



Arizona Performance Excellence Award Program – Board of Examiners Testimonials

“I found the AQA Examiner experience extremely valuable to my understanding and growth in Quality. The training and site visit offered me the opportunity to understand quality programs outside of my own industry”.

-Susie Duffy, Scottsdale Healthcare



“I have been following the Malcolm Baldrige Award process for over 12 years. I have achieved certifications in Process Management, Quality Engineering, Quality Management, Lean and Six Sigma, but the AQA process took me to new depths of understanding. I recommend the Examiner role to anyone in the Quality arena. Working with the Baldrige criteria as an examiner gives expanded insights into what a true quality process or business looks like”.

-Jim Penick, U.S. Postal Service

“It was a wonderful experience to go through the AQA examiner process. We had excellent team work and coordination. The best part is the site visit, where you actually learn the most about the applicant process. A good team work combined with different industry exposure is very rewarding at the end of the day given the amount of time and effort dedicated to the whole process giving the examiner a sense of accomplishment. I would recommend professionals to go through the same as an opportunity to serve the state, represent your organization and further professional development.”

-Deep Mane, Self-Representing



"Being an examiner provides me with the opportunity to keep up-to-date with best practices from the training and to get an "insider" view of excellent organizations. It's a great way to stay in touch with trends in Arizona business."

-Barbara Chatzkel, Principal, The New River Group LLC

"I became associated with the program in 1995. The examiner training and interaction with other volunteers from various industries provided insights into many aspects of quality which were not in my original view. During a hiatus from the examiner process, I realized that I missed the experience and decided to volunteer again. The program has grown richer and been made more accessible to businesses in the state. Examiner training and the methods of applying the criteria have been made more understandable and lessons learned from one cycle of examinations are visible in the next cycle.



Personally, the experience has helped me enrich the quality initiatives which are applied in my organization. The techniques taught during the training and applied during the direct examination of applications and site visits to applicants provided me with the ability to take an independent view of quality within my own organization and assess and clearly communicate steps which need to be taken for improvement. The discipline required to produce the final report carries into the written reports and presentations needed to clearly communicate in all directions within and outside of my organization. It is an intense team building experience which carries many personal and professional opportunities."

-Mary Hudak, Quality Correspondent, BULL HN

Being a first time State Quality Award Program Examiner was an extremely challenging, yet intensely rewarding experience. I had a personal interest in the Baldrige National Quality Program after attending one of their regional workshops. I wanted to get involved; but did not feel good enough to "go national". My involvement with the AQA State Quality Award Program was the right fit! The training opportunities are outstanding. Not only did I learn how to be an examiner to meet my personal goals, I learned how to write a successful application which benefited me professionally - my organization was a 2004 Showcase in Excellence Award recipient. I met many friends and now colleagues through my involvement in the AQA State Quality Award Program. I'd recommend AQA examiner involvement to anyone who wants to make a quality difference!



-Nick Buta, Quality Consultant, Arizona Department of Revenue

As an AQA Examiner, I grew personally and professionally in ways which benefited both me and my organization. The Examiner Process cemented my auditing and project management skills, both of which are fundamental to being a Six Sigma Black Belt. The exposure to other business practices and involvement with the examination team improved my creativity and collaborative skills.

The training associated with the Examiner Process enhanced my knowledge of Baldrige Criteria and benefited my organization as we continue to improve on aspects of the criteria to drive results.

**-Amy Pichora, Six Sigma Black Belt,
Laboratory Sciences of Arizona / Sonora Quest Laboratories**