
Minnesota Council for Quality Stakeholder Update
August 2005

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1. A Message from the President: It Doesn't Matter What You Call It, but It Works in Any Organization

This month's column offers two related, but distinct insights. Both are nicely illustrated in a legendary (although perhaps fabricated) story about one of the first K-12 recipients of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, Pearl River Schools in New York. The story goes something like this...

On the night before their first-ever site visit (which is a step in the rigorous Baldrige assessment process reached only by about 25% of applicants), the Superintendent of Schools had a revelation: although he had communicated and prepared his faculty and staff for the upcoming arrival of these examiners, he had never told his people that this was for the Baldrige Award. I guess this is a reasonable thing to have happen, as the school was accustomed to having accreditation audits, community visitors, and outside assessors all the time.

What significantly concerned the Superintendent is that one of the examiners might potentially ask a question about Baldrige -- such as "how long has Pearl River used the Baldrige framework to improve student learning and organizational outcomes?" How would his staff respond?? A blank look (or worse, a response that said "we don't use Baldrige here!") might give a completely inaccurate picture to the examiner team.

So he called an emergency meeting of all staff to share one final key piece of information. The journey that they had been on as a district for some seven or eight years -- a journey to improve their student achievement, stakeholder satisfaction, financial/budget results, and process performance -- was called "Baldrige." So, in case any of these examiners asked something about Baldrige, they would know how to respond.

See, this district had been using the framework and its concepts for nearly a decade. They had incorporated a set of proven business practices to manage and improve their organization: they had been using systematic listening and learning approaches to identify student and stakeholder needs; they had been creating sophisticated strategic plans that aligned with stakeholder, community, and organizational needs and challenges, and they had been aligning curriculum and key processes to that plan; they had been using data to make decisions, both in the classroom as well as to manage the overall organization; they had been focusing on what faculty and staff

needed to be successful, motivated, and satisfied on the job; they had been building relationships with their community, their business partners and receiving schools.

And they had consequently achieved role model results: they have a graduation rate of 100%; student satisfaction increased from 70% to 92% from 1998 to 2001, the year in which the received the Award; parent satisfaction was up 62% to 96% over the same period; faculty satisfaction has increased from 86% to 96% (all three satisfaction indicators are among the national best); student test scores are among the highest in New York and well above the national average; 94% of students who start at Pearl River graduate there; and the community approves the district's annual budget usually by a two-to-one margin or better. (For more on Pearl River, visit <http://www.pearlriver.k12.ny.us/> or http://www.nist.gov/public_affairs/peralriver.htm.)

But they had not called it "Baldrige." They did use the term "Golden Thread" to label their quality structure and the term "A+ Approach for Classroom Success" to define their PDSA improvement method. They indeed received the Baldrige Award that year, not because of what they called their system, but because of the level of alignment, integration, and results that the system was delivering.

So, I offer the first insight: organizations don't reach higher levels of performance by using jargon, buzzwords, slogans, or programs. And it's not enough to just SAY your organization is using Baldrige, or Six Sigma, or Lean, or Balanced Scorecard, or any number of other useful frameworks. Sustained organizational success can only be ensured with unwavering commitment from leadership to a systematic improvement philosophy.

And the story above has in it another useful insight: systematic improvement is not just for business. Sure, manufacturers and service companies are still using frameworks like Baldrige, Six Sigma, and Lean. But a growing number of "non-businesses" -- school districts (and individual schools), health care organizations (hospitals, clinics, long-term care, and payers), and not-for-profits (non-profits, governmental and public sector agencies, and professional associations) are beginning to use these tools to improve their outcomes, their operations, and their performance.

Consider this: of the seven Minnesota Quality Award recipients last year, only one was a business (StoraEnso, a manufacturer), while three were health care and three were K-12 school districts (for a list, see http://www.councilforquality.org/assess_org_award.cfm). This year will likely be the same, as we expect two or three businesses and perhaps as many as 10-12 non-businesses to participate.

On a national level, these numbers are similar. For the 2005 Baldrige Award, 52% of the applicants are health care organizations, 25% are education, and 23% are businesses (not-for-profits will be eligible for the national Award likely in 2006 or 2007). We are also seeing increased adoption of Six Sigma in non-business sectors (particularly health care), Balanced Scorecard (in all sectors, including health care, education, and not-for-profit), Lean (in health care and public sector), and ISO (in all sectors, including education). And I suspect that adoption rates of these tools and frameworks will only increase in non-business sectors as these organizations find that they help them achieve their objectives, accomplish their missions, and create value for their stakeholders.

If you are interested in learning more about how role model organizations, like Pearl River, are using various quality and improvement frameworks, I'd invite you to attend the Baldrige Regional Conference, scheduled for September 28 in Minneapolis (see the article below). A collection of 11 high performing organizations -- four from education, three from health care, and four from business -- will share their improvement strategies.

Not only do they represent all sectors, demonstrating that improvement methods transcend organizational type, but I guarantee that their collective success is not because of what they are calling their improvement methods. Rather, their success is due to their sustained commitment to those improvement methods.

Yours in Improvement,

Brian S. Lassiter
President, Minnesota Council for Quality
www.councilforquality.org

2. Learn from 11 Role Model Organizations -- Baldrige Regional Conference 9/28

The Minnesota Council for Quality, in partnership with the Baldrige National Quality Program and the Kansas Award for Excellence, is pleased to announce that Minnesota will be one of two host sites for the 2005 Baldrige Regional Conferences. Scheduled for Wednesday, September 28 (with a half-day pre-conference session on the 27th), the conference will offer a day of dynamic learning and networking with the 2004 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipients as well as Award recipients from prior years.

“The 11 organizations visiting Minnesota in late September represent a collection of role model organizations from nearly all sectors,” says Brian Lassiter, president of the Council. “This is a tremendous opportunity to learn from the best in business – both manufacturing and service – as well as health care and education.”

Leaders from the following organizations will participate in the conference:

- * Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Hamilton; health care; 2004 Baldrige recipient
- * The Bama Companies; manufacturing; 2004 Baldrige recipient
- * Kenneth W. Monfort College of Business; education; 2004 Baldrige recipient
- * Caterpillar Financial Services Corporation; service; 2003 Baldrige recipient
- * Community Consolidated School District 15 (Palatine, IL); education; 2003 Baldrige recipient
- * St. Luke’s Hospital of Kansas City; health care; 2003 Baldrige recipient
- * SSM Health Care (St. Louis); health care; 2002 Baldrige recipient
- * University of Wisconsin-Stout; education; 2001 Baldrige recipient
- * Pearl River School District (New York); education; 2001 Baldrige recipient
- * Sunny Fresh Foods (Cargill); manufacturing; 1999 Baldrige recipient
- * 3M Dental; manufacturing; 1997 Baldrige recipient

Spend a day learning about these role model organizations’ best practices and performance strategies in all seven Baldrige Criteria Categories:

- * leadership
- * strategic planning
- * customer/market/student/stakeholder/patient focus

- * measurement, analysis, and knowledge management
- * human resource/faculty/staff focus
- * process management
- * results.

The conference is an excellent way to network with and learn from Award recipients. You will undoubtedly discover valuable tips for applying Baldrige as well as hear other ways to improve your performance and strengthen your results.

Advance (before September 8) registration is \$445 (\$495 regular). An additional \$50 discount is available for faculty or groups of five or more registering at the same time. A pre-conference workshop for Baldrige Beginners is planned for the afternoon of 9/27; registration is \$100 for those attending the conference (\$150 for those who are not).

Both events are at the Sheraton-Bloomington (formerly the Radisson South, Hwy 100 and 494). A block of rooms has been reserved at a special \$129 rate, but register before 9/6 to take advantage of the room discount.

For more information, visit http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/2005_Regionals/Regionals.htm or call 301-975-2036 (email nqp@nist.gov).

To register, visit <http://maccinc.com/brc2005/>, call MACC at 215-822-6319, or visit http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/2005_Regionals/Regionals.htm and fax the registration form to 215-822-3332.

 3. Join the 2005 Board of Evaluators; Fall Training Approaching (Deadline Extended)

Are you interested in learning more about what makes organizations successful? Are you interested in helping other organizations -- such as schools, hospitals, non-profits, and businesses -- around the state improve their performance? Would you be interested in networking, learning, and sharing with others who feel the same way?

The Minnesota Council for Quality is seeking candidates for the 2005 Minnesota Quality Award Board of Evaluators. There are many benefits to becoming an Evaluator, such as:

- * strengthening your ability to understand what factors drive organizational results,
- * networking with peers across the state,
- * forming deep relationships with professionals and leaders interested in organizational improvement,
- * reviewing performance of organizations throughout the state (and possibly identifying best practices for your organization), and
- * developing other professional skills such as analysis, consensus- and team-building, interpersonal, written communication, interviewing, and systems thinking.

Many Evaluators consider the experience to be among the most valuable of their careers. Furthermore, Evaluators can now earn post-graduate credit for participating in training. For interested Evaluators, the University of Wisconsin-Stout will offer three (3) hours of credit in partnership with the Minnesota Council for Quality.

If you are interested in joining the 2005 Board of Evaluators, the fall training session will be September 20-22 (in Roseville). In addition to the full three-day training session, new Evaluators are also required to attend a one-day orientation (either 8/24, 8/25, or 8/30).

Applications for new Evaluators ARE DUE 8/24 (extended one week), but please indicate your preferred training date by emailing kathryn.mackin@councilforquality.org.

Applications for returning Evaluators (which only require updates from your most recent applicant) are due 9/9.

We hope that you would consider (re)joining the Board of Evaluators and/or encourage others to do so. For more information or for an application, please visit www.councilforquality.org/assess.cfm, email us at kathryn.mackin@councilforquality.org, or call 612-462-3577.

4. Looking for a Consultant? Try the New Consultant Referral Network at No Charge

Looking for a Six Sigma consultant? An ISO auditor? A leadership coach, a diversity trainer, or a strategic planning expert?

Sometimes locating an organizational improvement expert is difficult. There are many out there, but unless you already know who they are -- or you get lucky through word of mouth -- it is oftentimes challenging to find them.

The Minnesota Council for Quality -- in cooperation with the Michigan Quality Council, the Ohio Partnership for Excellence, and the Wisconsin Forward Award -- is pleased to announce the launch of the Consultant Referral Network(c). Located at www.consultantreferralnetwork.org, the Consultant Referral Network is a dynamic, web-enabled search tool that connects organizational improvement experts to client organizations seeking them. This service allows clients to outline their needs in terms of subject matter expertise sought, type of assistance desired (consulting, training, coaching, speaking, or facilitating), sector/industry expertise required, size of consulting firm desired, desired location of consulting firm, and years of experience preferred. The client can also weight the relative importance of each variable. The tool will then identify up to five consultants or firms that best match the client's needs.

What makes this service unique? Two things. First, it focuses on organizational improvement. There are other tools that help you locate doctors, dentists, and plumbers. But there are very few resources available to locate organizational improvement consultants. Second, the tool allows the hiring organization (the "client") to search for vendors based on their specific needs. So rather than sorting through dozens or hundreds of possible consultants on a particular subject matter expertise, this tool will allow you to narrow your search for the consultants that meet your specific requirements -- requirements such as sector/industry expertise, location, size, and years of experience.

The process is simple. If you are a client, it takes you about 5 minutes to conduct a search (if you are a consultant, it takes you about 15 minutes to register and select your listing fee option). To learn more about the service or to use the tool, visit www.consultantreferralnetwork.org.

5. Medtronic's Lean Sigma Improvement Strategy -- PIN Discussion 9/1

Should I use Six Sigma to improve my organization? Or should I instead use Lean? Why not consider integrating them, and leveraging the benefits of both?

Building on a long history of product excellence and innovation, Medtronic has integrated the concepts and tools from Lean and Six Sigma into Lean Sigma Solutions™, to enable its processes to work faster and better. Rather than choose between Lean OR Six Sigma, the two have been integrated into a common approach to build on one another rather than compete.

The Minnesota Council for Quality is pleased to welcome Dr. John Fechter, Master Black Belt in Medtronic's Quality Solutions Group, to the September 1 Performance Improvement Network (PIN) discussion. John will give an overview of how the two concepts work together at Medtronic, as well as share the results Medtronic has achieved through its Lean Sigma Solutions effort this far -- results in including better quality, reduced lead time, lower costs, and simplified operations.

The discussion is from 8:00-9:00 a.m. on September 1 (networking and continental breakfast begin at 7:30 a.m.) at the University of St. Thomas in downtown Minneapolis, Opus Hall Room 201. Admission is FREE for Council members; \$10 for partner organizations; \$20 for the public. Space is limited so register today: visit www.councilforquality.org/performance.cfm or email brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org.

6. The RCTC Story -- 90 Years of Excellence -- RAQC Session 9/13

The Rochester Area Quality Council (RAQC), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, will present "The RCTC Story -- 90 Years of Excellence" on September 13. Celebrate 90 years of excellence and learn about the college's Performance Improvement System and ongoing commitment to organizational learning and improvement. Details and registration can be found at www.raqc.com.

Looking ahead, on October 4, RAQC presents John G. Miller, author of the best selling book "QBQ! The Question Behind the Question." Mr. Miller will present at the Kahler Grand, Heritage Hall from 7:30 to 10:00 a.m. Drive your organization's 'bottom line' through inspirational personal accountability. John has a captivating and humorous speaking style that is "fast, frank and fun!" Registration includes a copy of the book. Details can be found at www.raqc.com. To register, send an email to kay.wiegert@roch.edu or call 507-285-7560.

At the October 4 program, RAQC will also present the Karl Shurson Quality Award. The award is named in honor of Karl Shurson who was a key executive at Pemstar, Inc. He was also among the important contributors to IBM's Malcolm Baldrige Quality Award in 1990. He was passionate about quality, customer satisfaction and education. Applications are available at www.raqc.com. Please send nominations for organizations and/or individuals to Connie Kurth, 1148 23rd Avenue SW, Rochester, MN by Tuesday, September 27, 2005. Nominations should be typewritten and not exceed three pages. Electronic submissions can be forwarded to raqc@att.net.

7. Beginning of Strategic Planning: Visioning -- MN Facilitators Network 8/18 & 9/10

The Minnesota Facilitators Network (MFN), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce their August 18 discussion "Beginning of Strategic Planning: Visioning." The discussion will be facilitated by Cheryl Kartes, who will share more about a visioning process. The meeting is from 5:30-9:00PM at the Salem Lutheran Church, 610 W. 28th Street in South Minneapolis. The session is \$10. For more information, visit <http://www.mnfacilitators.org/>; to register, email christy@christyjames.com.

In addition, MFN would like to announce the following other events:

9/10 Complete MFN Strategic Planning Session, 9am-5pm, Kroening Center, Minneapolis. \$15; facilitated by Cheryl Kartes. Mark your calendars to attend and invite other MFN members to help plan this session with them if you are interested in learning about a strategic planning

process or in planning this MFN event.

9/23-9/25 Jean Houston, "The Artful Way to Transform the Social Environment" (using facilitation). Promotional Partner discount: \$50 discount on the Friday (\$295) and Sat-Sun (\$395) workshops. MFN members register with Linda Alton 612-281-6556 or icamn@mninter.net by September 1, 2005.

10/11, MFN monthly meeting: IAF Report out. Come and hear about the exciting information learned at this year's IAF conference! 5:30 - 9:00 PM at Salem Lutheran Church, 610 West 28th St S, Minneapolis.

8. 52nd Annual Minnesota Quality Conference -- ASQ 10/10-10/11

The 52nd Annual Minnesota Quality Conference, hosted by the Minnesota Section of the American Society for Quality (ASQ, a partner of the Council), provides educational opportunities for the professional development of its participants. The Conference seeks to advance the use of quality principles, concepts, and technologies for every industry.

The goal of the conference is to provide education on current quality topics and fields of interest and to help quality professionals be informed and implement quality practices throughout their organizations.

This year's Minnesota Quality Conference will be held at the Minneapolis Airport Marriott. One and two hour educational seminars are being offered on Monday October 10, 2005, and full day workshops are offered on Tuesday October 11, 2005.

The keynote address is "Making Six Sigma Useful," delivered by Roderick A. Munro, Ph.D. He will be followed by speakers in five useful tracks: audits, six sigma, leadership, quality tools, and reliability.

The one day conference is \$250 for members of ASQ or the Council (\$300 for the public); fees for the main conference plus the day of workshops is \$450 or \$525, respectively.

For more information or to register, visit <http://www.mnasq.org/2005-conf-home.shtml>.

9. 2005 Annual Conference -- OD Network 11/13-11/15

Please make plans now to join the OD Network for their annual conference this November 13-15 at the Minneapolis Hilton and Towers. This is the first time the event will be held in the Twin Cities and is hosted by the Minnesota OD Network, a partner of the Council.

"So, what's in it for ME? " you ask?

This year's conference is centered around the four mission-critical areas of focus that reflect what OD and HR professionals told the OD Network you need to know to maximize your personal and organizational success: Systems Thinking, Strategic Thinking, Bottom-Line OD, and Leadership.

The program is specifically designed to meet your professional development needs and help you address your on-the-job and in-the-trenches challenges - while providing an environment for connection among peers who share similar challenges, values and fresh ideas.

And, in order to help you better define and communicate the value of OD within your own organization, you'll get an inside look at how successful OD initiatives made the grade and won praise from senior leadership teams at major organizations, including: American Express, Banco

Popular, Boeing, Children's Hospital, Goldman, Sachs & Co., H.B. Fuller, Honeywell, Lockheed Martin, Novartis, Pfizer, and others.

Plus, you'll hear riveting speakers -- who represent the founders of OD, as well as the next generation of leadership -- and enjoy scores of skill-building, relevant workshops and core sessions that offer you answers that you can implement as soon as you return to work.

The conference is \$995 for members of MNODN (\$1195 for non-members) or \$795 before 8/22 (\$995). There are senior and student rates available.

For more information or to register, visit <http://www.odnetwork.org/conf2005/index.php>.

10. University of St. Thomas Announces Summer Courses

The Center for Business Excellence at the University of St. Thomas Minneapolis Campus is pleased to announce their winter improvement curriculum. Council members are entitled to a 15% discount for the following courses:

8/24-2/19 Executive Leadership Program

http://www.stthomas.edu/cob/execprofdev/4d/sem_desc_results.asp?profctr=depd&id=10-1001004

8/25-26 Finance & Accounting for Nonfinancial Managers

http://www.stthomas.edu/cob/execprofdev/4d/sem_desc_results.asp?profctr=depd&id=11-3014012

8/26-12/10 (five two-day sessions) Strategies for Organizational Growth

http://www.stthomas.edu/cob/execprofdev/4d/sem_desc_results.asp?profctr=depd&id=10-3085006

For more information on any of these courses or to register, visit the Center for Business Excellence's website at www.stthomas.edu/cbe or call 651-962-4600.

11. Century College Announces Fall Courses; Council Members Get Discount

Century College, White Bear Lake, offers a comprehensive program of Quality training, certificate and certification courses to meet the needs of business and industry. Courses may be customized and delivered to your organization at your worksite. Century College is pleased to announce the following fall quality courses:

Certified Quality Improvement Associate (CQIA); Quality 101: ASQ Foundations in Quality; Tuesdays, October 4-25 from 6-9PM. Cost is \$575 (\$525 for Council members).

ASQ Certified Quality Auditor (CQA); Mondays, September 26 through November 21 from 6-9PM. Cost is \$795 (\$745 for Council members).

ASQ Certified Quality Engineer Program (CQE); Wednesdays, August 31 through November 16 from 6-9PM. Cost is \$875 (\$825 for Council members).

ASQ Certified Quality Manager; 35 hour course, fall dates TBD (visit www.century.edu/cect and click on the Quality link for more information). Cost is \$795 (\$745 for Council members).

ASQ Certified Quality Manager Test Prep Refresher; October 8 from 9:00am-3:30pm; \$165 (\$138 for Council members).

ISO 9001:2000 Internal Quality Auditor; September 20-21 from 8:30am-4:00pm; \$595 (\$545 for Council members).

Six Sigma Executive Overview; November 9 from 9:00am-12:00pm; \$119 (\$69 for Council members)

To register, contact Century College at 651-779-3341. For more information, contact Lorrie MacGillivray at 651-747-4048 or l.macgillivray@century.edu or visit www.century.edu/cect.

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