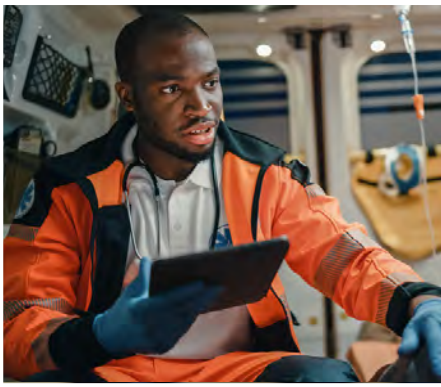

Job Quality Toolkit

Strategies and actions to help small-to-medium sized organizations recruit and retain a high-performing workforce

NIST | BALDRIGE PERFORMANCE EXCELLENCE PROGRAM

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Job Quality Toolkit

Introduction

The challenge of attracting and retaining a diverse, productive, engaged workforce has grown significantly in recent years. Workers seek quality jobs, and companies that prioritize job quality become employers of choice.

Job quality is not just about the job; it is a combination of key drivers that are important to each worker's overall employment experience. Pay and benefits matter, and so do a multitude of other factors like workplace safety and health, a voice, scheduling predictability, skills building, and advancement. Together, these distinguish an employer of choice from the rest.

True quality jobs—ones that give dignity to work—do not just pay well. They fulfill workers by bringing greater security to their lives and families, respect for their safety, and a voice to critique, contribute, or create community in their work family.

This Job Quality Toolkit is an **actionable tool for leaders and organizations to improve the quality of every job**. Identifying and improving the drivers most valued by workers can significantly increase their satisfaction and engagement, resulting in increased enthusiasm for their work, lower absenteeism, lower turnover, higher retention, better team performance, increased productivity, improved products and services for customers, higher customer satisfaction, and increased revenues.

Methodology

Given the clear nexus between job quality and performance excellence, the Job Quality Toolkit is rooted in the U.S. Department of Commerce's Baldrige Excellence Framework. For more than 34 years, the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program has provided the globally recognized and emulated Criteria for Performance Excellence, which are regularly updated to ensure that they incorporate the leading edge of validated leadership and management practices proven to help enhance organizational performance and sustainability. Among those leadership and management practices are many that focus on ensuring that workers are highly engaged in their work and are committed to the success of their organizations. Not surprisingly, research and real-world experience

have demonstrated that business leaders who demonstrate commitment to their workforce will cultivate a committed workforce.

A robust literature search on job quality, both national and international, revealed several key drivers of workers' perceptions of job quality. The literature consistently shows that most drivers act through a worker's sense of job satisfaction. To ensure a full understanding of what makes a job "high quality" and how to improve job quality, the Department of Commerce sought the input and insights of numerous experts in job quality, including academics, think tanks, advocacy groups, nonprofits, and, of course, employers and labor unions. The result is a nonprescriptive toolkit that identifies the key drivers of job quality and provides various strategies and actions that can be taken to improve the quality of the jobs you offer. The toolkit is nonprescriptive because every organization is different and what is most important to workers and what is most feasible for organizations will vary. However, it also reflects a consensus that certain aspects of job quality have a clear baseline, such as the need for a living wage and workplace physical and psychological safety. The toolkit offers numerous strategies and actions for all employers to consider. That does not mean employers must attempt them all. Employers need to engage in a cycle of dialogue, action, and measurement to understand what workers value, want, and need.

Finally, the Job Quality Toolkit should advance a much-needed national dialogue about job quality and the dignity of work, in partnership with the Department of Labor's Good Jobs Initiative. In that vein, the Department of Commerce would greatly appreciate feedback on the toolkit itself and employers' experience with using it. That input will help inform future revisions. Please email comments to jobquality@doc.gov.

Drivers of Job Quality

The Job Quality Toolkit provides practical guidance to employers of all kinds. The underlying values and aspirational vision are to strive to make every job a **high-quality job**.

Many interrelated factors impact job quality. The Job Quality Toolkit is organized around eight drivers:

> ***High-Quality Jobs***
>
> *All members of the workforce are respected and valued as important to an organization's success. The organization's policies, practices, and environment ensure high levels of well-being, compensation, empowerment, and growth. Leaders create systems to foster a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace.*

Recruitment & Hiring: Actively recruit a diverse pool of applicants. Implement skills-based hiring that only requires the education, credentials, and experience needed to do the job. Be intentional about onboarding and retaining workers.

Benefits: Seek workers' input on needed and desired benefits, such as paid leave, health insurance, and a retirement plan. Provide them and encourage their use.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility (DEIA): Make equal opportunity a core value and practiced norm. Foster systems where all workers feel respected and empowered in the workplace. Identify and remove systemic barriers to DEIA.

Empowerment & Representation: Ensure that workers have a meaningful voice, without fear of retaliation. Enable workers to contribute to decisions about their work, how it is performed, and organizational direction.

Job Security & Working Conditions**:** Ensure a safe, healthy, and accessible workplace and offer job security. Minimize temporary or contractor labor solutions, using such workers mainly to adjust for short-term needs. Assess and schedule hours that are adequate and predictable.

Organizational Culture: Demonstrate through explicit behaviors and norms of leadership that all workers belong, are valued, and contribute meaningfully to the organization. Assess workers' engagement and feelings of respect.

Pay: Provide an equitable living wage to all workers and ensure fair compensation practices.

Skills & Career Advancement: Provide opportunities and tools for workers' self-realization and advancement in their current jobs, within the organization, and outside it.

Each driver is linked to a series of strategies and actions for organizations to consider when assessing job quality. Some of the actions include links to relevant tools created by outside organizations. Multiple drivers and strategies are offered, recognizing that organizations will differ in their needs and abilities to focus on specific strategies, and that workers' needs also will vary across and within organizations. In other words, a certain strategy's importance is relative. Other strategies, however,

have a well-defined baseline that must be met, for example, in worker safety and in pay. A job that does not meet those baselines is not, in our assessment, a quality job.

DEIA, at its core, is about all employees' experience. Based on stakeholder input, this toolkit makes DEIA its own driver because of the need for many organizations to be more intentional and cross-cutting in their DEIA approaches. DEIA is especially cross-cutting, as it impacts and is impacted by every driver of job quality.

Ultimately, the Job Quality Toolkit aims to be approachable and valuable for large and small employers from every sector. For all, raising job quality not only increases workers' well-being but also increases the performance excellence and sustainability of organizations.

How to use the Job Quality Toolkit

- Keep in mind that all organizations can benefit from a fresh assessment of the quality of their jobs.

- Begin by obtaining baselines for key strategies. Use surveys and listening sessions to understand how workers at different levels and from different backgrounds perceive the quality of their jobs. Ensure that workers understand that this information will not be used against them, but will be used in an attempt to improve job quality.

- After assessing baselines, pick drivers that matter to you and your workforce.

- Select strategies and actions that fit your organization's situation, will be championed by all leaders, and are appropriately resourced.

- Avoid treating the strategies and actions like a checklist or catalog of "merit badges" that must be met to be considered an employer of choice. It is unlikely that any organization can or will do all of the suggested strategies and actions.

- Before implementing a strategy or action, plan for measuring outcomes against the baseline to know if actions were effective.

- Apply the strategies and actions to payroll employees and to contract staff members. Whether an "employee" or not, everyone who works in an organization matters.

- Don't go it alone. Partner with other employers, business and trade associations, labor unions, community organizations, a state or regional Baldrige-based program, and enablers like the Manufacturing Extension Partnership program on your journey to improve job quality.

- Consider whether in your state or city there are public programs that fill benefit gaps, particularly in areas such as childcare, tuition assistance, transportation assistance, and paid family leave. Your local workforce agency or department of business services may be able to provide information.

Recruitment & Hiring

Actively recruit a diverse pool of applicants. Implement skills-based hiring that only requires the education, credentials, and experience needed to do the job. Be intentional about onboarding and retaining workers.

Strategies and Actions

Recruit from diverse sources of talent.

- Actively recruit and track talent from underrepresented communities at universities, community colleges, and all minority-serving institutions.
- Offer job shadow programs and internships with local high schools, community colleges, or community-based organizations.
- Highlight inclusive benefits like childcare and paid leave in job descriptions.
- Offer on-ramps to late-career workers.

Implement skills-based hiring and promotion practices.

- Evaluate the credential and experience requirements in job descriptions and remove four-year degree requirements, where appropriate.
- Limit job requirements to "must haves."
- Reduce narrow definitions of relevant prior experience, and count life experiences.
- Consider diverse hiring slate policies, and remove personal and demographic information from the hiring process.
- Conduct structured and skills-based interviews. Where negotiation over salary is permitted, institute consistent practices and oversight to ensure equity.
- Eliminate salary history as a basis for screening applicants and pay setting.

Prioritize onboarding.

- Create an onboarding checklist of important actions (with deadlines) for staff and supervisors to do *before* the new person arrives (e.g., prepare security badges, keys, a computer, or personal protective equipment).
- Create an onboarding checklist for new hires that includes important "to do's" with dates (e.g., choose benefits by x date).
- Make sure your company is *ready* to welcome and include diverse talent. For example, you might translate onboarding or training materials into multiple languages.
- Have a buddy, friend, or other mentor system for new hires.

- Be as inclusive as any company can possibly be: understand a person's pronouns and what is motivational for them.

Create a formal retention plan for your organization.

- Ask employees what makes them stay (or would make them stay). Employee surveys and focus groups can uncover opportunity blind spots (e.g., workers prefer more flex time over wage increase). Offer flexible benefits, not a "one size fits all" package.
- Understand and adapt to causes of turnover (i.e., childcare, culture fit, job security, benefits, wages).
- Foster belonging; create a learning environment around the fundamentals of inclusivity and a psychologically safe place.
- Succession planning is essential; be strategic about apprenticeships and cross-training for senior positions.
- Ensure all have a well-explained path for learning and performance milestones.

Sample Resources

- BambooHR-Retention Strategy (Defined)
- Harvard Business Review – Skills-Based Hiring Is on the Rise
- Harvard Business Review – The Key to Retaining Young Workers? Better Onboarding
- Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) - New Employee Onboarding Guide

Benefits

Seek workers' input on needed and desired benefits, such as paid leave, health insurance, and a retirement plan. Provide them and encourage their use.

Strategies and Actions

Tailor services, benefits, and polices to the diverse needs of your workforce groups and segments.

- Regularly assess the needs of the entire workforce and match services, benefits, and policies to those needs. If choices in benefits must be made to make them affordable for the organization and workers, engage the workforce in the decision process.
- Use regular needs assessment results to improve/adjust services, benefits, and policies. Review adoption of benefit programs by demographics groups.

Offer health benefit options.

- Offer health benefit options that include consumer protections.
- Provide employer contributions toward health benefit coverage.
- Offer categories of benefits, provider networks, drug formularies, and cost-sharing options that meet the demonstrated needs of the overall workforce.
- Consider offering additional health benefit programs such as wellness programs, employee assistance programs, and flexible spending accounts based on workforce needs.

Offer mental health benefits.

- Measure workers' behavioral health.
- Offer expanded mental health benefits, such as increased coverage or waived and reduced cost sharing for out-of-network mental health services.
- Increase the number of mental health providers in provided plan networks.

Offer paid time off in support of work-life balance and wellness.

- Offer paid sick/medical leave.
- Offer paid family leave.
- Offer paid vacation and holidays.
- Offer a percentage of paid or nonpaid time off for community service.
- Offer emergency childcare and eldercare leave.
- Offer bereavement leave.

Offer retirement savings programs.

- Offer 401(k) or similar programs.
- Provide an employer match related to employee contributions.
- Design plans to include automatic enrollment, automatic escalation, and qualified default investment alternatives.
- Provide low-fee investment options and provide low-fee portability vehicles for workers who change jobs.

Offer liquid savings programs.

- Offer short- and long-term savings plans to help workers weather financial shocks.
- Consider including employee hardship funds, seeded accounts, split direct deposit, and employer matches and monetary incentives.

Eliminate worker misclassification.

- Review and properly classify workers as employees rather than independent contractors.

Financially support learning and skill building.

- Provide tuition assistance with clear criteria for provision.
- Support student-loan repayment with clear criteria for provision.
- Offer paid time off for learning with clear criteria for provision.

Reduce the cost and burden of commuting.

- Offer free or subsidized transit passes and information on all public-transit options.

Offer childcare and eldercare benefits.

- Provide childcare and eldercare subsidies.
- Provide information on local childcare and eldercare options.
- Provide information on local childcare and eldercare options.
- Consider creating on-site or nearby childcare spaces.
- Create peer-to-peer support networks for working parents of children under the age of 18.

Offer tax benefits.

- Offer pre-tax deduction benefits.

Promote worker financial wellness.

- Explore offering employee stock ownership plans (ESOPs), stock options, and profit sharing. Set employee ownership goals and track publicly.

- Conduct a financial wellness assessment of the workforce to understand workers' financial vulnerability and to identify opportunities to improve their resilience over the long term.
- Offer financial coaching or counseling in person or remotely.
- Offer family planning, fertility, or adoption cost support.

Encourage benefit uptake and use.

- Systemically, identify and remove barriers to benefit use, including by focusing on culturally relevant communication to workers.
- Build a positive culture around workers' use of benefits, with leaders validating benefits' importance.
- Actively discourage presentism and workplace cultural norms that impede benefit uptake.
- Offer navigation support for accessing benefits.

Sample Resources

- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 5 Workforce
- Guide to Providing Health Care Benefits to Employees
- Just Capital – Financial Wellness Initiative
- Project Equity
- Urban Institute – Understanding Good Jobs: A Review of Definitions and Evidence

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility (DEIA)

Make equal opportunity a core value and practiced norm. Foster systems where all workers feel respected and empowered in the workplace. Identify and remove systemic barriers to DEIA.

Strategies and Actions

Assess the organization's equity practices.

- Examine your organization's internal policies, practices, and organizational culture to assess alignment with your organization's values and its practices.
- Identify key data and metrics to set a baseline and measure progress.
- Conduct pay equity audits by gender, race, and ethnicity.
- Communicate to employees the organization's pay-setting practices and structures.

Institutionalize accountable, systemic change.

- Clearly identify a senior leader responsible for developing a DEIA strategy, monitoring outcomes, managing roadblocks, and making necessary adjustments along the way.
- Provide sufficient authority and resources to implement the DEIA strategy, ideally with the DEIA leader reporting directly to the organization head.
- Create a diversity council or task force that includes senior leaders. Empower it to examine and inform policies related to hiring, firing, promotion, pay, layoffs, harassment prevention, and exit data.
- Join a local or national business coalition committed to adopting DEIA actions.
- Avoid gender-coded language in written and or verbal communications (i.e., use of "she or he" for candidate/employee references).
- Use accessible language (e.g., to individuals for whom English is a second language).
- Ensure that the organization's online platforms and physical facilities are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Empower the workforce to speak out against bias and discrimination in the workplace and speak for DEIA without fear of retaliation.

- Ensure that your employees have multiple channels to report concerns, voice opinions, and offer feedback; and adopt robust anti-retaliation measures to ensure that they may safely do so.
- Hold focus groups to understand whether employees feel empowered to come forward to raise concerns and actions the organization can take to strengthen its systems.

- Eliminate mandatory arbitration and nondisclosure agreements or clauses as a condition of employment.

Offer DEIA training to all employees.

- Develop organization-wide and individual opportunities for awareness and customized DEIA training. Align the training with the organization's mission and values. Ensure that training raises worker awareness and also builds hard skills.
- Reinforce the training yearly as part of a sustained, integrated strategy to promote change in culture, behavior, and practices.
- Explain how the organization is committed to DEIA in job descriptions.
- Have managers endorse the importance of DEIA training.

Use mentorship, coaching, and sponsorship to help diverse talent advance.

- Design formal mentoring programs that align with employees' career interests and needs.

Establish recovery-ready workplace policies.

- Accommodate workers' recovery treatment and ongoing support needs.
- Provide ongoing education and information to reduce stigma and misunderstanding.

Sample Resources

- Bain Grads of Life Report – 10 Proven Actions to Advance Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility defined – see Section 2
- Gender Decoder
- Opportunity Employment
- Seven Workforce Questions that Are Top of Mind During COVID-19: A Resource for Small Businesses
- The Just Capital Racial Equity Tracker tool is one example of a DEIA baseline metric focused on assessing racial equity.

Empowerment & Representation

Ensure that workers have a meaningful voice, without fear of retaliation. Enable workers to contribute to decisions about their work, how it is performed, and organizational direction.

Strategies and Actions

Communicate with—and listen to—your workers systemically and frequently.

- Develop regular, repeatable processes for communicating, conversing, actively listening, and providing feedback on worker inputs.
- Communicate important messages more than once and in more than one way.
- Senior leaders should provide data on organizational performance and operations regularly and predictably.

Give your workforce a meaningful voice through formal structures that protect workers.

- Establish and promote clear worker complaint and investigation policies and procedures that include robust protection from retaliation.
- Create systems that receive and implement worker input on process improvements and innovation. Inform workers how their input was used.

Ensure that workers can organize and/or be represented by spokespeople with access to senior leaders.

- Support workers' rights to organizing and collective bargaining.
- Inform employees of their rights to form a union. Remain neutral during organizing activity.
- Ensure that barriers to workers' organizing or collective bargaining are removed.
- Encourage and support employee resources groups.

Assess workforce satisfaction and engagement.

- Regularly assess workforce satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement. Solicit feedback directly from the workforce.
- Examine key drivers of workforce engagement by group (e.g., based on race/gender/age) and segment (e.g., frontline, technical, administrative staff).
- Openly track and use indicators of workforce satisfaction and engagement in decision making.

Sample Resources

- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 5 Workforce
- Gallup articles and research on employee engagement
- Harvard Business Review – Using Effective Listening to Improve Leadership in Environmental Health and Safety
- Society for Human Resources Magazine – Questing for Quality

Job Security & Working Conditions

Ensure a safe, healthy, and accessible workplace and offer job security. Minimize temporary or contractor labor solutions, using such workers mainly to adjust for short-term needs. Assess and schedule hours that are adequate and predictable.

Strategies and Actions

Increase job security.

- Minimize part-time and contingent work, which can cause job insecurity and deprive workers of important benefits and protections. Be sure that part-time and contingent workers feel valued and that they are a part of the organization.
- Prepare the workforce for changing capacity and needs, and balance the needs of the workforce and the organization.
- Offer job sharing.
- Ensure organizational continuity.
- Plan to prevent workforce reductions and minimize the impact of any necessary reductions.
- Enact just-cause standards for employment, which would prohibit discipline and dismissal unless for a just cause or genuine business needs.

Ensure that workers are physically safe.

- Fulfill the requirement that all workers have the right to safe, healthy, and sanitary working conditions.
- Prohibit and prevent all forms of violence in the workplace, including verbal, physical, and gender-based violence, as well as sexual harassment.
- Regularly assess working conditions and promptly address safety issues to ensure workers' continued safety.
- Ensure that the safety system addresses prevention, inspection, root-cause analysis of failures, and recovery.
- Support a worker safety and health committee.

Ensure that workers are psychologically safe.

- Assess/measure the workforce's sense of psychological safety.
- Actively support workers' sense of well-being at work.
- Actively ensure an absence of fear, intimidation, or neglect in the workforce. Have a clear system of reporting and remedy.

Anticipate and respond with agility to reduce job strain.

- Utilize ongoing assessments of work activity, intensity, risk, and need for flexibility to adjust or lessen worker stress.
- Anticipate high-volume times and adjust staffing to accommodate those times.
- Adjust workload, staffing, and pay based on location specific circumstances and reflect locality pay and complexity.
- Make staffing decisions to maximize product and service effectiveness and customer value and not to meet payroll targets.
- Be prepared to ensure coverage in case of employee emergencies and time off.
- Encourage workers to discuss burnout or fatigue and offer resources to reduce it.

Protect workers' data and information.

- Establish clear data confidentiality and protection policies for workforce information.
- Regularly inform workers of information collection, surveillance, or monitoring and how information will be used, including for performance purposes (promotions, discipline, or dismissal).
- Give workers ownership over the data that they generate.

Offer stable and predictable hours to all workers.

- Assess and, when possible, meet workers' hourly needs.
- Provide workers their schedule at least two weeks in advance.
- Schedule most workers consistently for more than 15 hours a week.
- Minimize deviations from planned schedules. Make last-minute management-driven changes rare).

Offer flexible remote-work options.

- Offer telework or remote work.
- Ensure that telework and remote work do not adversely impact career advancement.

Sample Resources

- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 5 Workforce
- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 6.2 Operational Effectiveness
- Future of Work in California
- Good Jobs Institute Diagnostic Tool
- Harvard Business Review – Childcare Is a Business Issue
- Harvard Business Review – How to Make a Job Sharing Situation Work
- OECD Job Quality statistics
- Urban Institute – Five Elements of a Good Job

Organizational Culture

Demonstrate through explicit behaviors and norms of leadership that all workers belong, are valued, and contribute meaningfully to the organization. Assess workers' engagement and feelings of respect.

Strategies and Actions

Infuse the workplace with respect and trust—show how your organization values workers.

- Be explicit about values and behaviors that demonstrate respect and trust in your organization. Make leaders role models and accountable for those values.
- Foster open communication, high performance, worker safety, and a workforce engagement.
- Identify unhealthy behaviors and demonstrate accountability for those actions, as well.
- Lead by example. Leaders should demonstrate the importance of work-life balance by taking paid leave, sick time, self-care, etc. Incorporate accountability by having these actions in included in leadership evaluations.

Be intentional and strategic about improving the workplace climate.

- Annually assess your workplace climate, including workforce health, safety, security, and accessibility.
- Measure workplace climate performance/improvement goals.

Share tracked results for workforce engagement, satisfaction, and commitment to the organization's work.

- Recognize the difference between worker satisfaction and engagement. For engagement, track results related to safety, absenteeism, turnover, satisfaction, and complaints (grievances), as well as data on employer-provided training and the results of worker empowerment and representation initiatives.

Ensure that the workforce reflects the community and the organization.

- Recruit, hire, and onboard a workforce that represents the diversity of ideas, cultures, and thinking in your organization's hiring and customer communities.
- Ensure the inclusion of new workforce members within your organizational culture.

Make leaders accountable for workplace culture.

- Track multiple culture indicators, including perceptions of leaders' communication and ethical behavior.

- Track and act on results of oversight or audits.
- Connect management performance ratings to improving job quality, worker engagement, and satisfaction metrics.

Actively manage change.

- Prepare for and manage any periods of workforce growth or downsizing.
- Prepare your workforce for changes in organizational structure, workplaces, work systems, and technology, as needed.

Sample Resources

- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 1.1 Senior Leadership
- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 5 Workforce
- Harvard Business Review – Real Mentorship Starts with Company Culture, Not Formal Programs

Pay

Provide an equitable living wage to all workers and ensure fair compensation practices.

Strategies and Actions

Provide all employees an equitable living wage.

- Pay no less than an indexed, regionally defined living wage. Use tools like the Living Wage Calculator.
- Regularly assess and publish your pay, segmented by meaningful demographics.
- Assess and determine actions to reduce pay inequities by gender and race. For example, do not seek or rely on an applicant's salary history to screen, hire, or set compensation.

Ensure that compensation practices are equitable and transparent.

- Publish and regularly update all career paths and their pay. Clearly state required skills and competencies, and ensure that managers apply them.
- Advertise pay ranges for positions.
- Conduct pay-equity analysis by gender, ethnicity, and race and report on results transparently.
- Evaluate all practices that impact compensation, including bonuses, premium pay, overtime, and scheduling, to ensure that those practices are utilized in an equitable and transparent manner.

Demonstrate fairness and recognition by compensating workers for improving performance.

- Demonstrate fairness and recognition by increasing worker wages based on objective measures of performance improvement.
- Transparently link part of employee compensation to organizational and/or team performance, such as offering an annual bonus based on organization or team financial performance.

Sample Resources

- Good Jobs Diagnostic
- Future of Work in California
- Living Wage for Us: Living Wage Calculator (clickable map)

Skills & Career Advancement

Provide opportunities and tools for workers' self-realization and advancement in their current jobs, within the organization, and outside it.

Strategies and Actions

Offer multiple ways for workforce members to gain skills and progress.

- Equitably—and transparently—offer skills training for increasing levels of competency.
- Respond to workers' personal needs and your organization's needs.
- Communicate clear, transparent career paths within the organization, along with the skills, competencies, and experiences needed to progress on those paths.
- Offer training opportunities that lead to industry-recognized credentials such as a certificate, license, or degree.
- Support organizational performance improvement and intelligent risk taking and reinforce ethical business practices.
- Expand position descriptions to reflect new responsibilities and roles.

Make skills building free.

- Offer scholarships or tuition reimbursement for local and online educational programs.
- Offer Registered Apprenticeship programs for new and incumbent workers.
- Establish paid internships and school-to-work programs as pathways to full-time positions.

Cross-train employees.

- Cross-train workers such that employees and managers have ownership and specialization over a specific department but can step in to help other departments when needed.

Provide ongoing performance reviews and promotions.

- Ensure that workers meet with managers at least twice per year to review their career paths and development areas.
- Establish clear and transparent promotion pathways that prioritize internal candidates.

Ensure performance management and development.

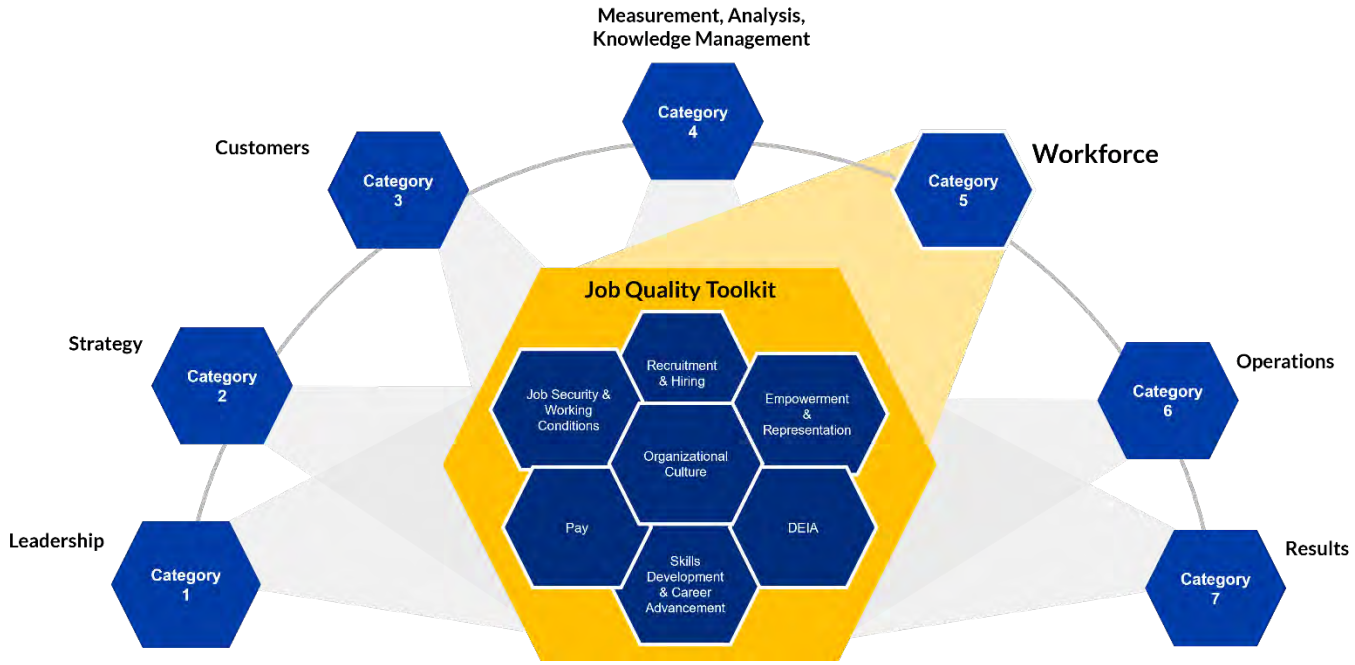
- Establish a performance management system that uses compensation, rewards, recognition, and other incentives to encourage high performance, intelligent risk taking, and a customer and business focus.
- Ensure that part-time work does not adversely impact career advancement.
- Create clear and transparent off- and on-ramps to full-time work.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of your learning and development programs.
- Examine learning outcomes with respect to worker engagement measures and key business results.
- Ensure that performance management development processes promote equity and inclusion for all workforce groups and segments.

Sample Resources

- Baldrige Excellence Framework: 5 Workforce
- Good Jobs Diagnostic Tool
- Good Jobs Project
- Urban Institute: Five Elements of a Good Job

Appendix A: The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program

The Baldrige Performance Excellence Program is a public-private partnership housed within the National Institute of Standards and Technology that has provided a globally emulated model for enabling and recognizing organizational performance excellence since 1987. The Baldrige Excellence Framework is a leadership and management guide that can help organizations understand best practices and other considerations that have been proven to enhance success and sustainability. It is also the basis for the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.



The Baldrige Framework examines the key drivers of short- and long-term organizational success through a comprehensive set of interrelated and interdependent questions organized under seven categories. The Baldrige Framework encourages a systems perspective of organizational leadership, management, and improvement. The framework is structured to highlight key systems found within any organization, and to show that these systems—and the key processes within them—are interrelated and part of an integrated whole. Understanding those relationships and interdependencies allows an organization to dramatically improve its ability to solve problems, address challenges, and improve its performance.

A systems approach to leadership, management, and improvement encourages practices and policies that ensure that workforce members are respected, valued, and highly engaged in their work. The Baldrige Framework focuses attention on a broad range of factors that are commonly associated with a good job, such as pay, benefits, training and development, and advancement opportunities. The Baldrige Framework also considers factors such as flexible work schedules, ethical and transparent leadership, leaders who communicate with and engage the entire workforce, a work environment and culture that respect everyone and value and support DEIA, a safe and secure work environment, empowerment to make or contribute to decisions that affect jobs, and contributions to societal well-being in some way.