Excellence In Community Action

Lessons on the Award and Pathways to Excellence Initiative

Overview

Jim Boyd
Award/Pathways Consultant

Community Action Partnership
What is Excellence?

Compliance is not Excellence!

Compliance is the starting point for Excellence!
Excellence vs. Compliance

Excellence vs. Compliance

Excellence

versus

Compliance

Maximum Level of Performance

Minimum Threshold Level of Performance
How Do We Achieve Excellence in Our Agency?
Your agency must honestly answer the following questions:

(1) Is our agency ready to move from a “compliance focus” to an “excellence focus”?

(2) Are we willing to rigorously examine what we do and how well we do it?

(3) Are we committed to improvement?
Its Really About …. 

Organizational Transformation
## Organizational Transformation

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<th>Unconscious Incompetence</th>
<th>Conscious Incompetence</th>
<th>Conscious Competence</th>
<th>Unconscious Competence</th>
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<td>Old System</td>
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<td>New System</td>
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<td>Awareness</td>
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<td>Refinement &amp; Improvement</td>
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<td>Alignment</td>
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- **Old System**: Unconscious Incompetence
- **New System**: Unconscious Competence
- **Awareness**: Conscious Incompetence
- **Refinement & Improvement**: Conscious Competence
Continuum of Excellence

Transforming Your Agency

From Good…

…to

GREAT!
The Partnership’s Excellence Initiative is based on the:

Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence

tailored to the language and operations of the CAA system
What Are the Standards of Excellence?

- The *Community Action Standards of Excellence* represent *35* of the very best practices of the very best agencies.

- They represent real-world administrative and operational *benchmarks*.

- They represent levels of excellence that every agency can strive to achieve …….
The Standards of Excellence - Seven Categories -

1. Organizational Leadership
2. Strategic Planning and Direction
3. Customer, Constituent, and Partner Focus
5. Human Resource Focus
6. Organizational Process Management
7. Organizational Results
Two Excellence Initiatives

- Pathways to Excellence in Community Action
  - Getting Started at Getting Better

- Award for Excellence in Community Action
  - Recognition for Achieving Excellence
Pathways to Excellence is a Capacity-Building Initiative

- It’s About Getting Started at Getting Better using the 35 Standards of Excellence.
- Creating a Roadmap For Achieving Excellence via a structured Self-Study Process
- Getting a detailed Feedback Reports that identifies your current Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement
The Pathways Process

- Two Day Self-Study Training for your Pathways team of 5-6 senior leadership staff focused on the Standards of Excellence and the Self-Study process

- 7 months to complete the Self-Study, with monthly TA Webinars hosted by the Partnership

- 3 months for the peer expert review and Feedback Report that identifies Strengths and Improvements
The Self-Study – the Heart of Pathways

- Using a series of ninety-eight questions, the self-study asks the agency to describe what it does now compared to each of the thirty-five Standards.

- Under the Pathways process, you are not trying to achieve each of the Standards – only benchmark where you are at this point in time.
The 10 Step Self-Study Process

1. Establish/engage a leadership team
2. Charter the team
3. Conduct an overview/orIENTATION
4. Adopt a communication plan
5. Ground the team: complete the Organizational Profile
6. Conduct the self-study/gather data/document facts
7. Draft initial category responses
8. Conduct independent reviews/solicit comments
9. Reach final team consensus
10. Compile/review/edit 55 page self-study report
The Feedback Process & Report

- A team of CAA Peer Experts reviews/scores and develops recommendation/feedback.

- **Strengths** and **Opportunities for Improvement** for each Standard are formalized into a written Feedback Report for each agency completing the self-study.
And Afterwards? Keep it Simple!

- Each agency may use the Feedback Report to identify gaps between where you are and where you want to be.
- Set your priorities, next steps, and timetables
- Set your own path to continuous improvement.
- Set measures to guide your progress over time
How Do I Enroll in Pathways?

Two Options:

- **State-Based Pathways:**
  - Sponsored by State CAA Association and/or State CSBG Office
  - 5-7 agencies go through Pathways together
  - Location and time of training are flexible

- **Individual Agency – Open Enrollment:**
  - Join with 5-7 CAAs from around the country
  - Next training – Watch for Announcements or Check with the Partnership for Open Pathways
  - Enrollments as scheduled
The Cost?

State Based:

- **Costs payable to the Partnership:**
  - Training: $3,600 + travel for 2 trainers and meeting facility expenses
  - $1,500 per agency enrollment fee

**Other costs:**

- Travel for your leadership teams to training
- Staff time to complete the Self-Study
Pathways Open Enrollment

- **Per Agency Costs:**
  - Sliding scale $750 - $1,800 per agency enrollment fee
  - Based on funding level - Payable to the Partnership

- **Other costs:**
  - Travel for your leadership team to training
  - Staff time to complete the Self-Study
Become a Peer Reviewer
Individual Staff Training

- Two day training offered as **pre-conference training** before each Partnership’s Annual Convention
- $350 Enrollment Fee
- Minimum of **five years** of management experience
- Participation on peer review teams is voluntary
- Offers an excellent professional development opportunity, and service to Community Action Network
Category 1 – Leadership

Examines the CAA’s leadership system, and how senior leaders guide the agency.

Examines how your agency is governed, and guides the achievement of the organization’s mission and overall performance.

Examines Board engagement, and how leadership sustains the agency, promotes community advocacy, focuses on addressing poverty, and achieves low-income involvement.

Core Value: Visionary Leadership
Category 1 – Leadership

1.1 Leadership Focus
1.2 Mission Statement, Code of Ethics, Community Action Promise
1.3 Board Structure/Function
1.4 Advisory Group Roles/Actions
1.5 Maximum Feasible Low-Income Involvement
1.6 Community Advocacy

Core Value: Visionary Leadership
Category 2 – Strategic Planning

Examines how your agency sets and maintains strategic direction.

Examines how strategic and operational plans are used as living documents that guides the agency both near and long term.

Stresses community needs, resource development and how leadership systematically uses measures/metrics to track agency success (in addressing poverty) over time.

Core Value: Focus on the Future
Category 2 – Strategic Planning

2.1 Strategic Plan and Deployment
2.2 Systematic Plan Review and Updates
2.3 Mobilizing New Resources
2.4 Strategic Measures of Success

Core Value: Focus on the Future
Category 3 – Customer Focus

Examines how your agency identifies and seeks to understand and act upon customer, constituents and stakeholder feedback.

It stresses customer relationships as integral to agency success, and part of an agency-wide listening strategy as a key to agency improvement over time.

Core Value: Customer Driven Excellence
Category 3 – Customer Focus

3.1 Customer/Constituent/Community Knowledge
3.2 Customer/Constituent Feedback System
3.3 Internal Improvement
3.4 Partnership System

Core Value: Customer Driven Excellence
Category 4 – Performance Management

Examines information technology and performance measurement systems, and how your agency selects, integrates and manage data.

Examines how your agency effectively uses data/information and technology to track, manage and improve performance over time.

Core Value: Management by Fact
Category 4 – Performance Management

4.1 Information System Technology
4.2 Information and Knowledge Management
4.3 Performance Management and Improvement System

Core Value: Management by Fact
Category 5 – Human Resource Focus

Examines HR Policies and how work and learning systems enable all employees to develop and utilize their full potential, aligning with your organization’s mission.

It also examines how your organization seeks engage all staff to build and maintain a healthy and safe work environment.

Core Value: Valuing Employees and Partners
Category 5 – Human Resource Focus

5.1 Policies, Procedures, and Personnel Systems
5.2 Employee Performance Management
5.3 Employee Engagement, Participation, and Well-Being
5.4 Staff Development and Learning System
5.5 Low-Income on Staff

Core Value: Valuing Employees and Partners
Category 6 – Organizational Process

Examines the efficiency and effectiveness of your agency’s key administrative and program support processes.

Assesses your service delivery system integration as well as project management.

Core Value: Systems Perspective
Category 6 – Organizational Process

**Administrative Support Processes**
6.1 Financial Systems
6.2 Infrastructure Support
6.3 Purchasing/Procurement
6.4 Communications/Public Relations

**Program/Service Delivery Processes**
6.5 Integrated Service Delivery -- Intake, Eligibility, Assessment, Case Management, and Follow-up
6.6 Agency-wide Project Management Policy

Core Value: Systems Perspective
Category 7 – Organizational Results

Examines your agency’s overall success -- performance trends, results, and improvements in six critical areas.

ROMA and its integration into everyday operations is stressed.

Core Value: Focus on results and creating value
Category 7 – Organizational Results

7.1a Leadership and Governance Outcomes
7.1b Strategic and Operational Results and Outcomes
7.2 External Customer Results
7.3 Internal Customer/Human Resource Results
7.4 Partner/Stakeholder Results
7.5 Advocacy Results
7.6 Financial Accountability and Health
7.7 Definitive or Noteworthy Community Recognition and Innovation

Core Value: Focus on results and creating value
Why Begin?

• *Start* doing the things that most affect performance/results!

• *Stop* doing the things that do not!

• *Align* People, Processes and Resources!

• *Focus* on Results, Impacts, and overall agency success!
Questions?

www.communityactionpartnership.com

Click on: Excellence

Jarle Crocker
Director of Training and Technical Assistance
Community Action Partnership
202-265-7546
Jcrocker@communityactionpartnership.com