THE JOURNEY AND BENEFITS TO ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE: THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS, COLORADO AND THE NATIONAL BALDRIGE AWARD

With: Terri Runyan, Performance Excellence Program Manager with the City of Fort Collins, Colorado

**Baldrige Award process**
Start in state or regional program to stair-step up to national requirements

- **Level I:** Develop organization profile
- **Level II:** Site visit and feedback with examiners
- **Level III:** Process category application
- **Level IV:** 50 page application with 5 page organization profile for national award

**Baldrige Process Categories**
1. **Leadership** – How do you govern? How does executive leadership demonstrate organizational values?
2. **Strategy** – What is your strategic planning process? How do you act on the strategic plan?
3. **Customers** – Who are they? Are they engaged?
4. **Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge** – How do you measure results and transfer knowledge?
5. **Workforce** – Do you have the right people in the right place to deliver services to customers?
6. **Operations** – How do you get the work done?
7. **Results** – Do you have comparative trend data over time?

**Now what?**
Continue the discussion in your city:
- How are you moving from “Trust us” to data driven?
- How could you better align resources to your vision?
- Which Baldrige category do you have the most room for improvement? How will you target it?
- How do you create a platform for your businesses and residents to thrive?

**Fort Collins’ National Baldrige Award Timeline**

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<td>Event</td>
<td>BFO Cycle</td>
<td>RMPEx Timberline Award</td>
<td>RMPEx Foothills</td>
<td>Achieved RMPEx Peak Award</td>
<td>Submitted 1st Baldrige Application</td>
<td>Submitted 1st Site Visit</td>
<td>Achieved RMPEx High Plains Level</td>
<td>Submitted 2nd Baldrige Application</td>
<td>Baldrige Recipient</td>
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- **First BFO Cycle**: Created Vision
- **RMPEx Foothills**: Achieved RMPEx Peak Award
- **Submit 2nd Baldrige Application**: Submitted 2nd Site Visit
How do you engage departments and employees directly to use Baldrige criteria?
Fort Collins spread the word using committees for each of the six process categories. These were made of 7-10 people at different levels of organization with an executive sponsor to focus on each process criteria. Team members were selected based on enthusiasm, engagement in process, and could work as ambassadors for the rest of the organization. The site visits also inspired many individuals as it involves a significant number of people in the organization. Part of Baldrige is also increasing employee engagement and feedback. Once employees see things changing within the organization, buy-in is easier.

How to you manage day-to-day work managing process criteria?
Fort Collins hired Terri as the Performance Excellence Program Manager, so this is her primary focus. Half of her job is working with teams to put together program and work on organizational culture and development. The other half is implementing opportunity for improvement around strategic planning – identifying the right players to be involved, determine measurement processes, and implement long-term change. For Collins also hired a consultant and prior Baldrige award winner to advise on specifics and act as an external, independent advisor.

Who were the primary champions in completing the application, and what were their roles?
Executive sponsors of each of the six category teams were primary champions. It was truly a team effort at various levels of the organization. Each team wrote their assigned section of the application, with back-and forth feedback with Terri and the consultant throughout the process. The city made sure their was a snapshot of members from each service area across the organization on each team.

When changing your approach and implementing new systems and measurement processes, how did you handle resistance to change? What were the common challenges you noted that other organizations may experience?
There’s “grumbling” during the initial stages of any change. There was some executive level direction and buy-in to encourage attitudes throughout the organization. The city provided a number of education sessions for employees to explain why. They also made sure to communicate what the benefits would be, and make sure that employees knew the effort up-front would make later stages of the process easier.

To watch this session again: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/2847005431024204035
Alliance for Innovation Calendar of Events: https://transformgov.org/virtual-events
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