

THE MERCED COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD
AND
MERCED COUNTY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT AREA



WORKFORCE
INVESTMENT BOARD
MERCED COUNTY

**CERTIFICATION FOR
WORKFORCE SYSTEM CENTERS**

WorkNet
Employment Resource Center
FEEDBACK REPORT

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KEY THEMES/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WorkNet scored in range **_350 - 450_** on the Certification for Workforce Investment Centers scoring guidelines, indicating (*insert use language of that scoring guidelines*).

- a. The most important strengths or outstanding practices aligned to the Certification Criteria are:

WorkNet offers staff a variety of customer service training opportunities. Examples of these opportunities are the center closes bi-monthly so staff and partners may attend staff trainings; Merced College offers an ongoing series of courses through their Customer Service Academy; and the National Workforce Professional Certification exam. The organization has made a commitment to offer the National Professional Tier 1 Certification to staff. For example, staff are given time during work hours to study the course work and complete the certification exam. Of the 32 staff members that enrolled, 18 of them have graduated with scores ranging from 96% - 100%. Having this certification process for the staff may assist WorkNet in achieving its key customer requirements of professional, timely, accurate information from knowledgeable, innovative and courteous staff.

Partners and stakeholders participate in the strategic planning process through the development (goals, objectives, measures and timelines) and approval (distribution of the plan to staff to review and provide input) stages. Frontline staffs as well as managers are included in the planning process to ensure input is gathered from all levels of the organization. By including stakeholders, partners, and staff in the various stages of the strategic planning process all members have knowledge and ownership of the goals, objectives, mission, and vision. Including partners and stakeholders demonstrates WorkNet's long-standing commitment to teamwork, partnership, customer service, and growth.

WorkNet is highly regulated by local, state and federal agencies. For example, the One Stop operator is monitored annually for compliance in fiscal and procurement performance as well as ensuring the organization is meeting all standards and expenditure requirements. Monthly, quarterly, and annual reports are submitted and reviewed by the WIB's Finance and Quality Assurance Committee. There were no findings for the 2004-2005 annual review. This demonstrates WorkNet's dedication to upholding its core values of integrity and ethical behavior.

The organization has a process in place to ensure dissemination about its policies and procedures is deployed throughout the organization. For example, WorkNet uses its new staff and partner orientation, one-on-one discussions, emails and monthly staff/partner meetings as methods to disseminate information. This process of knowledge sharing supports WorkNet's commitment to teamwork, partnership, collaboration, and the promotion of a seamless system.

- b. The areas, practices, or approaches that do not meet the Certification are identified as the following opportunities for improvement:

While WorkNet does provide a voluntary certification course (National Workforce Professional Certification exam) to its staff as well as partnering staff when available, which supports its senior leaders commitment to empowerment, innovation, and learning evidence demonstrating how education and training contribute to the achievement of WorkNet's action plans, performance expectations and performance improvement was not in place. For example, during the group interview members of the leadership team stated there was no hard data to show how employees use the knowledge gained from workshops and the certification course in their daily work activities that it was more of a verbal response. This may impact the organizations ability to ensure its formal education and employee development plans are in alignment to WorkNet's overall mission, vision, and achieving its strategic objectives.

While a well-defined strategic plan with measurable goals exists, a systematic approach to identify blind spots, address factors such as indications of major shifts in markets, regulatory environment, budget cuts, etc. was not demonstrated. This may impact WorkNet's ability to manage its resources needed to implement the strategic plan as well as sustain the organization and continue to deliver a skilled, competitive workforce that ensures a diverse and prosperous economy.

While the organization gathers customer data through a variety of formal and informal methods of listening and learning (Customer Satisfaction Survey, assessment process, Sign-In Sheet, etc.) to determine requirements, expectations and preferences of its customers evidence of how that information is used to identify those key factors that can lead to customer acquisition, retention and business expansion. This may impact WorkNet's ability to achieve its core values of customer service, growth and results.

WorkNet is in the first stage of implementing its Employee Development Plan (EDP); however participation is optional due to union constraints. Without a center-wide plan it may be difficult for the organization to align individual employee development with the organizations overall objectives and action plans. This may impact the organization's ability to integrate education and employment services and respond to the needs as well as enhance the community's quality of life.

While WorkNet provides information identifying performance and improvement in key business areas of the organization, like customer and community awareness, there was little numerical hard data to demonstrate the results the organization has achieved. Without hard data it may impact WorkNet's ability to determine its success factors – effective collaborations (satisfaction survey results from partners), financial performance (operating within budget trended annually), customer satisfaction, etc.

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Score	Approach-Deployment
0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Systematic approach is evident, information is anecdotal
10% to 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beginning of systematic approach to the basic purposes of the Item is evident. • Major Gaps exist in deployment that would inhibit progress in achieving the basic purpose of the Item. • Early stages of transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident.
30% to 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective, systematic approach, responsive to the basic purposes of the Item, is evident. • The approach is deployed, although some areas or work units are in early stages of deployment. • The beginning of a systematic approach to evaluation and improvement of basic Item processes is evident.
50% to 60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective, systematic approach, responsive to the overall purposes of the Item and your key business requirements, is evident. • The approach is well deployed, although deployment may vary in some areas or work units. • A fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process is in place for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of key processes. • The approach is aligned with your basic organizational needs identified in the other Criteria Categories.
70% to 80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective, systematic approach, responsive to the multiple requirements of the Item and your current and changing business needs, is evident. • The approach is well deployed, with no significant gaps. • A fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process and organizational learning/sharing are key management tools; there is clear evidence of refinement and improved integration as a result of organizational-level analysis and sharing. • The approach is well integrated with your organizational needs identified in the other Criteria Categories.
90% to 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective, systematic approach, fully responsive to all the requirements of the Item and all your current and changing business needs, is evident. • The approach is fully deployed without significant weaknesses or gaps in any areas or work units. • A very strong fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process and extensive organizational learning/sharing, are key management tool; strong refinement and integration, backed by excellent organizational-level analysis and sharing, are evident. • The approach is fully integrated with your organizational needs identified in the other Criteria Categories

Score	Results
0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no results or poor results in areas reported.
10% to 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some improvements and/or early good performance levels in a few areas. • Results are not reported for many to most areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements.
30% to 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements and/or good performance levels are reported in many areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements. • Early stages of developing trend and obtaining comparative information are evident. • Results are reported for many to most areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements.
50% to 60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement trends and/or good performance levels are reported for most areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements. • No pattern of adverse trends and no poor performance levels are evident in areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements. • Some trends and/or current performance levels-evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or benchmarks-show areas of strength and/or good to very good relative performance levels. • Business results address most key customer, market , and process requirements.
70% to 80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current performance is good to excellent in areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements. • Most improvement trends and/or current performance levels are sustained. • Many to most trends and/or current performance levels-evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or benchmarks-show areas of leadership and very good relative performance levels. • Business results address most key customer market, process and action plan requirements.
90% to 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current performance is excellent in most areas of importance to your organization's key business requirements. • Excellent improvement trends and/or sustained excellent performance levels are reported in most areas. • Evidence of industry and benchmark leadership is demonstrated in many areas. • Business results fully address key customer, market, process, and action plan requirements.

SCORE SUMMARY WORKSHEET

Summary of Criteria Items	Total Points Possible A	Score
I. Leadership		
A. Clear Direction	20	8
B. Quality One-Stop Staff	20	8
C. The "Right" Organization & Well Defined Organization	20	8
D. Customer Focus	25	10
E. Focus on Collaboration	25	10
F. Support for Continuous Quality Improvement	25	10
G. Supplier Certification	15	4.5
Category Total	150	58.5
II. Strategic Planning		
A. Well-Defined	15	6
B. Involvement of All Consituents	15	6
C. Customer Focus	15	4.5
D. Define Metrics	15	6
E. Implemented (Organizational Behaviors)	15	6
F. Consistent With Available Quality Resources	15	6
G. Includes Continuous Quality Improvement Plan	10	4
Category Total	100	38.5
III. Customer & Market Focus		
A. Customer Needs Surveyed	50	15
B. Customer Satisfaction	50	20
C. Results Linked to Strategic Plan & Continuous Improvement	50	15
D. Single Point of Contact for Clients & Employers	50	20
Category Total	200	70
IV. Information & Analysis		
A. Information System Supports Continuous Improvement	25	10
B. Continuous Improvement Linked to Data Collection	25	10
C. How Resource Center Delivers Services	25	10
D. Strategy for Meeting State and Local MIS Needs	25	10
Category Total	100	40
V. Human Resource Focus		
A. Staff is competent	30	12
B. Continuous Learning	30	15
C. Team Orientation	30	12
D. Uniform Application of Human Resources Policies	30	12
E. Employee Expectations Well-Defined	30	12
Category Total	150	63
VI. Process Management		
A. Uniform Application of Policies & Procedures	25	10
B. Feedback Mechanism	25	10
C. Service Recovery	25	10
D. Staff Empowerment	25	10
Category Total	100	40

Summary of Criteria Items	Total Points Possible A	Score
VII. Business Results		
A. Customer & Community Awareness	100	30
B. Demonstrated & Measureable	100	30
Category Total	200	60

Total Score

Meets 30% Required Score (yes/no)

370
YES

SCORE SUMMARY: COMPLIANCE CRITERIA

Summary of Criteria Items	Criteria Met?	
	YES	NO
Compliance Criteria		
I. Comprehensive Centers		
A. Center provides all Core Services	X	
B. Center provides access to Intensive Services	X	
C. Center provides all labor exchange services.	X	
D. Center provides services and access of mandated partners.	X	
E. Additional Criteria for all Comprehensive One-Stop Centers.	X	
Baldrige Based Criteria		
I. Leadership		
A. Clear Direction	X	
B. Quality One-Stop Staff	X	
C. The "Right" Organization & Well Defined Organization	X	
D. Customer Focus	X	
E. Focus on Collaboration	X	
F. Support for Continuous Quality Improvement	X	
G. Supplier Certification	X	
II. Strategic Planning		
A. Well-Defined	X	
B. Involvement of All Constituents	X	
C. Customer Focus	X	
D. Define Metrics	X	
E. Implemented (Organizational Behaviors)	X	
F. Consistent With Available Resource	X	
G. Includes Continuous Quality Improvement Plan	X	
III. Customer & Market Focus		
A. Customer Needs Surveyed	X	
B. Customer Satisfaction	X	
C. Results Linked to Strategic Plan & Continuous Improvement	X	
D. Single Point of Contact for Clients & Employers	X	
IV. Information & Analysis		
A. Information System Supports Continuous Improvement	X	
B. Continuous Improvement Linked to Data Collection	X	
C. How Resource Center Delivers Services	X	
D. Strategy for Meeting State and Local MIS Needs	X	
V. Human Resource Focus		
A. Staff is competent	X	
B. Continuous Learning	X	
C. Team Orientation	X	
D. Uniform Application of Human Resources Policies	X	
E. Employee Expectations Well-Defined	X	
VI. Process Management		
A. Uniform Application of Policies & Procedures	X	
B. Feedback Mechanism	X	
C. Service Recovery	X	
D. Staff Empowerment	X	
VII. Business Results		
A. Customer & Community Awareness	X	
B. Demonstrated & Measurable	X	
Meets 100% Require Compliance? (yes/no)	YES	

OVERALL SCORES SUMMARY
Certification for WorkNet Employment Resource Centers

Criteria Description	Required Score for Certification	Met Requirement (Yes/No)
1. Compliance Criteria for Comprehensive Centers	100%	YES
2. Baldrige Based Certification Criteria – Quality	30%	YES
3. Meets Minimum Requirement for Certification?		YES

COMPLIANCE CRITERIA FOR COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS

I. Comprehensive (Full Service) Centers

Statutory Based Criteria for All Comprehensive, physical one-stop, Worknet Employment Resource Centers to be certified:

- A. Center provides all core services listed in the Workforce Investment Act, as described in Section 134(d)(2) of the Act.
- B. Center provides access to intensive services.
 - 1. Center provides access to training and serves as a point of access for Virginia Individual Training Account (ITA) Vouchers.
- C. Center provides access to all labor exchange services authorized under the Wagner-Peyser Act.
- D. Center provides the core services and access to all of the workforce programs and activities carried out by mandated one-stop partners.
- E. Additional Criteria for all Comprehensive WorkNet Employment Resource Center to be certified, include:
 - 1. Center operator was selected through a competitive procurement process, or designated by the LWIB.
 - 2. High speed computer access to Internet based information system.
 - 3. Access to computers, including printing, access to software programs, which could include word processing, programs for resume development, and job application and cover letter preparation.
 - 4. Access to telephones and fax for job search.
 - 5. Access to up-to-date career and local community resource information.
 - 6. Strategies to meet any demand for “non-traditional” hours of operation for those who cannot attend during the traditional 8 AM - 5 PM hours of operation.
 - 7. Information desk and/or resource areas are staffed.
 - 8. There is a presence of mandated partners on-site.
 - 9. A case management system exists that provides guidance for customers participating in intensive and training services.
 - 10. MOUs or operational agreements are in place between partners for daily operations.
 - 11. Information sharing and customer confidentiality agreements exist.
 - 12. A description of all employer services is included in the business or strategic plan, including strategies for making the information available to employers.
 - 13. A customer assessment process exists, including skill, aptitude, interest, and needs assessment.
 - 14. Meets of the Baldrige Based Criteria with a score of 30% or higher for the Quality Criteria and 100% of the Compliance Criteria.
 - 15. Has an established referral process that is customer focused.

COMPLIANCE CRITERIA FOR COMPREHENSIVE CENTERS

I. Comprehensive Centers

Statutory Based Criteria For the Comprehensive, Physical One-Stop, WorkNet Employment Resource Center To Be Certified.

Strengths:

WorkNet provides all 15 comprehensive services mentioned in WIA in the four areas of functions (core, intensive, training and business) through its operator and partners. For example, an individual receives an initial assessment, which includes skill levels, aptitudes, and support services needed as well as a portfolio that contains information that would help in determining other assessment needs. This demonstrates WorkNet's commitment to achieving its vision to deliver a skilled, competitive workforce that ensures a diverse and prosperous economy.

Using a multi-faceted approach WorkNet provides comprehensive and individualized assessments, individual employment plans, and individual or group counseling. Also included is a process that transitions the customer from core to intensive and training services. The multi-faceted approach demonstrates the organizations ability to offer program flexibility and simplicity of access.

WorkNet offers a variety of computer software programs to assist customers with their job search and skills development. For example, the computer resource lab includes programs such as, Mavis Bacon Typing Tutor, WinWay Resume and a variety of assistive technology equipment for customers with disabilities. By providing an assortment of resources in the computer lab, the organization demonstrates its commitment to achieving its mission, "respond to the needs of our business community and jobseekers to enhance our community's quality of life".

Opportunities for Improvement:

While WorkNet generates and reviews reports on organization and fiscal performance as well as submits the information to the Department of Workforce Investment (WI) and the Workforce Investment Board Finance Committee on a monthly and quarterly basis, how this information is used for decision-making purposes was not demonstrated. This may impact the organization's ability to meet its mission to respond to the needs of its business and jobseeker customers as well as its core values of growth and results.

While a well-defined strategic plan with measurable goals exists, a systematic approach to identify blind spots, address factors such as indications of major shifts in markets, regulatory environment, budget cuts, etc. was not demonstrated. This may impact WorkNet's ability to manage its resources needed to implement the strategic plan as well as sustain the organization and continue to deliver a skilled, competitive workforce that ensures a diverse and prosperous economy.

I. Leadership (150 points)

The *Leadership* Category examines how your organization's senior leaders address values, directions, and performance expectations, as well as a focus on customers and other stakeholders, empowerment, innovation, and learning. Also examined is how your organization addresses its responsibilities to the public and supports its key communities.

1.a. (20) Clear direction (consistent) (mission)

There exists a clear, well articulated Mission Statement for the organization

1.b. (20) Quality One-Stop Staff (continuous learning)

A formal education/employee development plan exists

If certification is required for certain employee groups, those certifications exist and are current

1.c. (20) The "right" organization and a well defined organization

There is an organizational chart

The organizational structure is appropriate for the organization

All leadership positions are filled

1.d. (25) Customer focus

There is an understanding/definition of the customer(s)

A customer service training program exists

1.e. (25) Focus on collaboration

All of the mandatory partners participate in the One-Stop on a regular basis

The rate of cross-referral among the partners is satisfactory relative to benchmark organizations

The degree of information sharing among One-Stop partners is adequate

1.f. (25) Support for continuous quality improvement

A well defined CQI plan and program exists

Staff are trained in the principles of CQI

There is a commitment of employee time to the CQI process

1.g. (15) Supplier certification

Key performance factors are used in the evaluation of suppliers and partners

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

I. Leadership

Strengths:

WorkNet has a clear, well-articulated Mission Statement to “respond to the needs of their business community and jobseeker to enhance their community’s quality of life”. In March 2005, the mission and value statements were revised to ensure an accurate reflection of the organization and partnership. To deploy the mission, vision, and core value statements copies were posted and displayed in cubicles, on walls, computers, in the resource room, printed on all WLT correspondence, discussed during meetings and posted on the WLT website. This demonstrates WorkNet’s commitment to its core values of customer service, growth and results as well as its commitment to excellence.

The organization offers on-line courses by Dynamic Work Institute and has made a commitment to offer the National Professional Tier 1 Certification to staff. For example, staff are given time during work hours to study the course work and complete the certification exam. Of the 32 staff members that enrolled, 18 of them have graduated with scores ranging from 96% - 100%. Having this certification process for the staff may assist WorkNet in achieving its key customer requirements of professional, timely, accurate information from knowledgeable, innovative and courteous staff.

A well-defined organization chart for the entire organization exists and is inclusive of all partnering agencies. WorkNet uses a matrix listing the core services, which recently was updated to include intensive and training services, offered by partnering agencies. This promotes a seamless system of integrated services in education and employment.

WorkNet offers staff a variety of customer service training opportunities. Examples of these opportunities are the center closes bi-monthly so staff and partners may attend staff trainings; Merced College offers an ongoing series of courses through their Customer Service Academy; and the National Workforce Professional Certification exam. The criteria and training from the National Workforce Professional Certification exam provides specific information and techniques to ensure the organization is offering quality customer service to its diverse customer clientele.

The organization uses the Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) to provide a guideline on how the partnering agencies will operate and collaborate with WorkNet. The MOU formalizes the partner’s commitment to participate at the center. A formal review process is in place that consists of evaluating accomplishments of resource sharing, current budget in relation to fiscal allocations, and negotiations between WorkNet manager and partner. This process supports the organization’s belief that success is a result of effective collaboration with partners and suppliers, and its commitment to excellence.

WorkNet embraces the concept of CQI and uses the Baldrige criteria to develop and improve the quality of its programs from the previous certification findings. For example, some staff members (WI staff and one partner in the WIB examination process) attended the California Award for Performance Excellence Examiner certification training. The skills acquired from the training have been implemented into the CQI teams. This demonstrates WorkNet’s commitment of continuous quality improvement.

WorkNet uses the WIA-based performance criteria as well as key performance factors to

evaluate partners. Examples of performance factors are customer satisfaction surveys, service hours, on-site observations, entered employment, goal attainment and retention. The partnering agencies certifies that staff co-located at the ERC has the skills required to perform the jobs.

Opportunities for Improvement:

While WorkNet does provide a voluntary certification course (National Workforce Professional Certification exam) to its staff as well as partnering staff when available, which supports its senior leaders commitment to empowerment, innovation, and learning evidence demonstrating a systematic process that links staff learning to performance expectations was not in place. For example, during the group interview members of the leadership team stated there was no hard data to show how employees use the knowledge gained from workshops and the certification course in their daily work activities that it was more of a verbal response. This may impact the organizations ability to ensure its formal education and employee development plans are in alignment to WorkNet's overall mission, vision, and achieving its strategic objectives.

While a well-defined continuous quality improvement plan was developed from the organizations previous certification site visit the last documentation of an updated plan was in 2002 – 2003. The CQI plan includes workgroups that are continuous while others are created only for the purpose of resolving a particular opportunity for improvement. Having a CQI plan that has not been updated since 2003 may impact senior leaderships ability to address the organization's direction, performance expectations and sustainability as well as ensure that opportunities for improvements are producing results that are in alignment to WorkNet's overall strategic goals.

WorkNet emphasis on collaboration with its partners is demonstrated through its implementation of a cross-referral process in December 2004. While the process was created to track referrals from partners and gather data (i.e., name of the customer, referring agency, and agency referred to) evidence to identify whether the rate of cross-referral amongst the partners is satisfactory was not in place. Without a step in the process to evaluate the partners' satisfaction rate this may impact the organization's ability to build effective collaboration with partners and ensure its strategic goals and objectives focus and strengthen the partnership.

WorkNet identifies WIA-based performance criteria are used to evaluate partners. While the organization indicates the WIA criteria are in the process of changing due to the WIA reauthorization and that several of its partners will be affected, evidence demonstrating how WorkNet plans to ensure the continuation of its service delivery is not affected was not in place. This may impact the organization's future viability to sustain operations and maintain its seamless service delivery system.

II. Strategic Planning (100 points)

The *Strategic Planning* Category examines how your organization develops strategic objectives and action plans. Also examined are how your chosen strategic objectives and action plans are deployed and how progress is measured.

Issues to Address in your Challenger Application:

2.a. (15) Well defined

There exists a well-defined strategic plan with measurable objectives

2.b. (15) Involvement of all constituents

Stakeholders possess knowledge of the elements of the strategic plan

There is documented evidence that all levels of the organization and all stakeholders participated in the development of the strategic plan

2.c. (15) Customer focus (needs - now and in the future)

A formal customer needs assessment has been performed

The results of the needs assessment are addressed in the strategic plan

2.d. (15) Define metrics (are they measured)

Outcomes and a method to measure them are identified in the plan

Milestones exist for achievement of outcomes

2.e. (15) Implemented (organizational behavior)

There is evidence that the strategic plan is being implemented in the organization

2.f. (10) Consistent with available resources

The organization has sufficient resources to implement the plan

2.g. (15) Includes continuous quality improvement plan

The strategic plan includes an emphasis on CQI

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

II. Strategic Planning

Strengths:

WorkNet's goal to train and attract adaptable workers to fill industry needs, influence the educational system to design and implement strategies to teach employment strategies, and to become an active advocacy voice on workforce development issues addresses the strategic challenges that impact employment within its community. The attention to the strategic challenges may assist the organization achieve its vision "to deliver a skilled, competitive workforce that ensures a diverse and prosperous economy".

Partners and stakeholders participate in the strategic planning process through the development (goals, objectives, measures and timelines) and approval (distribution of the plan to staff to review and provide input) stages. Frontline staffs as well as managers are included in the planning process to ensure input is gathered from all levels of the organization. By including stakeholders, partners, and staff in the various stages of the strategic planning process all members have knowledge and ownership of the goals, objectives, mission, and vision.

The organization has multiple ways of collecting data on customer satisfaction and determining assessment needs (i.e., Services Sign-In Sheet, CSS, and comment cards). The Business Services Unit is also collecting data from the business customers through use of a similar CSS designed specifically to assess the quality of service, probability of referring the services to a colleague, and likelihood of seeking additional services. An example of how the results from the customer needs assessment is addressed, the CSS identified the length of time a customer had to wait for staff assistance in the computer lab. The concern was discussed in the cross-functional team (includes both staff and partners) and measured against available resources as well as impact to service delivery. The result, two additional full-time staff members were assigned to the computer lab.

WorkNet includes continuous quality improvement into its strategic plan through its adoption of Baldrige principles into its re-certification process and the development of 6 workgroups to address opportunities for improvement in the areas of Leadership/Strategic Planning, Human Resources, Customer and Market Focus, Process Management, Information and Analysis and Business Results. The strategic plan uses the balanced scorecard and regular partner and staff meetings to implement the strategic goals and objectives. For example, the cross-functional workgroups report on the status of their projects or action items as identified in the strategic plan.

Opportunities for Improvement:

WorkNet states additional funding and resources are not required to implement the strategic plan because partnering agencies provide additional resources. During a time where the current trend for WIA funding has steadily decreased over the past three years, it may be more difficult for partnering agencies to provide sufficient resources to assist in the implementation of the strategic plan. There was little evidence to demonstrate how the organization will address its strategic challenges of budget cuts, WIA re-authorization and the unfunded mandate of its partners. Without action plans in place to address these strategic challenges this may impact WorkNet's ability to sustain the organization and continue to deliver a skilled, competitive workforce that ensures a diverse and prosperous economy.

WorkNet uses the balanced scorecard to define measure metrics, identify timelines and process owners for accomplishing its strategic goals and objectives. While deployment of the scorecard occurs through the review of monthly and quarterly reports, how this activity ensures the scorecard is implemented throughout the organization was not demonstrated. Not having a clear linkage between how individual staff and partner staff's daily work activities assist in the achievement of the strategic goals and objectives may impact WorkNet's ability to achieve its determining competitive success factor of "focus and strengthen the partnership using the strategic goals and objectives".

III. Customer and Market Focus (200 points)

The *Customer and Market Focus* Category examines how your organization determines requirements, expectations, and preferences of customers and markets. Also examined is how your organization builds relationships with customers and determines the key factors that lead to customer acquisition, satisfaction, and retention; and, to business expansion

3.a. (50) Customer needs surveyed

There is evidence that customer needs have been surveyed/identified

3.b. (50) Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is satisfactory relative to benchmark organizations

Customer satisfaction demonstrates improvement over time

Internal organizational goals are established and achieved

3.c. (50) Results linked to strategic plan and continuous improvement

Customer Satisfaction surveys result in actions taken through strategic planning

3.d. (50) Single point of contact for clients and employers

There is evidence that all core services from all partners are available at the One-Stop

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

III. Customer and Market Focus

Strengths:

WorkNet obtains information regarding customer needs through a variety of informal and formal methods of listening and learning. Customer needs are discussed via emails, memos, and meetings. Improvements that came from suggestions, “We Care What You Think” comment cards are posted in the foyer to reinforce the organization’s commitment to responding to the needs of its jobseekers.

The organization’s commitment to excellence and continuously seeking to enhance services is demonstrated through its focus on universal access to employment of services with disabilities. For example, WorkNet applied and received a grant to facilitate better services to individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing. Another example is the Customer Satisfaction Survey and Services Sign-In Sheet replaced the Day Pass as a method to determining its current quality of services and opportunities for improvement. These methods for obtaining customer satisfaction were taken into consideration when developing its strategic goals (goal 1/ objective 1; goal 2/ objective 4; and goal 3/ objective 1). These examples demonstrate WorkNet commitment to continuous improvement.

WorkNet ensures the WIA concept of “No Wrong Door, Single Point of Contact” by requiring all partners to sign an MOU agreeing to provide Core A or Universal services. The service Matrix also identifies all of the partners and the services they provide to the One Stop. Two referral processes are in place to assist customers with services not available on site - interagency referral form or telephoning the referring agency to obtain additional program information for the customer.

Opportunities for Improvement:

While WorkNet conducts a number of outreach activities (mailings, distribution of flyers at other agencies, etc) to acquire new customers a process to determine whether the outreach activity produced desired results was not in place. Without a clear process the organization may not be able to determine which approaches are the most effective and which approaches to expend valuable resources on.

While the organization gathers customer data through a variety of formal and informal methods of listening and learning (Customer Satisfaction Survey, assessment process, Sign-In Sheet, etc.) to determine requirements, expectations and preferences of its customers evidence of how that information is used to identify those key factors that can lead to customer acquisition, retention and business expansion. This may impact WorkNet’s ability to achieve its core values of customer service, growth and results.

IV. Information and Analysis (100)

The *Information and Analysis* Category examines your organization's information management and performance measurement systems; and, how your organization analyzes performance data and information

4.a. (25) Information system supports continuous improvement

Existing systems adequately collect data

4.b. (25) Continuous improvement linked to data collection

The collected data is linked to CQI efforts

4.c. (25) Resource Center offers: information in multiple mediums; self-service; Internet access, trained staff, etc.

The above exists and is readily available to clients

4.d. (25) Strategy for meeting state and local MIS needs (management reporting)

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

IV. Information and Analysis

Strengths:

WorkNet collects information on services being accessed, partner referrals and customer comments. Once the information is gathered it is given to the responsible analyst who will aggregate the data using a customized database. The results are then disseminated on a monthly basis to partner, staff, WLT, and the WIB. The data is used in multiple areas of the operation to make operational improvements such as increasing workshops for specific needs, computer and software improvements, office equipment relocation, and cross training of staff. This demonstrates the organizations program flexibility, simplicity of program access and decrease and elimination of duplicate services.

The organization uses the Customer Satisfaction Survey, Customer Service Sign-In sheet and the case management system as methods to measure and track improvements to daily operations and overall organizational performance. The information gathered is then incorporated into the Balanced Scorecard, which provides leaders with a blueprint for action and evaluation.

The Resource Center offers information in multiple mediums or ways of accessing services and information. Jobseekers can obtain services via the telephone, internet, e-mail or visiting the center. Business customers can seek services in a similar manner with the additional service of having a Business Service Representative conduct services at the employers' place of business.

WorkNet is highly regulated by local, state and federal agencies. For example, the One Stop operator is monitored annually for compliance in fiscal and procurement performance as well as ensuring the organization is meeting all standards and expenditure requirements. Monthly, quarterly, and annual reports are submitted and reviewed by the WIB's Finance and Quality Assurance Committee. There were no findings for the 2004-2005 annual review. This demonstrates WorkNet's dedication to upholding its core values of integrity and ethical behavior.

Opportunities for Improvement:

WorkNet offers core, intensive and training services at its two-affiliate sites for customers who live in the outlying areas of the county. While representatives from both sites participate in the Leadership Team and Management Meetings evidence of how the organization ensures decisions and continuous improvement processes are transferred as well as implemented at the affiliated sites was not demonstrated. Without a process in place to ensure implementation this may impact WorkNet's ability to promote and develop a seamless service delivery system.

While WorkNet has a process for collecting, aggregating and translating results (opportunities for improvement) into action items; however, a process for taking a strength and implementing a cycle of improvement was not demonstrated. For example, if the organization received positive feedback on certain process or procedure, WorkNet may want to examine how they may continue to improve it. This may assist the organization transition from a reactive to a proactive center.

V. Human Resource Management (150 points)

The *Human Resource Focus* Category examines how your organization motivates and enables employees to develop and utilize their full potential in alignment with your organization's overall objectives and action plans. Also, examined are the organization's efforts to build and maintain a work environment and an employee support climate conducive to performance excellence, and to personal and organizational growth.

Issues to Address in your Challenger Award Application:

5.a. (30) Staff is competent

Job descriptions exist for all positions
Employees are evaluated against the requirements of the job descriptions
Employee evaluations demonstrate that employees are competent and meeting job requirements

5.b. (30) Continuous learning

Employees have an individual development plan that has been implemented
There is an organization-wide employee development plan that has been implemented
There is a vehicle for making employees aware of available training

5.c. (30) Team orientation

There are regular meetings to disseminate information and discuss important business issues
There are multidisciplinary cross-functional teams to work on performance improvement initiatives

5.d. (30) Uniform application of human resources policies

Results of employee satisfaction surveys demonstrate uniform application of policies
A formal grievance process exists
Grievances are not excessive given the size of the organization

5.e. (30) Employee expectations well defined

Policies and procedures are disseminated throughout the organization
All new employees get an orientation to the organization

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

V. Human Resource Management

Strengths:

To ensure a competent workforce WorkNet evaluates staff and partnering staff against duties listed on existing job descriptions as well as identifying a set of national competencies it would like staff to have. Any deficiencies or opportunities for professional growth are addressed through training, coaching, and/ or mentoring.

WorkNet holds regular monthly partner and staff meetings where information disseminated and business issues (i.e., strategic plan, CSS results, etc.) are discussed. The cross-functional workgroups are multidisciplinary and are based on CQI principles. The frequency of those meetings can vary from group to group based on need.

WorkNet has a grievance policy and posts the procedures in high traffic areas throughout the center. The postings list a point of contact person within the organization should someone like to file a complaint. A formal grievance process exists for each partnering agency and may be obtained by contacting its agency's Human Resource Department.

The organization disseminates information about its policies and procedures through its new staff and partner orientation, one-on-one discussions, emails and monthly staff/partner meetings. All new staff as well as partnering staff receives an orientation and a new policy checklist, which they must sign to validate receipt and understanding of the policies and procedures. Another example of how information is disseminated, as policies and procedures are updated the information is discussed and distributed during the monthly meetings. For partners who could not attend, a member of the leadership team will have a one-on-one discussion filling the partner in on what was discussed. This practice supports WorkNet's commitment to teamwork, partnership, collaboration, and the promotion of a seamless system.

Opportunities for Improvement:

While WorkNet formal grievance process does not reflect any excessive grievances, averaging 3 per year, there is no formal definition or criteria to determine if number of grievances is appropriate given the size of the organization. Without a clear understanding of what constitutes "excessive" may impact the organizations ability to build and maintain a work environment that is conducive to performance excellence.

Although WorkNet is in the first stage of implementing its Employee Development Plan (EDP) participation is optional due to union constraints. Without a center-wide plan it may be difficult for the organization to align individual employee development with the organizations overall objectives and action plans.

VI. Process Management (100)

The *Process Management* Category examines the key aspects of your organization's process management, including customer-focused design, product/service delivery, key business, and support processes

6.a. (25) Uniform application of policies and procedures

Policies and procedures are disseminated throughout the organization
All new employees get an orientation to the organization

6.b. (25) Feedback mechanism

An adequate feedback mechanism exists

6.c. (25) Service recovery

There is a formal policy/mechanism for complaint management
Examination of a sample of complaints indicates that the policy is being implemented

6.d. (25) Staff-empowerment

Decisions can be made at various levels within the organization
There is an organizational assessment to determine if the degree of empowerment is appropriate/working

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

VI. Process Management

Strengths:

WorkNet disseminates information about the policies and procedures throughout the organization and partnering agencies by conducting a new employee and partner orientation as well as a re-orientation once a year to make sure all current employees and partners have up-to-date information. Also to ensure new employees are well oriented to they WorkNet system, supervisors will work with them during their first month of employment. This practice ensures the organization is meeting its customer's key requirements to provide professional, timely, accurate information from knowledgeable, innovative and courteous staff.

The organization has a feedback mechanism encourages partners and staff at every level to bring forth areas of improvement. Once a suggestion is brought forth, WorkNet determines it's priority for creating a new workgroup based on several criteria - impact to customer products, services and satisfaction, impact to frontline staff training, costs associated with improvements, impact to organizational performance and alignment to the vision, mission and values. Recommendations are then presented to the Quality Assurance Committee for approval. To check the effectiveness of a change or update to policies the initiating workgroup will conduct a three-month follow up assessment. This process supports WorkNet's commitment to continuous quality improvement and performance excellence.

WorkNet has a mechanism for handling customer complaints and dealing with grievances against the organization. Employee complaints regarding discrimination are handled separately from complaints dealing with operations. A majority of the complaints are resolved informally through an internal process any formal grievances are filed with the Equal Opportunity Officer who then generates a report that is shared with Executive Leadership. Additionally, an annual report summarizing the number of complaints and strategies to resolve similar incidents in the future are discussed thus promoting an environment of organizational learning and continuous quality improvement.

Opportunities for Improvement:

While WorkNet ensures empowerment of staff through decentralizing daily decision making and including frontline/process owners in the CQI workgroups an organizational assessment or satisfaction survey to determine if the degree of empowerment is appropriate and working was not demonstrated. Without a process in place to assess staff, this may impact the organization's ability to achieve its core values of teamwork, partnership, customer service, and growth and results.

2005 Certification Criteria

VII. Business Results (200 points)

The *Business Results* Category examines your organization's performance and improvement in key business areas – customer satisfaction, product and service performance, financial and marketplace performance, human resource results, and operational performance. Also examined are performance levels relative to those of your competitors.

Editor's Note: Please focus your responses to the following questions by citing specific Results you have achieved. Charts and graphs are encouraged to summarize your Results. Avoid anecdotal responses that cannot be validated by numerical data.

Issues to Address in your Challenger Award Application:

7.a. (100) Customer and community awareness

- There is an awareness of One-Stop based on random survey of community
- There is an organizational effort to raise awareness
- Resources are devoted to marketing/PR
- Marketing/PR addresses both supply and demand
- Marketing plan exists and results are evaluated against plan

7.b. (100) Demonstrated and measurable

- Financial performance
 - A budget exists and performance suggests that the organization is operating within budget and significant variances have been adequately explained
 - Costs are benchmarked (and compare favorably) against other workforce investment areas
- Operational performance
 - Objectives in the strategic plan are achieved
 - Customer Satisfaction
 - See "Customer and Market Focus"

BALDRIGE BASED CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

VII. Business Results

Strengths:

WorkNet has made an effort to raise awareness within the community. Surveys conducted by the Action Business Center reflect a growing awareness within the community and customer segments about the center's services. For example, in 2000 the awareness rating was 3.7% and then increased to 30% in 2002. This demonstrates the organizations commitment to excellence and being responsive to the needs of the business community and jobseekers.

Fiscal performance and audit results show no significant variances that need to be explained. This demonstrates WorkNet's commitment to its core values of ethical behavior and integrity.

WorkNet ERC constantly receives ratings of 9 or higher (very satisfied) in all areas of customer satisfaction. This supports the organizations development and promotion of a seamless service, program flexibility and simplicity of program access.

Opportunities for Improvement:

WorkNet is actively trying to raise awareness about its services to the community using a variety of methods (radio, newspapers, direct mailings, inserts, brochures, website, etc). For example, The "Did You Know" campaign launched in 2004 where 1530 postcards were mailed out to county employers. While the returned postcards were reviewed and the database was updated for future mailings, data demonstrating the results that came from the campaign was not available. Without this information, it may be difficult for the organization to determine the effectiveness of the various campaigns it implements.