

**Book:** *Leading Your Healthcare Organization to Excellence: A Guide to Using the Baldrige Criteria*

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### **Book Review:**

The preface defines the purpose of the book as being about options, focusing on the actions leaders can take to improve performance excellence in healthcare organizations. Early on the author notes that there is voluminous amount of information pertaining to the various elements of the Baldrige Criteria. However, the goal of this book was to provide a more focused guidance to assist leaders to follow the Baldrige model of system quality. Combining a free flowing writing style with practical illustrations such as case studies, practical checklists, survey models, charts and matrices, the goal was reached.

The book is presented in nine logically sequenced chapters:

1. *Advancing Healthcare Excellence* – Excellence requires changing the system, diagnosing the symptoms of the organization for leadership and performance issues and conducting continuous self – assessment.
2. *Blueprint for Excellence* – The Baldrige Award criteria becomes an effective map to build performance excellence in your organization.
3. *Driver of Excellence: Leadership* - Leadership has the most direct impact on business results. Effective leadership activates enabling core values reflected in the Baldrige Criteria.
4. *Getting From Here to There* – The process of strategic planning and deployment of strategy.
5. *Know Thy Customers* – Measuring, developing, and maintaining customer service and satisfaction.
6. *From Data to Knowledge* – Information systems, data analysis, and business intelligence help leaders analyze the condition of the organization and its' relationship to other organizations.
7. *Bottoms-up Excellence* – Improvement of the skills of your workforce; investing in your most important asset – your people.
8. *Achieving Sustainable Gains: Process Management* – Make your organization perform better by understanding, measuring, and improving the core processes. This requires knowing how these processes are monitored, designed, implemented, and methods of improvement.
9. *Measuring Your Progress* – The six areas that must be measured to be a contender for the Baldrige National Quality Award.

Adding more value, this book lists the contact information for state quality award programs, including the telephone number and website addresses for each state coordinator. This information is worth the cost of the book. I logged on to one of the featured websites, and found a wealth of information about this particular states' quality program. There is a tool entitled "Quick Check" on the website I visited which is designed to provide a preliminary assessment of the organization's processes and results in preparation for the award application. The website is easy to navigate, and answered all questions I might have about applying for this state's quality program.

We all need to improve our service to clients, and finding a reliable source of information that whets our appetite for improvement while providing enjoyable reading is rare. *Leading Your Healthcare Organization to Excellence* is a great resource to start the journey or to improve what you already have in place.