

# PERFORMANCE COUNTS

Winter 2010-2011



The Newsletter of the Virginia U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award Program

## 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?

- *Bob Bowles, Executive Director* 571.215.8881  
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- *Jo Lin Rohr, Board Chair*  
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- *Mike Novak, Newsletter Editor*  
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## 2011 SPQA Award Cycle is in Full Swing!

The 2011 U.S. Senate Productivity and Quality Award for Virginia program is in full swing.



Individuals who were selected to be Examiners attended two days of training in Richmond in late January. The training provided the knowledge and skills necessary for Examiners to review, evaluate, and score an SPQA Application and to develop Feedback Comments that

will highlight an Applicant's Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement.

A number of experienced individuals also attended a half-day of training immediately following the Examiner Training sessions. These were the Team Leaders, Assistant Team Leaders, and Team Mentors, who will guide the Examiner Team through the examination process; Scorebook Editors, who will develop the Scorebook that will serve as the basis for the Final Feedback Report that will be delivered to the Applicants; and Judges, who will oversee the entire process and ensure that the examination is conducted according to the SPQA process, and that the Final Feedback Report will enable the

Applicant to achieve the next level of performance excellence.

At this point, Examiner Teams are nearing completion of the Independent Review Phase. After that, the Consensus Phase will commence and will last until mid-March. The Teams will submit their Consensus Scorebooks to the Panel of Judges, who will recommend whether or not the Applicants receive Site Visits. Site Visits will be completed by late April, and Final Feedback Reports will be delivered to Applicants in early June. Then, Examiner Teams will meet with Applicants to discuss the Feedback Reports. Finally, the SPQA Community will gather in September for the annual Virginia Forum for Excellence and Awards Ceremony. ●

## SPQA in the Cloud

### "Cloud Computing" comes to SPQA – Scorebook Navigator

If you want to know what this "Cloud Computing" is all about, ask someone on the 2011 Examiner Team about Scorebook Navigator.

Last year SPQA piloted Scorebook Navigator, an on-line tool for constructing a Scorebook for Baldrige-based award programs. Jane Keathley was the Team Leader that piloted Scorebook Navigator. Jane did such a superb job that she has taken over as the SPQA Scorebook Navigator Program Manager for the 2011 award cycle.

Examiners log on to the system and perform their Independent Reviews, entering their observations, scores, and other data onto the on-line forms. During Independent Review, the

Team Leader can view each Examiner's work, but other Examiners cannot. The system is password protected, so there is very little chance of someone accidentally gaining access to the on-line materials.

During Consensus Review, all Examiners are given access to one another's on-line work. As Category Champions develop their Consensus comments and scores, all other team members can view and comment on that work. Scorebook Navigator is especially valuable during the Consensus process as it does away with the need for passing email attachments and hard copy material back and forth among Examiners.

Scorebook Navigator also has a number of other features that cut

down on "busywork" on the part of Examiners. For example, Scorebook Navigator has a "Report" feature that allows individual Item reports, Key Factors, Key Themes, or the entire Scorebook to be exported to a Microsoft Word document or other formats.

So, with its adoption of Scorebook Navigator, SPQA is "in the cloud." To find out more, and to get into the cloud yourself, apply to be an Examiner in 2012! ●



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



## A Whack On the Side of the Head!

### *The Baldrige Community gets a wakeup call – from the Editor Mike Novak*

Normally I don't editorialize in these pages, and I expect to catch some flak for what follows. And therefore, I need to precede my comments with the disclaimer: My comments and views are those of your humble Editor, and do not reflect the policies or practices of the U.S. Senate Productivity Award for Virginia, its officers, or sponsors.

But it needs to be said: While we – all of us – were resting on our laurels, proud to be part of the SPQA Community and the larger Baldrige Community, we lost sight of our vulnerability. We forgot about the puzzled looks when we mentioned "SPQA" or "Baldrige" at a cocktail party or cookout.

While we (we few, we proud ...) knew how valuable Baldrige is, and how powerful Baldrige can be in creating and sustaining our economy, we failed to realize that very few outside of our tight circle shared that knowledge.

And as a result, we got blindsided ... sucker-punched ... whacked on the side of the head.

A few months ago, the Co-Chairs of the Bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility & Reform identified a number of programs that might be subject to reduction, restructuring, or elimination with a view to reducing the national deficit. One of the programs cited was the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program.

The mere inclusion of the Baldrige Program on the "hit list" was evidence that policy and decision makers at the highest levels – the very people who should be leveraging the Baldrige Program to drive our nation's economic recovery – appear to be woefully unaware of what the Program does and how it ultimately seeds extraordinary dollar levels of volunteer and private donor resources across the nation toward achieving a common vision of performance excellence across the nation.

The President's 2012 budget proposal has been released, and while it recommends a reduction in the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (BPEP) budget, it does not recommend elimination and comfort can be taken in that.

The Alliance for Performance Excellence, which represents the 33 state/local Baldrige-based award programs, strongly supports the mission and continuity of the BPEP program. The Alliance, in collaboration with other key partners, is formulating a short- and long-term plan to sustain the national program to preserve the mission of educating, advancing, and recognizing performance excellence in the United States.

According to an Alliance press release, "None of the independent state/local Baldrige-based Award programs receive federal financial support at this time, so all state/local programs will be unaffected by this proposed change. State/local programs will continue to support performance excellence and enhancement of US competitiveness through the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence throughout the U.S."

While true, there are some nagging questions. For example, if there were no National Baldrige Program, who would fund the cost of maintaining, publishing and evolving the nationally recognized performance standards currently used by state programs? Likewise, if not the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) so treasured with maintaining other standards, who would be entrusted with these to ensure an aurora of credibility?

Indeed, many state program participants and donors participate because of the national consensus around the Baldrige Criteria.

So, what do *we* do now?

The first thing *we* – you and I and the rest of the SPQA Community – need to do is look at the situation realistically. We need to realize

that not very many people "out there" know much about Baldrige and its value.

The second thing is to change that. We need to do everything we can to take the Baldrige message to as many people as possible. That falls well within our unofficial role as "ambassadors" of the SPQA and Baldrige programs.

Going to speak at a conference? Inject something about Baldrige in your presentation. If you are not a speaker, review the conference program, choose your sessions, and prepare questions that can be asked in the Baldrige context.

Submitting a question, suggestion, or complaint to your local government? Write to them in the context of the Criteria.

Going to a professional or other meeting? Be prepared to talk about Baldrige.

Write some articles – and not just for "Quality" publications. Write for business, education, health care, government, religious, sports, and other type of publications – especially those that are outside the Quality community and might not know about Baldrige

Recruit Examiners. But look for them in the IT shop, in the CFO's office, in HR, and other areas outside of the "Quality box."

Challenge your organization. Persuade your boss to participate in the SPQA's Discovery Program. Begin to prepare to apply for the Recognition program. This may not be as difficult as it sounds – especially if you are the boss or close to the boss.

But be careful. There are pitfalls and stumbling blocks. (See "Be An Effective SPQA Ambassador" on page 4.)

We have received the wakeup call. We can remain awake and be vigilant and save our Program. Or we can go back to sleep. ●

**Coming Soon to a Theater  
Near You!**

## **An Inquirer's Guide to the Criteria for Performance Excellence**

The Inquirer's Guide to the Criteria for Performance Excellence is a two-day overview of the SPQA Award Program and a detailed discussion of the content of the Organizational Profile and seven Categories of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence using the 2011-12 Criteria. The program includes exercises for each of the seven Categories plus a strong emphasis on the Organizational Profile.

The workshop is designed for individuals and organizations interested in learning the details of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence and its application in the organization through discussion and exercises. It is ideal for organizations interested in deploying Criteria principles and considering applying for the Medallion award.

SPQA Examiners are required to attend this workshop every two years.

This workshop is scheduled June 20&21 in Roanoke. See <http://www.spqa-va.org> for details. ●

## **SPQA Schedule of Events**

- January - February 2011 – Independent Review
- February - March 2011 – Consensus Meetings
- April 2011 – Site Visits
- April - May 2011– Feedback Reports sent
- June - July 2011 – Feedback Meetings with Applicants
- July 16, 2011 – SPQA Forward
- September 7&8 – VA Forum for Excellence

Watch <http://www.spqa-va.org> for details. ●

# **Supporting Small Business**

## **The Discovery Program Partners to Inspire Performance Excellence – 12 to Watch**

In late January, members of the SPQA Board of Directors met with Virginia government officials to discuss what may be a real boost to the SPQA Program.

Envisioned is a partnership that would, among other things, sponsor twelve small businesses participation in the Discovery Program.

Some factors that led to this concept include:

- Most jobs are created by small business, not big business.
- Companies with income of \$5-10 million and with 50-250 employees that have been around for five or more years are reasonable bets for growth.
- These Companies often live in a "void" relative to financial, technological, and other forms of support.

Moving a small business forward requires its owners to look holistically at their organization. The Baldrige Criteria offers a means to do that and to move the small business out of the "void." But most small businesses lack the resources (time, funds, personnel, and knowledge) to implement a "full-scale" Baldrige-based management infrastructure.

Enter the SPQA's Discovery Program.

The Discovery Program can assist a small business in achieving and maintaining performance excellence through a modified application of the Baldrige Criteria:

- VA SPQA's Discovery Program criteria ask small business owners tough questions about how they are positioned relative to demonstrated

performance excellence criteria of world class organizations.

- While there is no award, per se, Discovery participants receive a feedback report, an optional feedback tele-conference, and recognition at the Annual Forum for Excellence.

Now, link the Discovery Program to support from the Commonwealth government, and the result is the Virginia SPQA's Discovery Program Small Business Excellence Initiative. This Initiative would provide Discovery Program Assistance for "12 to Watch" small businesses deemed poised to create jobs.

What would this Initiative look like? At this point, the exact details of the program are still being ironed out. But here are some program elements:

- The "12 to Watch" would be selected by application or by nomination, using a set of criteria that are currently under development.
- SPQA would provide scholarships covering the \$750 cost for the 12 participants, along with training assistance on the self-assessment method.
- Although scholarships are limited, the campaign would serve to promote the Criteria for Performance Excellence and self-assessment as a tool for improvement and growth for small business.
- Through promotion and leadership from the Lieutenant Governor's Office, VA SPQA is assembling a special team to include the Virginia Federation of Independent Business, the United States Small Business Administration, Virginia Department of Business Assistance, and *VA Business Magazine*, to manage and promote the Initiative.

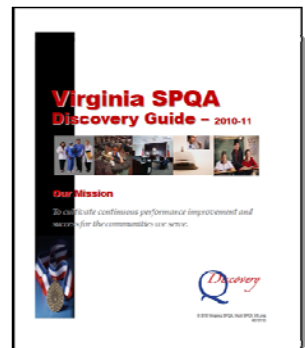
But ... what's in it for me? Or, more to the point, what's in it for the "12 to Watch"? Among other benefits, the "12 to Watch" will receive:

- No-cost participation in the Discovery Program
- Training in the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence (CPE)
- Opportunity for structured CPE-based self-assessment, including identification of Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement.
- Written feedback from a team of experienced Examiners
- Complimentary attendance for two at the Virginia Forum for Excellence
- Promotion as "12 to Watch."

Of course, the most significant benefit to the "12 to Watch" will be the opportunity to assess and improve their performance, increase profits, and create jobs.

Significant benefits to SPQA would include enhanced awareness of the SPQA and Baldrige programs and a possible increase in participation in SPQA's Recognition programs.

And viewing this Initiative in a larger context ... at least one other Baldrige-based state award program has taken notice, and is considering emulating SPQA's approach. ●





## The Performance Corner

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

*This article is submitted by Michael Novak, of the Center for Public-Private Enterprise, and Editor of "Performance Counts."*

*"Performance Counts" is looking for submissions for the Spring 2011 edition. To be considered, submit your article no later than March 11, 2011 to: [editor@spqa-va.org](mailto:editor@spqa-va.org). Please limit submissions to 625 words.*

## Be An Effective SPQA Ambassador

### *A Top Ten List that Never Made it to the Letterman Show*

There comes a point in every Examiner training session where the Trainer tells us that we are more than Examiners ... we are Ambassadors of the program. The Trainer goes on to tell how Examiners should use every opportunity to spread the word about Baldrige, SPQA, or whatever the program happens to be.

That's all well and good. But it usually ends there. Or the Trainer gives a few examples of where and when to serve as "Ambassadors." But there is seldom any discussion of how to be an Ambassador – or, perhaps more important, how *not* to be an Ambassador.

There are a number of common mistakes that passionate advocates/Ambassadors can make. What follows is a list of thumb rules to help prevent making those mistakes.

**1. Don't be a jargon slinger** – The Baldrige Criteria and methodology have their own language. Most people are not familiar with the Baldrige/SPQA program, let alone the jargon. Don't assume everyone knows what you are talking about ... because they don't. Translate "Baldrige-ese" into plain English. Instead of "approach" say, "process," or "how you do things." Instead of "deployment" say, "how many people/work units do it this way." You may even have to avoid using the word "Baldrige." Some people will see "Baldrige" as just another in a never-ending series of management-fads-of-the-month.

**2. Don't be a zealot** – The world won't come to an end tomorrow if the organization doesn't immediately respond to your exhortations to "begin the Baldrige journey." Even if people support your proposal 100%, it will take time to implement. Change takes time and patience.

**3. Don't set yourself up as a guru (a.k.a. know-it-all)** – Deming was a guru. Juran was a guru. Crosby was a guru. *You* are *not* a guru. Get used to it. Similarly, don't play "My guru is better than your guru." There are a lot of "quality" authorities; most of them have something valuable to teach us.

**4. Don't be a martyr** – Your life and career won't end if the organization doesn't see the wisdom of your words.

**5. Don't be a whiner** – Complaining is never an effective strategy. It never won any support for Baldrige/SPQA Ambassadors.

**6. Don't be a geek** – Being committed to performance excellence and to the Baldrige/SPQA framework is one thing. But being one-dimensional in your outlook, and not being able to see the big picture, is a showstopper.

**7. Don't pretend to be an intellectual** – Being pretentious and giving the impression that you are smarter than everyone else will not win any friends – for yourself, for the Baldrige/SPQA approach, or for the Baldrige/SPQA programs.

**8. Don't be a wastrel** – No organization has an unlimited budget; they don't want to throw money away on high-priced consultants and gold-plated software. Oftentimes – particularly in smaller organizations – extensive performance management infrastructures are unnecessary.

**9. Don't be a weasel** – Don't use the Baldrige/SPQA approach and programs to advance your personal agenda. The purpose of Baldrige and SPQA is to enhance the organization, not to build your ego.

**10. OK, I lied** – It's only a Top Nine List. ●

## SPQA On-Site Training

Can't wait until the June Criteria Workshop in Roanoke? Can't travel? Have a large group that needs training? Let SPQA come to you! SPQA currently is able to conduct the following

- **Meet Virginia SPQA** – A one-hour high-level overview of the SPQA programs and the Baldrige Criteria
- **A Layman's Guide to the Criteria for Performance Excellence** – A half-day overview of the SPQA programs and a brief introduction to the Baldrige Criteria
- **The Explorer's Guide to the Criteria for Performance Excellence** – A one-day overview of the SPQA Programs and a detailed discussion of the Organization Profile and Baldrige Criteria
- **An Inquirer's Guide to the Criteria for Performance Excellence** – A two-day overview of the SPQA Award Program and a detailed discussion of the Organizational Profile and Baldrige Criteria
- **Enhancing Your Organizational Profile Through Assessment** – A half-day overview of the SPQA Award Program and a detailed discussion of the Organizational Profile with special emphasis on conducting self-assessments
- **Unraveling the Mysteries of Category 7** – A half-day overview of the SPQA Award Program and a detailed discussion the relationships among Categories 1-6, Performance Measures, and Category 7 "Results."

Learn more about these sessions at [www.spqa-va.org/events](http://www.spqa-va.org/events). ●