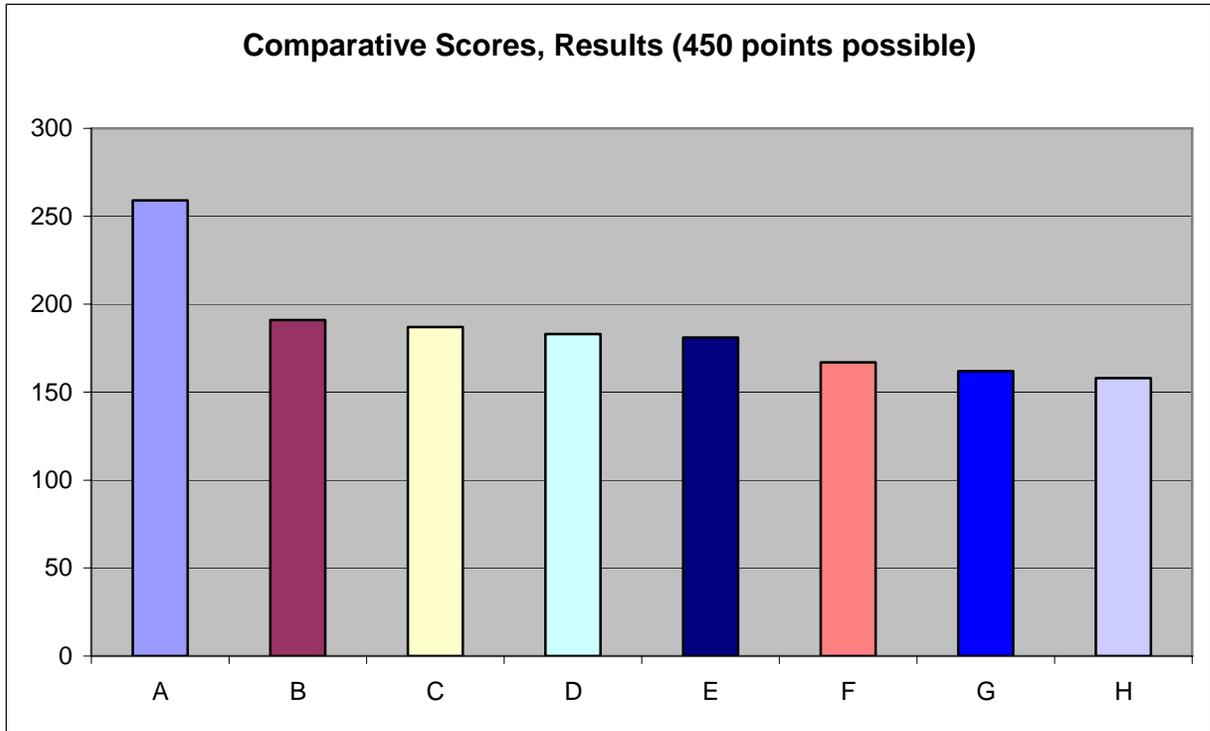
During the past eight years, more than half (58%) of all WFA applications evaluated between 1998 and 2005 were awarded Proficiency Level recognition (Band 2 or 3); 34% of WFA applications evaluated scored specifically in Band 3.

At the Mastery Level, an organization is entering an advanced level relative to the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. The organization demonstrates effective and systematic approaches. There are no major gaps in deployment, though it may be in early stages in some areas. Organizations at the Mastery Level demonstrate fact-based improvement processes, good results, and improvement trends in most areas of importance. The good results and improvement trends can be directly attributed to their systematic, well-deployed approaches.

During the past eight years, approximately 31% of all WFA applications were awarded Mastery Level recognition (Band 4 or 5); 6.8% of WFA applications evaluated scored specifically in Band 5.



In addition to an overall score, the WFA survey process provides scores for each functional criteria category. The chart above illustrates WDB scores for the six "process categories" in the Criteria. All participating workforce boards demonstrated strong leadership, especially in the areas of promoting a climate for ethical and legal behavior, providing community support, and protecting stakeholder interests.



Scores for Category 7, Business Results, ranged from 158 to 259 points, out of a total possible score of 450. This survey category asked respondents to rate reporting of results with improvement trends and benchmarking in six areas: product and service results, customer results, financial/market results, human resource results, organizational effectiveness results, and leadership/social responsibility results. As the results areas indicate, this category may incorporate, but is not limited to, reporting of performance standards required under the Workforce Investment Act. Most Boards agreed that they are in the early stages of developing and monitoring key performance indicators to facilitate fact-based decision making.

TRAINING IMPLICATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

Wisconsin Workforce Development Boards function in a dynamic environment. As in many organizations, the strengths of the Board tend to reflect the strengths/interest areas of WDB leadership. Overall, respondents (Board members and staff) felt they needed additional training/learning opportunities:

- To help Boards and staff more closely align strategy development and implementation/execution. Some respondents indicated a need for assistance in identifying and procuring relevant training, especially as programs, services, and expectations change.
- To develop and implement simple tools to assess customer and stakeholder satisfaction to better understand key requirements and drivers of satisfaction/dissatisfaction.
- To identify key business and support processes and develop, map, and communicate standard processes to increase understanding and reduce variation and rework.

Workforce Development Board leaders understand the need for fact-based decision making, yet may not fully understand the reports, tools, and data available to them for these purposes. Further education and orientation to available data and the process to request additional data may facilitate improved decision-making and analysis at the Board level.

Additionally, the survey responses represented genuine opportunities for overall Board orientation/reorientation to the Wisconsin workforce system and the programs and services offered by individual Workforce Development Boards to “ground” entire Boards and staff. Many WDB Executive Directors planned to use survey findings and feedback as communication opportunities with Board and staff to close gaps in knowledge and understanding of WDB programs and processes for new and long term Board members and staff.

SURVEY FINDINGS – KEY OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Several themes emerged. For the purposes of this summary, the lowest scoring survey questions and the areas picked as the most needing improvement are highlighted to help determine the general themes best suited for improvement in each category as well as the “critical few” themes that could have the greatest impact on overall leadership improvement and change.

LEADERSHIP: While leadership was a strength area for all participating WDBs, survey respondents felt their individual Boards needed additional

focus on fostering an environment of empowerment and motivation, taking action to improve performance, and creating customer value.

STRATEGIC PLANNING: Most survey respondents felt that their WDB needed additional focus on aligning work with the strategic plan, tracking processes, and making changes to plans quickly.

CUSTOMER & MARKET FOCUS: Another frequently identified priority for improvement is getting timely customer feedback and information about the satisfaction of customers and competitors' customers. This area references the ongoing need to collect and manage information about customers in order to better manage their priorities and preferences, to create a more customer-focused organization.

MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS & KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT: Ensuring that needed data are accessible to employees and appropriate suppliers, partners, and customers to enhance communications and improve decision-making was a frequently identified priority for improvement, along with ensuring that hardware and software are user-friendly.

HUMAN RESOURCE FOCUS: Many survey respondents felt that their WDB needed additional focus on designing and delivering training and education that is aligned with strategic plans and focus.

PROCESS MANAGEMENT: Many survey respondents indicated that their WDB needed additional focus on managing support processes to consistently meet requirements and prevent errors and rework while reducing costs of inspections, tests, and audits for support processes.

ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES (RESULTS): WDB survey participants felt their Boards were in the early stages of tracking key business results. There seemed to be mixed understanding of what kinds of reporting/tracking mechanisms are available, and how those could best be used by individual Boards as well as across the workforce system to share best practices, develop benchmarks, and drive improvement efforts.

CONCLUSION

Without exception, each participating Wisconsin Workforce Development Board demonstrated strong leadership and planning as evidence by strong

scores in Category 1, Leadership. The individual survey comments may provide ways for each WDB to continue to refine and enhance these strengths.

Additional thought and analysis should be directed to Category 6, Process Management. This Category often received the lowest Item scores (Item 6.2 and 6.1) as well as the lowest overall Category score. Results suggest a need for additional focus on understanding processes that produce value for WDB customers and the overall organization, as well as those things most important to “running your Board.” Strong processes allow leaders to delegate more effectively and help all stakeholders understand how business is accomplished at the individual, department, and Board levels.

Strong processes also allow WDBs to manage key service, financial, and business processes to meet customer and stakeholder requirements, and they allow the Board to adapt quickly and effectively to changing requirements with flexibility and agility. There may also be opportunities for WDBs to share information on effective processes with each other to fast track improvements and create greater consistency of service across Wisconsin.

The Baldrige Express Board Leadership Assessment Survey offers detailed commentary from representatives from various stakeholders within the Wisconsin workforce system. These comments are insightful and provide detail on what stakeholders—Board members, staff and others—consider to be critical issues that need to be taken into consideration. Some gaps were noted in responses from different stakeholder groups within each WDB, but no specific trends were noted.

Anecdotal comments provided by survey participants may offer suggestions on how each participating Wisconsin Workforce Development Board can develop innovative solutions to improve organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and innovation while adding value for customers and other key stakeholders.

**Evaluation Summary
Baldrige Express Surveys for
Wisconsin Workforce Development Boards
January–March, 2006**

Summary of 3 evaluations from 7 participating Workforce Development Boards

Ratings are on a scale of 1 to 5

Our overall experience with the Baldrige Express survey was...

5= positive and informative ⇔ 1=negative and not helpful

4 }
4 } Average of 3.66
3 }

The survey process was clear for leadership.

5= Yes, definitely ⇔ 1=No, not at all

4 }
4 } Average of 4.00
4 }

The process was clear for survey participants.

5= Yes, definitely ⇔ 1=No, not at all

3 }
3 } Average of 3.00
3 }

In our interactions with Wisconsin Forward Award, WFA was prompt, courteous, and helpful in its responses.

5= Yes, definitely ⇔ 1=No, not at all

5 }
5 } Average of 4.67
4 }