



Company Information:

Highest Ranking Official:
David A. Dexter
President & Chief Executive Officer

Contact Person:
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Type of work:
Sonora Quest Laboratories (SQL) is a joint venture clinical laboratory between Banner Health, the largest healthcare system in the state of Arizona, and Quest Diagnostics Incorporated, the largest clinical laboratory provider in the United States. SQL provides a broad range of laboratory testing services to physicians, hospitals, and other healthcare providers throughout the state of Arizona.

Workforce: 1,400 employees

Testimonial of Value of the AZ State Quality Awards Program

“Sonora Quest Laboratories is pleased to be the recipient of the 2005 Governor’s Award for Quality. Our participation in the state quality awards program through the Arizona Quality Alliance is a validation of our Six Sigma quality improvement efforts to become recognized as the ‘Standard for Laboratory Excellence in Arizona’.

Based on our experience, I would highly encourage other organizations to participate in the awards program and take advantage of the program’s processes to improve quality and recognize Arizona companies for performance excellence.”

David A. Dexter, President & CEO, Sonora Quest Laboratories

Highlights of Organizational Process:

Quality and Performance Results

- Sonora Quest Laboratories is the market leader in clinical laboratory testing in the state of Arizona and has a customer reputation of an organization that offers excellent integrated systems, products and services.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories demonstrates substantial and sustained increase in financial performance over the past six years. Net revenue has increased 226% since 1998.
- SQL’s Customer Satisfaction Index Scores show uninterrupted improvement over the past five years. Marked improvement in performance measures including client problem resolution indicate the success of the various process improvement initiatives initiated during this period.
- SQL’s Employee Satisfaction Index Scores demonstrate a substantial and sustained increase since 1999 and has attained industry defined World Class status for the past three years.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories has achieved six consecutive years of improvement in reducing employee attrition levels.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories has achieved Accreditation with Distinction from the College of American Pathologists.
- For the past two years, Sonora Quest has been designated as one of the Top 25 Best Places to Work in the Valley by its employees.

- Customer Service Call Center Statistics perform at best-in class levels. The department has achieved this status for five consecutive years while the number of calls has increased with the increase in requisition volume. The Average Speed of Answer is less than 20 seconds, the Abandonment rate is less than 1%, and the Service Factor is greater than 80%. Service Factor is defined as percent of calls answered in 20 seconds or less.
- For the past four years, Sonora Quest Laboratories has demonstrated sustained improvement and high performance in delivering STAT and routine testing results within turnaround time targets. Timely reporting of testing results is a key customer requirement.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories has been recognized as a successful and improvement oriented organization in a complex, highly regulated, and competitive environment. The organization has demonstrated an effective and systematic approach using fact-based data analysis and decision-making.
- SQL participates in internal and external quality, compliance, safety and financial audits. The organization has maintained a green status on all audits conducted in the last four years.

Processes

- Sonora Quest Laboratories is a Mission, Vision, and Values driven organization. These defining statements along with the organizational business objectives are included in the organization's business plan, the ROADMAP. The ROADMAP is shared with all employees to create alignment and engagement of employees and support specific business objectives. Senior leadership routinely presents information at Town Meetings, which are held at all facilities on all shifts. This format has been devised to enable employees to review the business plan, receive performance updates, and ask any questions of clarification.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories is a customer driven organization that strives to provide every patient and every customer with services and products of uncompromising quality – error free, on time, every time. The organization prepares a comprehensive regional market strategy to support customer's requirements and meet the customer's needs.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories identifies core processes and support processes that are tightly linked and must be delivered flawlessly to meet customer requirements. Measures are established for key requirements of the organization's core and support processes.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories utilizes a problem resolution management system to address internal and external problems and complaints. Measures are tied to important aspects of the process and include resolution turnaround time, percent of problems resolved in the established time frame, and the customer's satisfaction level with the resolution.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories utilizes the Six Sigma methodology to systematically improve processes throughout the organization. The organization employs dedicated resources for leading process improvement activities, a Master Black Belt and four Black Belts along with a number of Green Belts. Green Belts lead process improvement projects in their respective areas of operations. Six Sigma projects are aligned with the organization's business objectives.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories is involved in the community through participation in education and various community charities. The organization partners with Phoenix College to develop curriculum that relates to their laboratory sciences programs and is also involved with several charitable organizations outside their industry.
- Sonora Quest Laboratories is committed to providing learning and development opportunities to its employees. Employees learn key skills and knowledge through annual mandatory education and other education offerings. Collaboration with Phoenix College and their laboratory sciences programs, tuition reimbursement, teleconferences, in-house training and career ladders are methods utilized to provide learning opportunities and address key needs associated with organizational performance measurement, performance improvement and technological change.
- A well-integrated approach exists to manage and provide analysis of organizational performance. Data is aligned with strategic objectives, processes, and results measurements.