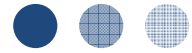




Performance Counts



The Newsletter for the United States Senate Productivity and Quality Award for Virginia

Summer, 2009

Who's in the VA SPQA Community?

- Award applicants and past recipients
- Current, potential and past Examiners
- Sponsors big and small
- Others who wish to make a difference

Who to contact with questions about the VA SPQA Community?

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2009 SPQA Examiners relaxing after Site Visit



SPQA 2009 Recipients Announced!

Medallions, Plaque, Certificates to be awarded October 7

The 2009 SPQA Examination cycle has been concluded. Following three days of training, six teams of Examiners conducted rigorous independent and consensus reviews.

The SPQA Judges Panel met and identified applicants that would receive site visits, and the Examiners spent two days at the facilities of those applicants. Examiners drafted feedback reports, and again the Judges met to recommend award levels for the applicants.

Finally, in May, the SPQA Board of Directors met and selected the

following organizations for recognition:

United States Senate Productivity and Quality Award Medallion:

- High Performance Technologies, Inc., Reston, VA
- Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Washington, DC

Plaque for Performance Excellence:

- Willard InterContinental Hotel, Washington, DC

Certificate for Performance Excellence:

- Aurora Flight Sciences, Manassas, VA
- Department of Human Resources, Albemarle County, VA
- School of Business, Marymount University, Arlington, VA

Join us in celebrating the achievements of these high-performing organizations at the SPQA Award Recognition Ceremony and Dessert Buffet at 2:30pm on October 7. ●

Senator Warner On Board



In May, Senator Mark Warner enthusiastically joined his colleague Senator Jim Webb as an Honorary Chair of the Virginia SPQA program. A

former Governor, Senator Warner understands the need for strong organizations to ensure economic growth and quality of life in the Commonwealth. As a successful businessman, he is aware of the need for organizational excellence as the enabler of sustained growth and economic viability for Virginia.

Ms. Courtney Dozier of Senator Warner's office will join her colleague Ms. Louise Ware of Senator Webb's office as Virginia SPQA program advisors. ●



Virginia SPQA welcomes NVTC as its newest Partner. Visit them at nvtc.org

Are you a member of a professional society or trade group that could benefit from a Virginia SPQA affiliation? Partner members receive discounts and other benefits. Contact us at partners@spqa-va.org

"VA SPQA evaluation and recognition is available to the **business service, manufacturing, health care, government/non-profit and educational sectors.**"

2009 Forum for Excellence, October 6 & 7



Mark your calendar for the 27th Annual Forum for Excellence October 6 & 7 at the Holiday Inn Select, Koger Conference Center, Richmond. Learn from subject matter experts; network with peers; celebrate the 2009 Virginia SPQA award recipients.

Activities begin on October 6 with three **Pre-Forum Workshops:**

So You Got the Feedback Report - Now What? This is a new Virginia SPQA offering, designed for individuals in organizations that have participated in a Virginia SPQA program and received a feedback report. This half-day workshop, delivered by Fred Salanitro of Norfolk Naval Shipyard is intended to help organizations make the most from Virginia SPQA Feedback reports.

An Explorer's Guide to the SPQA Criteria This is a full-day overview of the SPQA Programs and a detailed discussion of the content of the Organization Profile and the seven Categories of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. This workshop, designed for leaders and change agents of organizations interested in learning the details of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence and its application in the organization, will be delivered by Jay Fadgen of Lodestar Consulting.

Unraveling the Mysteries of Category Seven This is a half-day overview of the SPQA Award Program and a detailed

discussion around the relationships between Categories 1-6, and Category 7 "Results." This newly updated workshop focuses on defining "mature" results, and will help organizations understand the relationship between inputs, outputs, and outcomes. Specifically designed for individuals seeking to understand how to identify and portray results relative to processes, this workshop will be delivered by Ken Smith of Strategic Directions, LLC.

The Forum proper begins the evening of October 6 with the **Welcome and Recognition Reception.**



Please join us along with Dr. Harry Hertz, Director of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program, for the Welcome and Recognition Reception to honor our Sponsors, Partners, and Board of Examiners. Reception attendees will have a chance to meet Dr. Marta Wilson and will receive a copy of her new book, *Leaders in Motion*.

October 7 begins with the **Opening Keynote: "Execution Revolution, Breaking the 3% Limit," featuring author Gary Harpst.** Gary Harpst is the founder of Six Disciplines, a strategy execution coaching program designed to revolutionize the strategy execution management of small and mid-sized businesses.



Mr. Harpst's methodology is documented in his award-winning handbook, *Six Disciplines for Excellence*. His latest book, *Six Disciplines Execution Revolution*, has been named in the bestseller lists of *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, and *BusinessWeek*. Each luncheon attendee will receive a copy of *Six Disciplines for Excellence*.

Another highlight will be the **Luncheon Keynote: "Charting the Course to Deep Calm Waters," with Rear Admiral Mark Hugel, U.S. Navy (Retired).**



Rear Admiral Mark Hugel recently retired as Deputy Commander, Naval Sea Systems Command for Logistics, Maintenance, and Industrial Operations. Earlier in his career, RADM Hugel commanded the Norfolk Naval Shipyard during a time when it received the Virginia SPQA Medallion.

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2009 Forum for Excellence

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As an accomplished ship-builder, Rear Admiral Hugel understands what it takes for organizations to "thrive in the midst of a storm."

Throughout the morning and in the afternoon, additional speakers will conduct workshops that address the role of leadership, strategic planning, customer and stakeholder focus, workforce focus, analysis and data-based decision making, and process management in enabling organizations to produce the results necessary to "Thrive in the Midst of A Storm." Workshops will demonstrate how these facets of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence can help organizations not only survive, but also succeed and achieve world-class status, even in today's turbulent environment.

Concluding the Forum will be the **Award Recognition Ceremony and Dessert Buffet**, with Bernie Nieimeier, Publisher of *Virginia Business* magazine, as Master of Ceremonies, and Dr. Harry Hertz, Director, Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program, as featured speaker. Please join us for the Award Recognition Ceremony to honor our award recipients. Dessert will be provided and some lucky attendees will receive special a "Journey Incentive." ●

Go to <http://www.spqa-va.org> to register for the Forum and to obtain additional details about the Forum location, directions, and agenda.

Time to Get Ready for SPQA 2010

The 2009 Forum for Excellence means many things. First and foremost, it represents the end of the 2009 award cycle, and signals the approach of the 2010 cycle.

This means different things to different people.

For the SPQA Board of Directors and Committee Members, it means preparing for the administrative duties associated with managing a Baldrige-based award program. Developing a plan and a schedule of events that balances the needs of all stakeholders is the most important, and without a doubt the most difficult, task of the process. The schedule needs to account for the facts that Examiners and Judges need to be recruited and trained; trainers need to be identified; a training facility must be found; and training materials have to be developed, reproduced, and distributed. The schedule must be built so that it allows Examiner teams the time to perform their duties in excellent fashion and at the same time meet strict deadlines for completion of Independent Reviews, Consensus meetings, writing of Scorebooks, and conducting Site Visits and Feedback meetings with applicants.

For the SPQA Panel of Judges, it means becoming intimately familiar with the new 2009-2010 Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. It also means preparing for the task of reviewing applications and monitoring the assessments developed by the Examiner teams.

For those who served as 2009 Examiners, it means deciding whether to once again devote the countless hours of selfless

service to the goal of helping organizations improve their performance and enhance the economic viability and quality of life in the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia.

For prospective Examiners, it means attending the SPQA two-day Criteria Workshop (or equivalent training) to prepare them for the rigorous job of evaluating an organization's performance. It then means making sure they have the time necessary (often about 100 hours) to devote to this task. Then it means completing the prework required prior to attending Examiner training, and ultimately attending three days of Examiner training.

Finally, for potential applicants, it means preparing a 50-page self-assessment in pursuit of the Medallion or a shorter Discovery self-assessment. For the Medallion applicants, this will require studying the Criteria, spending numerous hours developing responses to the Criteria areas to address, consolidating the responses into a coherent, integrated self-assessment, and finally submitting the application package.

Due dates for applications for the 2010 Board of Examiners and for submission of self-assessments will be finalized soon, and will be announced on the SPQA web site at <http://www.spqa-va.org>.

An electronic form for application to the Board of Examiners is posted on the SPQA web site during the fourth quarter of the year. If you are interested in being reminded when it is available, let us know by email to

SPQA Forward July 18 In Richmond

SPQA Forward – formerly known as "SPQA Improvement Day" – is our way of practicing what we preach.

Each summer, Virginia SPQA program participants; examiners, applicants, board and committee members, other volunteers, and other interested individuals meet to develop lessons learned from the year and incorporate improvement ideas and suggestions.

Lessons learned that are identified as SPQA Program strengths will be enhanced with a view to having them drive us to a higher level of performance. Similarly, Opportunities for Improvement will be analyzed and ways will be sought to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate their effects, thereby preventing them from inhibiting SPQA from reaching the next level of performance.

This year's event is on Saturday, July 18, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm and will be located at the Eanes-Pittman Public Safety Training Center located in Chesterfield County, Va. Directions are available at <http://www.chesterfield.gov/publicsafety/fire/eppstc.asp>

If you have an idea that could help us improve, participate in SPQA Forward. Watch <http://www.spqa-va.org> for registration details. ●





The Performance Corner

Featuring articles from members of the VA SPQA Community that promote performance excellence.

This article is submitted by Mike Novak of the Internal Revenue Service. He is a VA SPQA Examiner and the editor of "Performance Counts."

"Performance Counts" is looking for submissions for the Fall 2009 edition. To be considered, submit your article no later than September 5, 2009 to: editor@spqa-va.org. Please limit words to 625.

How Can We Do This? The Road to Performance Excellence

Usually the first reaction to the prospect of pursuing performance excellence using the Baldrige Criteria and methodology is, "How can we do this? It is so much to do! And it is such a change!"

But as W. Edwards Deming was fond of saying, "It is not necessary to change. Survival is not mandatory."

But in today's turbulent economic environment, organizations that want to survive must change. The old ways don't work anymore (if, as Deming would counter, they ever did work).

Granted: Using the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence is no mean task. It is difficult; and it is expensive in terms of time, effort, and funds. And if that were not enough, simply understanding what the Criteria are asking can be quite challenging.

So here are three simple rules for survival – and perhaps eventual world-class performance – using the Baldrige approach:

- 1. Get started**
- 2. Keep going**
- 3. Steal shamelessly**

History is littered with variants of Rule Number 1. "Rome wasn't built in a day." "The longest journey begins with a single step." And so on. So, with Baldrige, how does one "get started?" The first step would be: go to the Baldrige web site, www.baldrige.nist.gov. Download "Are We Making Progress?" That simple tool can help identify areas on which to focus before even picking up the Criteria. Then attend one of the SPQA Criteria workshops to help achieve an understanding of the Criteria and the self-assessment and improvement process.

At this point some might jump right into a full-blown application for the Baldrige or a state-level award. That would be like reading a book about downhill

skiing and trying out for the next Winter Olympics. The only outcome would be frustration.

Many organizations use the Baldrige approach for internal self-assessment and improvement efforts before they even start thinking about applying for an award. After several cycles of applying the Criteria and leveraging strengths and addressing opportunities for improvement, some organizations then seek an external perspective by applying for an award.

But the first-time applicant is often frustrated or disappointed by the results of the application process. Indeed, 50+ pages of comments can be overwhelming.

And that is where Rule Number 2 comes into play. Don't get discouraged. The feedback report is an opportunity to keep the momentum going. Develop an action plan to prioritize strengths and opportunities to work on. Implement improvements. Then, submit another application. Use the feedback from that application to implement further improvements.

Submit more applications. Make more improvements. Keep submitting applications. Keep making improvements.

And when you receive the Baldrige Award, or the SPQA Medallion, don't fall into the trap of thinking you have "made it." Performance excellence is a moving target and an ever-increasing goal. Customer requirements and expectations are always on the rise. So are the requirements of your workforce, suppliers, partners, collaborators, and other stakeholders. This is where Rule Number 2 assumes its greatest value. Never stop

improving. Because if you do, your competition will pass you by.

Rule Number 3 is the tongue-in-cheek embodiment of how the Baldrige process works. Baldrige Award recipients are required to serve as role models for other organizations that are on the journey to performance excellence. As a part of that role model function, Baldrige Award recipients act as mentors and share their best practices and lessons learned. That allows you to "steal" their knowledge and experience and use it for your benefit. You can find these best practices in the Baldrige recipients' applications, many of which are posted on the Baldrige web site. You can also visit recipients for the purpose of Benchmarking and best practices research.

Some state award programs have similar "role model" and "mentor" requirements for their award recipients. And where state award programs do not impose a formal obligation, most award recipients are proud of their achievements and are more than happy to show them off. There are also books that recipients and Examiners have written that show best practices.

So, these three simple rules can be the key to survival, success, and world-class performance. Start your journey. Continue your journey. Learn from those who have gone before you.

(By the way, I practice what I preach: I started my Baldrige journey in 1994; I am still on my journey; and I shamelessly stole the idea for this article from a March 23 presentation by Terry May, President of MESA Products, a 2006 Baldrige Award Recipient.) ●