



2024

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA)

**California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE) Program
Administered by the California Council for Excellence**

CALIFORNIA
COUNCIL FOR EXCELLENCE

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Application Specifics	5
Application Process.....	5
Application Timetable.....	6
Application Fee	6
Application Submission.....	6
California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Criteria	7
Scoring System.....	9
Scoring Dimensions.....	9
Criteria Category Point Values and Recognition Levels	10
Process Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Categories 1-6)	11
Results Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Category 7)	11
How to Respond to the Criteria	12
CTEA Glossary of Key Terms.....	14

The California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Criteria was developed by the California Council for Excellence (CCE) for the California Awards for Performance Excellence (CAPE) Program. CCE retains full ownership of the CTEA Criteria.

The CTEA Criteria are Baldrige-based and adapted from the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. *2023-2024 Baldrige Excellence Framework: Proven Leadership and Management Practices for High Performance*. Gaithersburg, MD: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology. <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige>.

2024 California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Application Instructions

Overview

The focus of California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) is to help your team—no matter its size, sector, or industry— answer three questions:

- 1) **Is your team performing as well as it could?**
- 2) **How do you know?**
- 3) **What and how should your team improve or change?**

The CTEA Criteria provides your team with a set of questions designed to assess the effectiveness of your team, its processes, and outcomes. Organizations can use CTEA Criteria to assess either project or process-based teams. By challenging yourself with the questions that make up the CTEA Criteria you explore how you are accomplishing what is important to your team and of course to the project/process on which your team is focused.

Examiners assess the CTEA application against the CTEA Criteria and provide a written Feedback Report identifying strengths as well as opportunities for improvement organized by the seven categories. Your team, senior leaders and any other readers should consider the Feedback Report content in the spirit of continuous improvement.

CTEA applicants are provided the opportunity to share their team’s successes and outcomes with other organizations that are interested in learning from your team’s accomplishments. Teams may be asked to showcase their demonstrated outcomes during the annual spring conference. Applicants receive recognition for their accomplishments at the annual spring conference awards ceremony.

The questions are divided into six process categories (Categories 1-6) and a results category (Category 7), which represent seven critical aspects of managing and performing as a team. It should be noted that these seven categories are identical to the seven categories of the Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence. Thus, for organizations already using Baldrige adopting the CTEA Criteria as the improvement methodology for teams ensures alignment of all the performance initiatives:

1. Leadership
2. Strategy
3. Customers
4. Measurement, Analysis, Review, and Knowledge Management
5. Workforce
6. Operations
7. Results

2024 California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Application Instructions

CTEA promotes:

A focus on processes (Categories 1-6). Processes are the methods your team uses to accomplish its work. The CTEA Criteria helps you assess and improve your processes along four dimensions:

- **Approach (A):** How do you accomplish your team's work? How effective are your key approaches?
- **Deployment (D):** How consistently are your key approaches used in relevant parts of your team? How does your team share progress and outcomes of the projects being improved in the organization?
- **Learning (L):** How well have you evaluated and improved your key approaches? How well have improvements been shared within your team and organization, as appropriate? Has new knowledge led to innovation?
- **Integration (I):** How well do your approaches align with your current and future team needs? How well do your measures, information, and improvement systems complement each other across processes and work units? What value does improving the team project have to other areas of the organization (strategic planning, workforce, customer and/or stakeholder satisfaction/engagement)?

A focus on results (Category 7). The CTEA Criteria leads you to examine your results from three viewpoints:

- The external view (How do your customers and other stakeholders view you?),
- The internal view (How efficient and effective are your team's operations?), and
- The future view (Is your team learning and growing?)

CTEA results include all areas of importance to your team. The CTEA Criteria leads you to evaluate your results from a fact-based data-driven perspective along four dimensions:

- **Levels (Le):** What is your current performance on a meaningful measurement scale?
- **Trends (T):** Are the results improving, staying the same, or getting worse over time?
- **Comparisons (C):** How does your performance compare with that of other similar teams in your organization, or against relevant benchmarks internally/externally?
- **Integration (I):** Are you tracking results that are important to your team and organization and that consider the expectations and needs of your key stakeholders? Are you using the results in decision-making?

A focus on improvement. The CTEA Criteria helps you understand and assess how well you are accomplishing what is important to your team: how mature and how well deployed your processes are, how good your results are, whether your team is learning and improving, and how well your approaches address your teams' needs. As you respond to the criteria, you will learn more and more about your team and begin to define the best ways to build on your strengths, close gaps, and innovate.

2024 California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Application Instructions

Application Specifics

What you can expect...

Application Process

- Submit Intent to Apply by cycle deadline (see table below).
- CCE will confirm receipt of Intent to Apply and send an invoice for the application fee.
- Complete and submit your CTEA Application and Fee by cycle deadline.
 - We recommend a two-column format, with 10-point font minimum. The application is limited to 10 pages plus a PowerPoint file that contains accompanying figures (20 slides maximum). You may add charts or tables within the application as needed to summarize key information.
 - In addition to the 10-pages allotted for your responses to the CTEA questions, you may also include an organization chart and a summary of terms, acronyms and abbreviations that are used within your application. Neither of these counts against the 10-page maximum. The organization chart may help the examiners understand the structure of the applicant team and its organization. The terms, acronyms and abbreviations are provided to clarify information included in your application that would otherwise be unfamiliar to the examiners.
- A team of examiners will be assigned to your application. They will individually assess and then collectively complete a synthesized written Feedback Report based on the information provided in the application and team call. Please note that each examiner working on your application:
 - Signs an affidavit stating he/she has no conflict of interest with your application or organization, and
 - Agrees in writing to maintain the confidentiality of all information provided in your application. As set forth by the Baldrige Program, CAPE follows the highest ethical standards regarding an application's confidentiality, removing any direct or implied conflicts of interest.
- A two-hour virtual call between the applicant and examiners will be scheduled. This occurs after the review of the application is completed by a team of examiners. The applicant has up to one hour to present using the previously submitted PowerPoint presentation. After the applicant's presentation, there will be time for a question-and-answer session between the applicant and the examination team. The application presentation between the applicant and the examination team will occur within two months of application submission.
- Within approximately three months of receipt of your application, you will receive the examination team's Feedback Report.
- After receiving and reviewing the Feedback Report, you may request an Executive Briefing to verify and clarify any points within the report.
- All applicants will receive recognition at the annual spring conference to recognize their commitment to excellence.

**2024 California Team Excellence Award (CTEA)
Application Instructions**

Application Timetable

CTEA Applications are accepted three times a year.

	Cycle 1: Spring/Summer	Cycle 2: Summer/Fall	Cycle 3: Fall/Winter
Intent to Apply Due	February 1	May 1	August 1
Application Due	April 1	July 1	October 1
Examination Team: Independent Review	April-May	July-August	October-November
Examination Team: Consensus Review	May-June	August-September	November-December
Feedback Report Review	Early June	Early September	Early December
Feedback Report Sent to Applicant	Late June	Late September	Late December
Executive Briefing (optional for an additional fee)	July/August	October/November	January/February

Application Fee

Intent to Apply: \$500 (non-refundable)

Application Fee: \$2,400

Application Submission

Upon receipt of the Intent to Apply, California Council for Excellence will send an invoice for the application fee which can be paid by credit card, ACH, or check. The application fee must be received by the application submission deadline.

Applicants must submit the final 10-page application in PDF format and PowerPoint file to the California Council for Excellence at hello@calexcellence.org.

2023 California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Criteria

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Criteria

Profile	
P.1 Organizational Profile	
In this section, please provide the broader organizational context for your team. In section P2, you will have a chance to answer questions about your specific team.	
P.1-1	What are your organization's main product/service offerings?
P.1-2	What are your organization's Mission, Vision, and Values?
P.1-3	What is your organization's performance improvement system?
P.2 Team Profile	
P.2-1	Where does the team fit within the organization (an organizational chart may be provided)?
P.2-2	What is the purpose of the team? Is there a problem the team is trying to solve? If so, what is the problem?
P.2-3	Why is the team important to the organization?
P.2-4	What are the team's project/process goals?
P.2-5	What are the team's key customer and stakeholder groups (i.e., who will use or benefit from the project/process your team provides)?
Notes	
P.1-2. If your organization has a stated purpose as well as a mission, you should include it in your response. Some organizations define a mission and a purpose, and some use the terms interchangeably. In some organizations, purpose refers to the fundamental reason that the organization exists. Its role is to inspire the organization and guide its setting of values.	
Category 1: Leadership	
1.1 Senior Leadership	
1.1-1	How does the team secure executive sponsor/senior leader support?
1.1-2	How does the team's executive sponsor/senior leader support the purpose and outcome of the team?
1.2 Team Leadership	
1.2-1	How does the team leader create focus to ensure the success of the team's project/process?
1.2-2	How does the team leader seek input from all team members?
1.2-3	How does the team make decisions?
1.2-4	How are internal/external experts integrated with the team?
1.2-5	How does the team leader communicate about team progress including: goals, project/process status, action plans, etc.?
Notes	
1.1. The team's executive sponsor(s) can be a leader at any level of the organization who has the authority to enable the team to operate and who will support and defend the team when necessary.	
Category 2: Strategy	
2-1	How does the team develop its strategy?
2-2	How does the team determine key short-and long-term action plans?
2-3	How does the team determine key deliverables?
2-4	How does the team's project/process align with areas of importance (i.e., Organization's Mission, Vision, Values, etc.)?
2-5	How does the team ensure that adequate resources (financial & personnel) are available to support the completion of the project/process?

2023 California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Criteria

Category 3: Customers	
3-1	How does the team listen to customers to obtain actionable information?
3-2	How does the team determine customer/stakeholder needs and requirements?
3-3	How does the team build and manage customer/stakeholder relationships?
3-4	How does the team determine customer/stakeholder satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and engagement?
3-5	How does the team determine if the project/process meets customer/stakeholder needs and requirements?
3-6	How does the team use VOICE-OF-THE-CUSTOMER and market data and information?
Category 4: Measurement, Analysis, Review, and Knowledge Management	
4-1	What key performance measures or indicators does the team use to track the achievement and effectiveness of the team's goals and plans?
4-2	How does the team measure and analyze data and information to improve the project/process?
4-3	How does the team transfer relevant knowledge to key stakeholders?
4-4	How does the team share their best practices with the organization?
4-5	How does the team use their knowledge and resources to stimulate learning in the organization?
Category 5: Team Workforce	
5-1	How does the team build an effective and supportive environment to accomplish its goals and action plans?
5-2	How does the team assess that the right expertise and skills are represented on the team?
5-3	How do team members receive the necessary training to complete the project/process?
5-4	How does the team remain engaged and focused on accomplishing the team goals and action plan(s)?
5-5	How is the team's effectiveness and efficiency evaluated?
Category 6: Operations	
6-1	How does your team determine your key work products and processes?
6-2	How do you ensure the team's key work products and processes meet the requirements of the customers/stakeholders?
6-3	What are your key support processes and how were they determined?
6-4	How do you make meaningful change to create value for customers/stakeholders (i.e., innovation)?
6-5	How does the team ensure effective management of the project/process?
6-6	How do you manage the cost of the team project/process?
Category 7: Results	
7-1	What are the results of the team's project/process? Results presented should align to performance measures identified within application.
7-2	What are the team's process effectiveness and efficiency results?
7-3	What are the team's customer/stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction results?
7-4	What are the team's customer/stakeholder engagement results?
7-5	What are the results for measures of team engagement and satisfaction?
7-6	What are the results for team leader communication and engagement with the team, customers/stakeholders?
7-7	What are the team's financial results related to the project/process (i.e., cost savings, adherence to budget, etc.)?
7-8	What are the results for the achievement of the team's strategy and action plans?

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Scoring System

Scoring System

Scoring Dimensions

The scoring responses to the CTEA Criteria items is based on two evaluation dimensions: process (categories 1-6) and results (category 7).

Process (Categories 1-6):

Processes are the methods your team uses to accomplish its work. The CTEA criteria helps you assess and improve your processes using four factors: *Approach, Deployment, Learning, & Integration* (ADLI):

Approach (A), (how you accomplish your team's work) comprises:

- The methods used to carry out the process,
- The appropriateness of these methods to the item requirements and your operating environment,
- The effectiveness of your team's use of the methods, and
- The degree to which the approach is repeatable and based on reliable data and information (i.e., systematic) and

Deployment (D), (how your approach is shared) is the extent to which:

- Your approach addresses item requirements that are relevant and important to your team,
- Your approach is applied consistently, and
- Your approach is used by all appropriate work units.

Learning (L), (how you evaluate and improve your key approaches) comprises:

- The refinement of your approach through cycles of evaluation and improvement,
- The encouragement of breakthrough improvement to your approach through innovation, and
- the sharing of refinements and innovations with other relevant work units and processes in your organization.

Learning is an essential attribute of high-performing teams. Effective, well-deployed learning can help a team improve from the early stages of reacting to problems to the highest levels of improvement, refinement, and innovation. Progression through the maturity levels for this scoring dimension typically includes the following:

- Reacting to the problem
- General improvement orientation
- Systematic evaluation and improvement
- Learning and strategic improvement
- Innovation

Integration (I), (the value added by the team's project to other areas of the organization) is the extent to which:

- Your approach is aligned with the teams needs identified in the Team Profile and other process items;
- Your measures, information, and improvement systems are complementary across processes and work units; and
- Your plans, processes, results, analyses, learning, and actions are harmonized across processes and work units to support team goals.

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Scoring System

In responding to process questions, keep in mind that approach, deployment, learning, and integration are linked. Descriptions of approach should always indicate the deployment consistent with the specific requirements of the item and your team. As processes mature, the description should also show cycles of learning (including innovation), as well as integration with other processes and work units.

Results

Results are the outputs and outcomes your team achieves, which address the requirements in Category 7. The four factors used to evaluate results are *Levels, Trends, Comparisons, and Integration* (LeTCI). A score for a results item is based on a holistic assessment of your overall performance, considering the four results factors.

Levels (Le) are your current performance on a meaningful measurement scale.

Trends (T) comprise your rate of performance improvement or continuation of good performance in areas of importance (i.e., the slope of data points over time). At least three data points are needed to evaluate a trend.

Comparisons (C) comprise your performance relative to that of other comparable team/projects within your organization or external organizations.

Integration (I) is the extent to which your results harmonize with other parts of your team and/or organization.

Criteria Category Point Values and Recognition Levels

Categories	Point Values
Category 1: Leadership	28
Category 2: Strategy	20
Category 3: Customers	24
Category 4: Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management	20
Category 5: Team Workforce	20
Category 6: Operations	24
Total Process Points	136
Category 7: Results	64
Total Results Points	64
Total Points (Process and Results)	200

The recognition level is determined by combining total process and results points. Applicants will only be provided the recognition level and point range they scored in; they will not receive the exact points received.

Point Range	Recognition Level
Less than 139	CTEA Bronze
140 - 170	CTEA Silver
171 – 200	CTEA Gold

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Scoring System

Process Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Categories 1-6)

Points	Description
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to the question is not evident; information is ANECDOTAL (A) • DEPLOYMENT of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH is not evident (D) • An improvement orientation is not evident; improvement is achieved by reacting to problems (L) • No organizational ALIGNMENT is evident (I)
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to the question is evident (A) • The APPROACH is in the early stages of DEPLOYMENT (D) • Early stages of a transition from reacting to programs to a general improvement orientation are evident (L) • The APPROACH is ALIGNED with the organization (I)
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH responsive to the question is evident (A) • The APPROACH is DEPLOYED (D) • The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to evaluation and improvement of KEY PROCESSES is evident (L) • The APPROACH is in the early stages of ALIGNMENT with organizational needs identified in response to the Profile and other process items (I)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the question is evident (A) • The APPROACH is well DEPLOYED (D) • A fact-based SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement PROCESS and some LEARNING, including some INNOVATION, are in place for improving the efficiency and EFFECTIVENESS of KEY PROCESSES (L) • The APPROACH is ALIGNED with organizational needs identified in response to the Profile and other process items (I)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the question is evident (A) • The APPROACH is well DEPLOYED, with no significant gaps (D) • Fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement and LEARNING, including INNOVATION (L) • The APPROACH is INTEGRATED with current and future organizational needs as identified in response to the Profile and other process items (I)

Results Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Category 7)

Score	Description
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No performance results reported, or the results reported are unfavorable (Le) • TREND data are not reported (T) • Comparative information is not reported (C) • RESULTS are not reported for any areas of importance to the accomplishment of the organization's mission (I)
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few performance results are reported, and early good performance levels are evident (Le) • Some TREND data are reported, with some adverse TRENDS evident (T) • Little or no comparative information is reported (C) • RESULTS are reported for a few areas of importance to the accomplishments of the organization's mission (I)
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported (Le) • Some TREND data are reported, and most of the TRENDS presented are beneficial (T) • Early stages of obtaining comparative information are evident (C) • RESULTS are reported for many areas of importance to the accomplishment of the organization's mission (I)
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good-to-excellent PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported (Le) • Beneficial TRENDS are evident in areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's mission (T) • Some current PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported (C) • Team PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER and PROCESS requirements (I)
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported (Le) • Beneficial TRENDS have been sustained over time in most areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's mission (T) • Many to most TRENDS and current PERFORMANCE LEVELS have been evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or BENCHMARKS and show areas of leadership and very good relative PERFORMANCE (C) • Team PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER, PROCESS, and ACTION PLAN requirements (I)

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Instructions

How to Respond to the Criteria

These guidelines explain how to respond most effectively to the CTEA Criteria questions.

Responding to Process Items

Understand the meaning of *how*. In responding to questions in process items that begin with *how*, give information on your key processes with regard to approach, deployment, learning, and integration (ADLI). Responses lacking such information, or merely providing an example, are referred to in the scoring guidelines as *anecdotal information*.

Show that *approaches* are systematic. Systematic approaches are repeatable and use data and information to enable learning. In other words, approaches are systematic if they build in the opportunity for evaluation, improvement, innovation, and knowledge sharing, thereby enabling a gain in maturity.

Show *deployment*. In your responses, summarize how your approaches are implemented in different parts of your team.

Show evidence of *learning*. Give evidence of evaluation and improvement cycles for processes, as well as the potential for innovation. Show that process improvements are shared with other appropriate units of your team to enable team learning.

Show *integration*. Integration is alignment and harmonization among processes, plans, measures, actions, and results. This harmonization generates team effectiveness and efficiencies. Showing alignment in the process items and tracking corresponding measures in the results items should improve team performance. In your responses, show alignment between the team's project and other areas of the organization, such as the profile, strategic planning, workforce, customer and/or stakeholder satisfaction/engagement, etc.

Understand the meaning of *what*. Two types of questions in process items begin with *what*. The first requests basic information on key processes and how they work. Although it is helpful to state *who* performs the work, a description of how the process works is required so that feedback can be offered. The second type of *what* question asks you to report key findings, plans, objectives, goals, or measures. These questions set the context for showing alignment and integration in your performance management system. For example, when you identify key strategic objectives, your action plans, some performance measures, and some results in category 7 are expected to relate to those strategic objectives.

Responding to Results Items

Report current *performance levels (Le)* on a meaningful measurement scale.

Report *trends (T)* to show the directions of results and rates of change in areas of importance. A minimum of three historical data points is generally needed to ascertain a trend. Trends should represent historic and current performance and not rely on projected (future) performance. For important results, include new data even if trends are not yet well established. *Explain trends that show a significant beneficial or adverse change.*

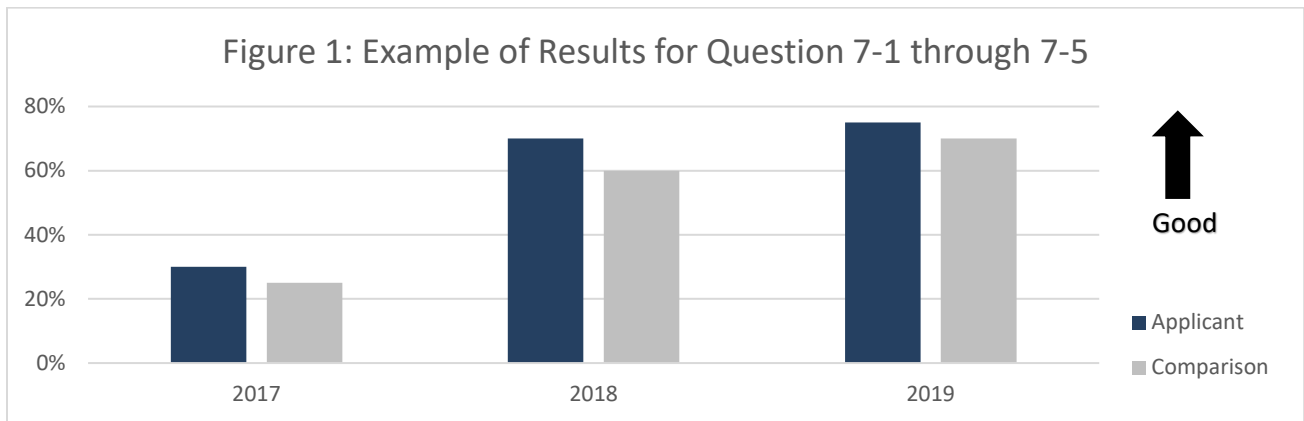
Report *comparisons (C)* to show how your results compare with those of other, appropriately selected teams or industry outcomes such as averages or best practice performance.

Describe *integration (I)* by including all results that are important to your team and segmenting them appropriately (e.g., by customer, workforce, process groups). Results should be reported for all performance measures listed in application.

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Instructions

Responding Efficiently

- **Cross-reference when appropriate.** Ensure that each item response is as self-contained as possible and that responses to different items are mutually reinforcing. To accomplish this, refer to other responses rather than repeat information.
- **Use a compact format.** To make the best use of space, use flowcharts, tables, and lists to present information concisely. Page limits are designed to force your team to consider what is most important in managing your project or process and reporting your results.
- **Use graphs and tables.** You can report many results compactly by using graphs and tables. When you report results over time or compare them with others, “normalize” them (i.e., present them in a way—for example, as ratios—that takes size factors into account. (See Figure below for a sample chart demonstrating LeTCI.)
- Explain your use of **terms and nomenclature** that are not in common use or are unique to your team, organization, or industry. If you choose the external assessment option, provide a Glossary of Terms to help examiners better understand the context of your application. This Glossary will not be part of the page count.



This figure provides data on a meaningful scale and there is a label to indicate that higher percentages indicate improved performance on the metric. There are three data points available so a trend can be evaluated. A comparison is also provided.

California Team Excellence Award (CTEA) Glossary of Key Terms

CTEA Glossary of Key Terms

ACTION PLANS: Specific actions that your team takes to reach its strategic objective.

ALIGNMENT: A state of consistency among plans, processes, information, resource decisions, team capability and capacity, actions, results, and analyses that support key goals.

ANECDOTAL: Information that lacks specific methods measures; deployment mechanism; and evaluation, improvement and learning factors.

BENCHMARKS: Processes and results that represent the best performance for similar activities, inside or outside your organization's industry.

CORE COMPETENCIES: The team's area of expertise; those strategically important, possibly specialized capabilities that are central to fulfilling your mission or that provide an advantage in your marketplace or service environment.

CUSTOMER: An actual or potential user of your products, programs, or services.

EFFECTIVE: How well a process or a measure addresses its intended purpose.

GOALS: Future conditions or performance levels your team intends or desires to attain.

KEY: Major or most important; critical to achieving your intended outcome.

LEVELS: Numerical information that places or positions your team's results and performance on a meaningful scale.

MISSION: Your team's overall function.

PERFORMANCE: Outputs and their outcomes obtained from processes, products, and customers that permit you to evaluate and compare your team's results to performance projections, standards, past results, goals, and other team's results.

RESULTS: Outputs and outcomes achieved by your team.

PROCESS: Linked activities with the purpose of producing a product or service for a customer (user) within or outside your team.

STAKEHOLDERS: All groups that are or might be affected by your team's actions and success.

TRENDS: Numerical information that shows the direction and rate of change of your team's results or the consistency of its performance over time.

VISION: Your team's desired future state.

VOICE OF THE CUSTOMER: Your process for capturing customer-related information.