



2008

Washington State

Quality Award

Workforce Training and

Education Coordinating Board

Lite (Assessment) Feedback Report

This document provides a Lite (Assessment) Feedback Report for the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. Used in conjunction with the Criteria for Performance Excellence and Scoring Guidelines, this feedback report is the conclusion of the application process.



March 6, 2009

Tim Sweeney
Marketing Director
Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
P.O. Box 43105
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Mr. Sweeney:

Congratulations for taking the Washington State Quality Award challenge! We commend you for applying for this award. Your application for the Award and use of the Baldrige Criteria demonstrate your organization's commitment to performance excellence.

This feedback report was prepared for your organization by members of the Washington State Quality Award Board of Examiners in response to your application for the Washington State Quality Award. It presents an outline of the scoring for your organization and describes areas identified as strengths and opportunities for possible improvement. The report contains the Examiners' observations about your organization and is not intended to prescribe a specific course of action. Please refer to "Preparing to Read Your Feedback Report" and "Considerations for Reviewing Small Organizations" for further details about how to use the information contained in your feedback report.

We are eager to ensure that the comments in the report are clear to you so that you can incorporate the feedback into your planning process to continue to improve your organization. As direct communication between Examiners and applicants is not allowed under the operating procedures for the application process, please contact me at (360) 697-2444 if you wish to clarify the meaning of any comment in your report. We will contact the Examiners for clarification and convey their intentions to you. Additionally, WSQA also offers an opportunity for you to meet with WSQA to discuss the feedback report. If you are interested, please phone the office to set up this meeting.

The feedback report is not your only source for ideas about organizational improvement. Current and previous Award recipients can be potential resources on your continuing journey to performance excellence. An Award recipients' contact list may be found at www.baldrige.nist.gov/Contacts_Profiles.htm or at www.wsqa.net. Additionally, national and state recipients will share their stories at our annual WSQA Symposium scheduled in May.

Thank you for your participation in the Washington State Quality Award process. Best wishes for continued success with your performance excellence journey.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Sprecher, Executive Director
Washington State Quality Award

Enclosures

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Preparing to Read Your Lite (Assessment) Feedback Report

Your feedback report contains Washington State Quality Award Examiners' observations that are based on their understanding of your organization. They have provided comments on your organization's strengths and opportunities for improvement relative to the Baldrige Criteria. The feedback is non-prescriptive. It will tell you where Examiners think you have strengths to celebrate and where they think improvement opportunities exist. The feedback will not say specifically how you should address these opportunities. The specifics will depend on what you decide is most important to your organization. Applicant organizations read and use feedback comments in different ways. We've gathered some tips and practices from prior applicants for you to consider.

- Take a deep breath and prepare to benefit from the feedback process. You applied to get the feedback. Read it, take time to digest it, and read it again.
- Please keep in mind that high performing organizations often spend several years within the same band. When reviewing a second feedback report we encourage you not to become discouraged if you have not increased scoring bands, but rather to focus on both your new strengths and opportunities.
- Especially note comments in **boldface type**. These comments indicate particularly important observations - those the Examiner Team felt had substantial impact on your organization's performance practices, capabilities, or results (either a strength or opportunity for improvement) and, therefore, had more influence on the team's scoring of that particular item.
- You know your organization better than the Examiners know it. There might be relevant information that was not communicated to them or that they did not fully understand. Therefore, not all of their comments may be equally accurate.
- Although we strive for "perfection," we do not achieve it in every comment. If Examiners have misread your application or misunderstood your organization on a particular point, don't discount the whole feedback report. Consider the other comments and focus on the most important ones.
- Celebrate your strengths and build on them to achieve world-class performance and a competitive advantage. You've worked hard and should congratulate yourselves.
- Use your strengths comments to understand what the Examiners observed you do well and build upon them. Continue to evaluate and improve the things you do well. Sharing those things you do well with the rest of your organization can speed organizational learning.
- Prioritize your opportunities for improvement. You can't do everything all at once. Think about what's most important for your organization at this time and decide which things to work on first.
- You may decide to address all, some, or none of the opportunities in a particular Item. It depends on how important you think that Item or comment is to your organization.
- Use the feedback as input to your strategic planning process. Focus on the strengths and opportunities for improvement that have an impact on your strategic goals and objectives.

Considerations for Reviewing Small Organizations

All applicants are reviewed in the context of their individual key factors. In the case of small organizations, size is a significant factor. While an organization's size does not affect the applicability of the Baldrige Criteria, it does need to be factored into the assessment of an applicant's responses in its Washington State Quality Award application. Therefore, Examiners with large-organization frames of reference should be careful not to apply operational and procedural requirements as they review small organization applications.

Some guidelines are given below for understanding the context for reviewing a small organization:

- Small organization applicants are defined as those with 500 or fewer employees. Also noteworthy is the significant difference in resource availability between a 450-person organization and a 50-person organization.
- Social responsibility and community involvement must be viewed in the context of the applicant's size. A large organization might have impacts on a national or international basis; a small organization will frequently focus its involvement on a local community.
- The issues of fiscal and managerial accountability, ethical behavior, and legal compliance are as pertinent to a small organization as they are to a large one, and the responses of management to these issues are equally important. A small organization, however, will necessarily address these issues in the context of its size, ownership (many are privately held or family-owned), and responsibilities. Good governance practices are still an imperative.
- While large organizations frequently have complex computer/information systems for data management, a small organization (depending upon how small) may perform data and information management with a combination of personal computer- or work station-based data management systems and manual methods.
- Due to limited workforce and funding resources, benchmarking and competitive comparison information in a small organization environment may be based largely on literature/trade association information and comparisons with best practices in the local geographic area.
- In the context a small organization, systems for workforce involvement and process management may rely more on informal verbal communication than on formal written communication and documentation. However, all applicants have the same requirements to demonstrate that their processes are repeatable, can produce the desired results, and are deployed fully and systematically throughout the organization.
- The ability of a small organization to leverage key suppliers, particularly large suppliers, has to be viewed in the context of workforce availability and the volume of business that it does with the supplier.
- The ability of a small organization to obtain customer and market knowledge through independent third-party surveys, commissioned studies, extensive interviews, or focus group

techniques is limited by its resources. The important consideration for Examiners is to assess whether the applicant, given its resources, is using appropriate mechanisms to gather and use information to improve its customer and market focus and satisfaction.

- The expectation that large organizations will segment their results data with regard to various customer and workforce segments may require modification in small organizations, depending on the complexity of these groups and the level of resources needed to gather and analyze the data.

Introduction

By submitting a Washington State Quality Award Lite (Assessment) application, you have differentiated yourself from most State of Washington organizations. We are eager to make your efforts achieve the maximum benefit possible. This feedback report was written for your consideration in accelerating your journey toward performance excellence.

The Board of Examiners has evaluated your application for the Washington State Quality Award Lite (Assessment). Strict confidentiality is observed at all times and in every aspect of the application review and feedback.

This feedback report contains a detailed listing of strengths and opportunities for improvement, and scoring information. Background information on the examination process is also provided.

We encourage you to use the feedback as input to your strategic planning process. As a Washington State Quality Award Lite (Assessment) applicant, you are already a winner in the journey toward performance improvement!

Details of Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

Category 1 – Leadership

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 3.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- In setting the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board’s (Workforce Board’s) vision and values, senior leaders used a collaborative process involving agency staff and stakeholders to develop a working draft. The process included a review of the agency's statutory mandates and the Governor's Executive Order. The draft statements were reviewed by the Interagency Committee, presented to the Workforce Board for comment and public feedback, and approved by the agency in 2004. They were later updated slightly in 2006.
- Goals associated with the vision and mission were recently reset through a collaborative, team-driven process that aligned the agency strategic plan with the state plan for Washington's workforce development system, *High Skills, High Wages*.
- The Workforce Board identifies its responsibilities to the public through the agency's strategic plan, communicating those responsibilities through its website, correspondence, and board meetings. Each staff person's responsibilities are defined by performance agreements and professional development plans developed in collaboration with their supervisors.
- The Workforce Board’s team-based culture and matrix organization foster an environment of cooperation, communication, skill sharing, and leveraging of diverse ideas.
- Senior leaders use a variety of mechanisms to communicate with and engage the entire workforce, including monthly staff meetings, team-leader meetings, office lunches, e-mail, and newsletters.
- The Workforce Board’s chief operating officer provides copies of the state's ethics law and supporting material to all staff at an annual meeting. Major features of the law are discussed and opportunities are provided to clarify ambiguities. This year the Attorney General's Office also conducted a four-hour training session for the agency staff, focusing on “Ethics in Public Service Act, RCW 42.52 and WAC 292-110-010, Use of Resources Rule.”

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Although the leadership recognizes that its mission, vision, and values may require revision, no decision has been made as to when or what process will be followed. Without a systematic approach for reviewing, revising, or reaffirming the mission, vision, and values, the organization may lose focus.
- **It is not clear whether there has been systematic review and improvement of key leadership approaches, such as processes to ensure ethical and legal behavior, to address responsibilities to the public, and to facilitate organization-wide communication and workforce engagement. Without systematic evaluation and**

improvement in these areas, it may be difficult for the Workforce Board to ensure it is achieving continuous improvement in all of its key processes, including how senior leaders guide and sustain the organization. Recall that the agency's values are stated as core competencies and expectations of the leadership team include: leadership, communication, relationship-building, active people management, and managing for results.

- It is unclear how senior leaders are evaluated and held accountable for organizational performance.

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 3.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- Workforce Board members helped develop the State’s strategic plan for workforce development, *High Skills, High Wages*, chairing subcommittees on Youth, Adults, and Industry. The process for developing the state plan involved considerable public process, with a focus on customers. The Workforce Board’s staff crafted the agency’s strategic plan to address the strategic challenges identified in the state plan, such as changing economic and demographic trends. This process began with the formation of three primary teams: youth, adults, and industry. The teams reviewed *High Skills, High Wages* for the objectives related to their areas, refining the objective statements and developing a list of policy, program, research, and communication strategies designed to address those objectives, as well as related performance measures. This planning process ensured that the agency’s strategic plan focused on the key priorities established by *High Skills, High Wages*.
- All activities of the Workforce Board and each employee's primary functions are articulated in the strategic plan. The agency’s workforce is organized and managed using a combination of matrix management and team-based structures aligned with the strategic plan. Each team identified key strategic objectives and developed action plans to achieve them. Team leaders work with direct supervisors to ensure that each team member's performance agreement and professional development plan include any assigned responsibilities for the team’s work. The agreements show what needs to be completed in each three month period to accomplish the strategies. The strategic plan also specifies the success measures for each of the core areas, research and leadership. Progress is tracked through regular meetings with the leadership team and team leads.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The application does not clearly delineate the Workforce Board’s strategic advantages nor discuss how the strategic objectives address them. Strategic advantages generally arise from either or both of two sources: (1) core competencies, through building and expanding on an organization's internal capabilities, and (2) strategically important external resources, which are shaped and leveraged through key external relationships and partnerships. When an organization realizes both sources of strategic advantage, it can amplify its unique internal capabilities by capitalizing on complimentary capabilities in other organizations. Although the agency has pursued greater efficiency by fostering closer alignment with other organizations, without a systematic approach for determining its strategic advantages, these efforts may not improve overall organizational effectiveness and capability.
- The Workforce Board’s strategic plan consists of 15 objectives and 183 strategies. There does not appear to be prioritization of tasks or time frames identified for the large volume of strategies the agency wishes to accomplish. Further, it is not clear how the agency ensures that adequate financial and other resources are available and allocated to carry out

these strategies or how they work with their twelve major workforce development agencies to do so. Without clear direction and linkages to financial and other resources, the agency could flounder as it attempts to address multiple priorities.

- The new team structure began in 2007 and the Workforce Board's strategic plan was adopted in July 2008. Performance measures have been established and information is now being collected by the teams. However, the new approach has not yet been through a full cycle of learning and improvement.

Category 3 – Customer and Market Focus

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The agency captures customer-related information through Workforce Board public meetings conducted six times a year throughout the state to determine the direction of the workforce development. As part of the core measures, the agency surveys twelve of the most active programs to determine satisfaction with the program and identify unmet needs. Employers statewide are surveyed every two years to determine employer demand for job applicants and the agency also held skill panel program participants around a specific industry need. The results of these surveys and other performance results are shared with the agency staff and members as well as the agencies that manage the programs. The results inform discussions on funding priorities that can lead to innovation and changes in policy.
- The development of the state plan, *High Skills, High Wages*, involved public process, with a focus on customers. The most recent edition included three subcommittees -Youth, Adults, and Industry - and conducted up to three meetings each with service providers, businesses, and target population advocates producing recommendations which were then vetted through a series of ten public meetings throughout the state.
- The most common way a customer does business with the Workforce Board is through direct contact with the board or staff through hundreds of meetings annually. The partnership designed to establish an employer-employee matching fund for education, the Lifelong Learning Account partnership, lists ten collaborators as an example. The agency's website and weekly e-mail newsletter also provide information and encourage interactive communication.
- Key agency products and services have feedback mechanisms. Examples include feedback cards, website surveys, and a survey of conference participants.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- A variety of methods are used to gather customer satisfaction data, but it is unclear as to how the Workforce Board uses the information obtained to determine key requirements.
- No comparative data or information is provided. Comparative data may be useful to the Workforce Board to determine their performance, particularly regarding customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and loyalty.

Category 4 – Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The Workforce Board identified Workforce Core Measures related to employment, earnings, skills, customer satisfaction, and return on investment. These measures are tracked for the twelve major workforce development programs. In July 2008, the staff also identified data and measures to track performance related to strategies and objectives in the agency's strategic plan. The teams bring the data together to track results. The measures and results are presented during the Interagency Committee. This provides an opportunity for input from the public and the twelve major workforce development programs.
- Team leaders and the leadership team meet monthly to review the agency's strategic plan and the performance measures. The team leaders and leadership team review to ensure that staff performance and development plans are aligning with the agency strategic plan and team expectations.
- A project management system with a template that allows sharing of data has been launched.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- The link between Workforce Core Measures and the performance measures related to the strategic plan are unclear.
- The source of data collection, the frequency of reporting, and how the data is used to drive improvements at the Workforce Board is unclear. It is also unclear if the research staff contribute to the data. The organization may benefit from clearly defining indicators and data sources.
- The Workforce Board envisions the new team structure as a way to identify information gaps, collect information, and share with others, targeted to the agency's three key issues: youth, adults, and industry. However, this approach is new and has not yet gone through a cycle of learning and improvement.

Category 5 – Workforce Focus

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The Workforce Board performs an annual employee survey based on the survey used by the Department of Personnel and shares those results with staff.
- Each employee develops, in conjunction with their leader, an annual performance agreement and a professional development plan that includes assignments related to the team's work and agency strategic plan.
- Leaders meet routinely with employees and without employees to discuss needs and progress toward accomplishing the employee linked performance goals and other issues associated with implementing the agency's strategic plan.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- It is not evident that the Workforce Board has developed an effective and supportive environment with processes for encouraging its workforce to achieve personal and organizational success. For example, it is not clear what methods are used to recruit employees and a systematic approach is not evident for training and retaining members of the workforce. The agency does not articulate how its workforce development and learning system addresses its core competencies and strategic advantages. Further, performance measures are not provided for workplace engagement, workforce development, and workforce capability and capacity (including staffing levels, retention, and appropriate skills). Without a systematic approach that addresses these areas, the Workforce Board may be limited in its ability to meet key workforce requirements, to optimize human resources, and to create a sustainable competitive advantage for its organization.
- It is unclear how leadership uses employee satisfaction data to assist in motivating employees or addressing employee needs.

Category 6 – Process Management

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The Workforce Board’s core competencies are determined by the agency and identified as important work values for both leadership and staff. The values are evident throughout the application as the workplace culture required for the highest possible levels of collaboration and coordination among a variety of system stakeholders.
- A recent reorganization focuses on new team alignments. A 2009 all-staff initiative is planned to review and refine the stated understanding of the work processes and the core competencies to provide sufficient details for key measurements and indicators for process improvement.
- Key work processes include development of workforce development strategy, production of policies and research that support strategy, support and staffing of the board, execution of programs, and planning conference and other public forums.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- As state and federal funding become scarce, workforce development system success will rest on how the system satisfies demand through improved efficiency, greater innovation, and new funding streams. Plans for the 2009 all-staff initiative on work processes and competencies may assist the agency to better understand its key processes, achieve greater efficiency, and increase focus on programs and services important to its customers and stakeholders.
- **Key work processes provide structure and allow employees to work productively to deliver programs and services important to customers and stakeholders. Internal agency work processes to support strategically important core competencies are not clear. Measures and trends to provide visibility of productivity gains from continuous improvement of work and people processes are not clear.**

Category 7 – Results

7.0a Financial Outcomes

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The Workforce Board's key measure of budgetary performance is its expenditures to budget comparison. However, taxpayer return on investment is linked to the agency achieving key milestones, such as the completion of the latest *High Skills, High Wages* plan.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- It is unclear how the Workforce Board links the funds used to performance of the workforce development programs.
- The Workforce Board does not have comparison data nor does it link financial performance to market segments. Comparative data may assist the agency in better judging its performance relative to other organizations providing the same or similar services (e.g., private sector companies or other states). This information may also be important to its customers and stakeholders, including policymakers and potential donors.

7.0.b Leadership Outcomes

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- Since 2004 the Workforce Board has been reviewed or assessed annually through Perkins Act, Veteran Affairs, and Employment Security Dept Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and two State Auditors Office audits. During that time, there has only been one minor finding which was addressed promptly.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- There do not appear to be any internal procedures in place to measure or monitor ethical behavior or regulatory and legal compliance. Because of the federally-funded programs, particularly WIA and Carl Perkins, the Workforce Board is subject to occasional federal and state audits. These audits are not frequent enough to use as performance measures. Without a more systematic approach, the agency may be unaware of problems.
- Comparative data are not included for key measures or indicators of budgetary performance, ethical behavior, and regulatory and legal compliance. A more comprehensive use of comparative data may assist the Workforce Board in better judging its performance relative

to other organizations providing the same or similar services (e.g., other agencies or other states). This information may also be important to its customers and stakeholders, including policymakers and potential donors.

7.0.c Strategic Planning

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The Workforce Board collects a large amount of data related to its strategic objectives. The three key measures used to determine progress towards the goal of ensuring that residents get good skills and good jobs are earnings, employment, and skill attainment. Additional measures are tracked for the three categories, Youth, Adult, and Industry. Data indicating accomplishment includes worker, employer, program, communication, and skill panel results. Data is compiled for the twelve most active workforce development programs, and individual programs within the system are compared from year to year.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Comparative data are not included for any of the results presented in Figures 2 through 17. Comparative data may assist the Workforce Board in better judging its performance relative to other organizations providing the same or similar services. This information may also be important to its customers and stakeholders, including policymakers and potential donors.
- It is unclear why these measures are meaningful and how they measure (or indicate) accomplishment of strategy and action plans. The measures of success for adults (Figures 14 – *Inflation Adjusted Annualized Earnings of WIA Adult Participants*, 15 – *Percent Employed for Target Populations 2005-2006* and 16 – *Median Hourly Wage of Women Relative to Men During the Third Quarter After Training*), for example, and the unemployment rate for young adults (Figures 11 – *Unemployment Rate for 20 to 24* and 12 – *Unemployment Rate of Washington Young Adults, Aged 18-24, by Education Level*) are sensitive to economic and demographic changes. Further, the Workforce Board states that for some key measures, such as earnings, year-to-year comparisons are complicated by changes in reporting standards.
- Many results lack segmented data (e.g., data segmented by program type, major market segments or subsegments or by the Workforce Board's diverse customer groups). For example, no segmented data is provided for Figures 2 – *Earnings*, 4 - *Annual Earnings Seven to Nine Months after Leaving Program*, 5 - *Employer Satisfaction*, 6 - *Percent Completing Apprenticeships*, 8 - *Annual Dropout Rate*, and Figures 11 and 12. The Workforce Board's programs serve very different populations. Without segmented results, the agency may not fully understand the underlying contribution of various groups or segments to overall performance and therefore may have difficulty translating performance information into improvement actions.

7.0.d-e Customer-Focused Outcomes

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- A survey determines key measures of product and service performance important to customers and includes the opportunity for participants to identify specific unmet needs that allow the agency to track how the programs are doing. The Workforce Board provided this information back to the respective programs which in turn have shown progress in reducing the unmet needs. Segmented results from FY93 through FY06 in Figure 18 display positive trends, and in Figure 19 – *Percent of Workforce Participants Reporting Unmet Needs* the average percent of Workforce participants reporting unmet needs beginning in FY97 improved from 12% down to 5%.
- Valuable indicators that are important to the agency’s customers are how the state is doing in meeting the skill gap which is a measure for gauging how many postsecondary slots should be available to meet demand for skilled workers. Gap closure of 77% in FY00 to 92% in FY08.
- Specific occupational gap measures are identified as important to the Workforce Board’s customers. Figure 20 - *Selected Major Occupational Groups - Demand Met* is useful as a tool to identify specific training program gaps.
- Visits to the agency's website are tracked and this year they instituted weekly e-mail newsletters to draw more attention to reports and research available on the site. A recent survey measured whether recipients were going to the website as a result of something they read in the newsletter. As shown in Figure 21 – *Used the Workforce Board Website Because of the Newsletter* results are positive and there is opportunity for improvement, with 24% reporting regularly, 64% at least once, and 12% never. Figure 22 – *Unique Visitors to Website* tracks unique web visits on a monthly basis and it is positive although there is only one year of data.
- Customer satisfaction with workforce development programs monitors customer expectations and the information is shared with stakeholders both through the agency’s website and at Workforce Board meetings. Employer satisfaction with participants who completed a program shows FY06 at 93% and FY08 at 95%. Figure 24 - *Percentage of Satisfied Participants* has FY97 through FY06 data showing a fairly level trend of 90%. The segmented data in Figure 27 – *Percentage Satisfied with Program (Core State Measure)* is valuable for determining which programs are doing well and where to target improvement efforts.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- There is a concern for the validity of the measure for gauging how many postsecondary slots should be available to meet demand for skilled workers. The research staff is looking at ways to parse this process in a manner that can measure performance.

- Comparisons are needed to better understand how agency programs are performing. This information may be important to the Workforce Board, the leadership team, and also to taxpayers and lawmakers.
- The Board has a complex mix of customers and stakeholders, ranging from policymakers to operating organizations, including public agencies, community organizations, and the two key system beneficiaries, employers and workers/job seekers. The information presented in Figures 23-26 related to customer satisfaction is not segmented by major customer group. Lack of segmentation may limit the Workforce Board's ability to identify and focus its resources on those areas and programs most in need of improvement.
- It is unclear if the measures presented are indicators of product and service performance that are important to the customer.

7.0.f Workforce-Focused Outcomes

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- The Workforce Board conducts an annual employee survey based on the survey used by the Department of Personnel. The most recent results have prompted the agency to consider a more serious approach in response to declining numbers on specific questions. The Workforce Board hired a consultant (Organizational Resource Group, Inc.) to assist the agency in a review of the organizational climate and areas of success and areas requiring additional emphasis.
- The Workforce Board compares itself to other Washington State Employees.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- It is unclear what the current levels and trends in key measures or indicators of Workforce Engagement, Workforce Satisfaction, Workforce Development, and Workforce Capability and Capacity (including staffing levels, retention, and appropriate skills) actually are.
- It appears that there are missing key measures or indicators of Workforce Engagement, Workforce Development, and Workforce Capability and Capacity (including staffing levels, retention, and appropriate skills). Without additional data related to these areas, the Workforce Board may be limited in its ability to meet key workforce requirements and to develop an effective and supportive environment with processes for encouraging its workforce to achieve personal and organizational success.

7.0.g Process Effectiveness Outcomes

Your score in this Criteria Item for the Stage 2, Consensus Review, is in Band 2.
(Please refer to Appendix - Scoring Guidelines.)

STRENGTHS

- Workforce Board has trends and measures for their two most active processes. Figure 29 - *Number of Improved CTE Courses Approved for VA Benefits* shows the number of approved CTE courses increasing from 1198 to 1924. Figure 30 - *Number of Private Career Schools Inspected* shows the number of private career schools inspected at 28, 39, and 36. Schools are inspected based on complaints and also proactively on a schedule toward the result of increasing consumer protection and helping schools understand the agency's regulations.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Defined levels and trends in key measures or indicators and the operational performance of key work processes is not evident. Clear, documented key work processes lead to successfully reaching set goals.
- There is a lack of detailed data provided for career school inspections so it is difficult to determine how these measures are used to help the organization meet the set goals
- Additional comparisons are needed to understand how agency programs are performing. This information may be important to the Workforce Board, the leadership team, and also to taxpayers and lawmakers.

Your Next WSQA Application

The timing for reapplication to WSQA is an individual organizational decision that is based on how quickly the organization is able to act on their feedback and then gather results from their actions. Many organizations find that a period of 18-24 months is appropriate. Typical considerations for determining the time to reapply include:

- Ability to address a substantial amount of the key findings of the report.
- Ability to demonstrate the results that have occurred from addressing the key findings. Please remember that 45% of the total score is in the results.
- Ability to demonstrate at least one cycle of learning/ improvement within key process changes.

Closing Thoughts on Writing a Better Application

Improvement is the driving force behind the submission of a WSQA application. Examiners are trained to focus on content and ignore editorial issues. By focusing on the creation of feedback that reflects the applicant content versus editorial issues, examiners provide comments that are valuable in helping an organization improve. However, WSQA recognizes that many organizations intend to reapply at some point in the future as a critical component of their improvement process. Additionally, many organizations use all or portions of their applications to communicate with their internal and external stakeholders through numerous mechanisms including web, mailings, meetings, and presentations. For this reason, the examiners have assembled a few suggestions that may help your organization in writing a stronger application. We hope that these suggestions may be of some assistance in the future.

- Provide results data related to areas of importance.
- When answering a “How” question it is important to describe the process you use. Therefore provide a flow chart, model, diagram, or table to show the elements of a process. Elements of a process include inputs, steps (related activities), timeframes, outputs, end user, standards, key measures to evaluate the process and improvement to the process over time.

Maintaining the Improvement Momentum

WSQA has seen many strong approaches to maintaining the improvement momentum including:

- Prioritizing the feedback of this report, creating action plans to address the feedback, and holding follow up progression meetings on the action plans. WSQA offers a follow up workshop entitled Turning Feedback into Action to facilitate this process.
- Conducting internal reviews with internal examiners.
- Conducting on-line self-assessment surveys during the non-application years. WSQA offers two types of these surveys.
- Participating in an Improvement Collaborative with other organizations.
- Joining a Round Table group of past WSQA recipients.

Please contact WSQA for more information on these and other methods of maintaining the improvement momentum within your organization.



Final Note

Thank you for taking the quality challenge to pursue the Washington State Quality Award. It is our sincere hope that the feedback provided in this Lite (Assessment) Feedback Report is both reaffirming to your strengths as well as insightful into your operation's opportunities for improvement. Excellence is a journey. We wish you well on your journey to performance excellence. Congratulations!

Sincerely,
WSQA Application Review Team
WSQA Board of Examiners

Appendix

This feedback report contains the Examiner's findings, including a detailed listing of strengths and opportunities for improvement along with scoring information. Background information on the examination process is provided on the following pages.

Lite (Assessment) Application Review Process

Stage 1: Independent Review

The application process begins with Stage 1, Independent Review; in which members of the Board of Examiners and/or Judges Panel are assigned to the assessment applications. Assignments are made according to the Examiners' areas of expertise and to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Each application is evaluated independently by Examiners who write comments relating to the applicant's strengths and opportunities for improvement. All applicants go through the Stage 1 evaluation process.

Stage 2: Consensus Review

Applicants then move forward to Stage 2, Consensus Review. During Stage 2 Examiners conduct a series of conference calls and meetings to reach consensus on comments that capture the team's collective view of the applicant's strengths and opportunities for improvement and the scoring range for each Category. Comments are documented in a consensus scorebook. The consensus process is shown in Figure 1.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Consensus Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarify the timeline for the team to complete its work• Assign Category/Item discussion leaders• Discuss key business/organization factors	Virtual Consensus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review all independent review evaluations - draft consensus comments and propose scores• Post consensus review worksheets for the team to review• Address feedback, incorporate inputs, and propose a resolution of differences on each worksheet• Review updated comments and scores	Consensus Calls: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss a limited number of issues related to specific comments or scores, and discuss all Key Themes• Achieve consensus on comments and scores	Post Consensus Call Planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revise comments and scores to reflect consensus decisions• Prepare final consensus scorebook• Prepare feedback report

Figure 1—Consensus Review Process

Scoring Guidelines

Criteria for Performance Excellence 2008

Band	Process (For Use With Categories 1-6)
<p>1 Not Evident</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No systematic approach to Item requirements is evident; information is anecdotal. (A) • Little or no deployment of any systematic approach is evident. (D) • An improvement orientation is not evident; improvement is achieved through reacting to problems.(L) • No organizational alignment is evident; individual areas or work units operate independently. (I)
<p>2 Beginning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beginning of a systematic approach to the basic requirements of the Item is evident. (A) • The approach is in the early stages of deployment in most areas or work units, inhibiting progress in achieving the basic requirements of the Item. (D) • Early stages of a transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident. (L) • The approach is aligned with other areas or work units largely through joint problem solving. (I)
<p>3 Basically Effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective, systematic approach, responsive to the basic requirements of the Item, is evident. (A) • The approach is deployed, although some areas or work units are in early stages of deployment. (D) • The beginning of a systematic approach to evaluation and improvement of key processes is evident. (L) • The approach is in early stages of alignment with your basic organizational needs identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other Process Items. (I)
<p>4 Overall Effective</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective, systematic approach, responsive to the overall requirements of the Item, is evident. (A) • The approach is well deployed, although deployment may vary in some areas or work units. (D) • A fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process and some organizational learning are in place for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of key processes. (L) • The approach is aligned with your organizational needs identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other Process Items. (I)

Figure 2 – Scoring Guidelines

Band	Results (For Use With Category 7)
1 Not Evident	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no organizational performance results and/or poor results in areas reported. • Trend data are either not reported or show mainly adverse trends. • Comparative information is not reported. • Results are not reported for any areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's mission.
2 Beginning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few organizational performance results are reported, and early good performance levels are evident in a few areas. • Some trend data are reported, with some adverse trends evident. • Little or no comparative information is reported. • Results are reported for a few areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's mission.
3 Basically Effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good organizational performance levels are reported for some areas of importance to the Item requirements. • Some trend data are reported, and a majority of the trends presented are beneficial. • Early stages of obtaining comparative information are evident. • Results are reported for many areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's mission.
4 Overall Effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good organizational performance levels are reported for most areas of importance to the Item requirements. • Beneficial trends are evident in areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's mission. • Some current performance levels have been evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or benchmarks and show areas of good relative performance. • Organizational performance results are reported for most key customer, market, and process requirements.

Figure 2 – Scoring Guidelines continued