

# Code of Ethical Conduct

Members of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Board of Examiners pledge to uphold their professional principles in the fulfillment of their responsibilities as defined in the administration of Public Law 100-107, the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Improvement Act of 1987, which establishes the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

Board members will be guided by four principles: integrity, professional conduct, confidentiality, and respect for intellectual property. In promoting high standards of public service and ethical conduct, they will

- conduct themselves professionally, guided by truth, accuracy, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all their interactions
- avoid representing conflicting or competing interests, or placing themselves in such a position where their interest may be in conflict—or appear to be in conflict—with the purposes and administration of the Award
- safeguard the confidences of all parties involved in the judging or examination of present or former applicants
- protect confidential information and avoid disclosures that may in any way influence the Award integrity or process, currently or in the future
- not serve any private or special interest in their fulfillment of the duties of a [Judge](#) or [Examiner](#), therefore excluding by definition the examination of any organization or subunit of an organization that employs them or has a consulting arrangement in effect or anticipated with them
- not serve as Examiners of a primary competitor or customer or supplier of any organization (or subunit of an organization) that employs them, that they have a financial interest in, or with which they anticipate a consulting arrangement, or are otherwise involved
- not intentionally communicate false or misleading information that may compromise the integrity of the Award process or decisions therein
- make it clear, when establishing links from their own Web sites to the National Institute of Standards and Technology ([NIST](#)) or [Baldrige Performance Excellence Program](#) Web sites, that users will be taken to the official NIST Web sites
- acknowledge the use of trademarks owned by NIST, including those for NIST, The [Quest for Excellence](#)®, and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, along with a statement indicating the trademark is registered by NIST
- never approach an organization they have evaluated for their personal gain, including the establishment of an employment or consulting relationship, and, if approached by an organization they have evaluated, not accept employment from that organization for a period of five years after the evaluation
- maintain and safeguard fairness in the examination process and the confidentiality of all Award application information, including the identity of applicants
- treat as confidential all information about the applicant and the applicant's operation gained through the evaluation process, and take the following precautions:
  - Applicant information is not discussed with anyone, including other Examiners, with the exception of designated team members, Judges, the Award Administrator, and NIST representatives. This includes information contained in the written application, as well as any additional information obtained during a site visit.
  - Names of applicants are not disclosed during or after the application review process.
  - No copies of application information are made or retained. (American Society for Quality [ASQ] will notify Examiners when to return materials.)
  - No notes, written or electronic, pertaining to the application are retained. (ASQ will notify Examiners when to destroy all notes.)
  - Applicant-specific information can be discussed via cellular phone, cordless phone, and VoIP if authorized by the applicant. However, applicant names are not used within print or discussions.
  - Electronic exchanges are only through an encrypted, secure Web site designated by NIST.

- No applicant information is adapted and/or used subsequent to the review process, unless the information is publicly released by the applicant (at the annual Quest for Excellence Conference, for example).
  - Examiners do not reveal or discuss with other Examiners, either during training or during the application review phases, their participation with an organization in the preparation of an Award application.
- during Independent Review, personally and independently evaluate and score all assigned applications
  - during Independent and Consensus Reviews, not communicate with applicant organization, or in any manner seek additional documentation, information, or clarification about the applicant's organization. This restriction includes Internet searches. At Site Visit Review, the site visit Team Leader will communicate with the applicant.
  - during the entire evaluation cycle use only applicant-specific information provided by the applicant. Not at anytime use independently gathered information on the applicant, e.g. from the press, web sites, or other social media.
  - not at anytime (during or after the evaluation cycle) independently give feedback to applicants regarding scoring or overall performance
  - upon completion of the Examiner Preparation Course, be able to use the following designation: Examiner, Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award (MBNQA), and year(s) served. However, board members may not use the MBNQA logo in advertising or promotion or use business cards including the Examiner designation or the MBNQA logo.
  - during the consensus and site visit processes, encourage and maintain a professional working environment that promotes respect for the Award applicants, their employees, and all members of the Examiner team
  - when participating in a site visit, respect the climate, culture, and values of the organization being evaluated

Furthermore, board members enhance and advance the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award as it serves to stimulate American companies and organizations to improve quality, productivity, and overall performance. **All board members pledge to abide by this Code of Ethical Conduct.**

*I agree to abide by the Code of Ethical Conduct.*

  

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Print your name

  

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Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date