

IMPROVING SMALL BUSINESS PERFORMANCE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM MBNQA WINNERS

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—Abstract —

The purpose of this paper is to present common key factors from Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA) winners on small business category. Recently, four small businesses have won the MBNQA namely MidwayUSA, Freese & Nichols Inc, K & N Management and Studer Group. It is appear that MBNQA criteria which have adopted philosophy of quality management are helping small business to achieve their goals. However, MBNQA criteria not precisely inform about the way “how to do”, rather focus on “what to do”. Hence, a model is needed to draw their experiences to enhance the understanding about how to improve small business performance. For doing so, this study has grasped lessons learned and proposes a phase based model to be applied for increasing small business performance. The model consists of 4 focuses namely: customer intimacy, process and planning, workforce engagement, and community building. Each focus correspond to the phases namely introduction, promotion, and institution.

Key Words: *MBNQA, small business, case studies, phase-based model.*

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