Applicant Site Visit Guide

2009 Missouri Quality Award Process

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Introduction:

This guide is designed to provide applicants with pertinent information concerning the conduct of the site visit.

Most site visit evaluations will be conducted in five to six days by a team of six to seven Examiners, including the Team Leader. At least one member of the Board of Overseers will be present at the visit. The primary duty of the Overseer is to ensure that the same review process is followed on all visits. This person does not take part in the evaluation process, but may be consulted as deemed advisable by the team. The Overseer will also serve as an interface between the site visit team and the applicant.

There are three steps/phases to the site visit review process:

1. Planning,
2. Conducting the site visit, and
3. Feedback development.

The site visit review stage is intense - what follows are requirements and tips to assist applicants in conducting a successful site visit.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please don't hesitate to contact the Award Office at (573) 526-1728.

Site Visit Process Map

Notification:
Site Visit team members and applicants are notified by the Award Office, informed of the pending site visit and instructed as to the next steps and responsibilities. The Award Office distributes logistical information and evaluation materials.

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Advance Preparation:
The Team Leader works with the applicant OPC (Official Point of Contact) to establish details of the site visit, develop the agenda, review the ground rules, confirm arrangements, and secure information. The Award Office makes hotel arrangements, verifies that the team has site visit materials, etc. The Team Leader consults with the applicant concerning visiting multiple sites, if applicable.

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Site Visit Preparation:
The Site Visit team meets at the hotel the afternoon prior to the actual visit to continue preparations for the visit.

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Conduct of the Site Visit:
The team conducts the site visit to include the following:

- Initial meeting with the applicant;
- Meet with individual team counterparts;
- Overview of the facility;
- Verify and clarify the contents of the application;
- Resolve site visit issues;
- Update information based upon new information provided;
- Have a closing meeting with the applicant.

Team caucuses will be held to track progress and adjust the schedule as necessary.

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Report Preparation:
The team completes the report.

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Report Review and Feedback Preparation
The Team Leader provides the report to the Award Office. The Award Office sends the report to the Panel of Judges for review. The Judges review all site visit reports and recommend recipients to the Board of Overseers. The Award Office notifies applicants of their status after the Board of Overseers meeting. Feedback reports are sent to applicants after the Board of Overseers meeting.

STEP 1: Planning and Communication

AWARD OFFICE	The planning phase of the site visit begins when the Award Office notifies the applicant and Team Leader that a site visit will be conducted. The Award Office makes hotel arrangements, verifies that team members have site visit materials, and provides other administrative support.
TEAM LEADER	The Team Leader works with the applicant to establish details of the site visit, develop the agenda, review the ground rules, and to confirm arrangements. The Team Leader consults with the applicant and Award Office concerning the agenda and visiting multiple sites, if applicable. He/she will also reconfirm Key Business Factors and share with applicant.
TEAM MEMBERS	Team members individually review the evaluation materials and develop Site Visit Issue Worksheets.

Please note: Only the Team Leader and Award Office may communicate with the applicant's Official Point of Contact (OPC) prior to the site visit.

Applicant Responsibilities:

The applicant will be responsible for the following specifics during and related to the site visit:

1. The examiners will ask to interview selected individuals and review certain documents related to the information you have presented. As time will be limited during the site visit, please provide requested back-up materials and substantiating data. All materials provided to the team will be returned to you at or before the conclusion of the site visit, and the team will accept no information after the close of the site visit.

2. Please provide the team with work areas and materials as discussed in the segment "Items the Applicant Will Provide," in this guide (please see table on contents for specific location). Also, please note that the team is not able to accept gifts, entertainment or meals in excess of the lunch and light refreshments provided on-site during the site visit.

3. While the Excellence in Missouri Foundation will absorb the majority of the cost of the site visit, you will need to fulfill the invoice provided to you prior to the commencement of the site visit to ensure that all costs are secured for the site visit.

4. A Background Check is required (see last page for sample letter) of all applicants receiving a site visit. The release for the check must be signed and returned as soon as possible so as to allow time for the appropriate

government agencies to provide required information to officials of the Missouri Quality Award. This information is required of applicants to determine their corporate citizenship.

5. A brief letter addressing the question "Is there anything in your background (including but not limited to health, safety, financial and environmental issues) that could be embarrassing to the State of Missouri or the Award which the Board of Overseers should know before making their final decision?" is also due to the Award office as soon as possible. All information provided will remain confidential.

Examiner Team's Requests for Additional Information from the Applicant:

The Team Leader will request documents and information from the applicant's OPC to assist in planning the site visit. Requested information may be provided in hard copy or electronic format. Some of the following information may be important to the team and **may** be requested by the Team Leader:

Application-specific information:
- Specific documents for review during the visit
- Specific results charts that might not have been included in the application
- Updates on tables and graphs in the application

Interview/scheduling information:
- Names of individual responsible for important activities and their location
- A schedule of compatibility for the specific people to be interviewed (interviews may be done by telephone, if necessary)
- More detailed organizational chart
- More details on the nature of individual locations (if applicable) including:
  - Types of facilities
  - Mix of applicant activities at each site
  - Location of special facilities
  - Hours employees are on duty at different sites

Other:
- Any information regarding changes in the organization since the application was submitted
- Special safety considerations of any facilities
- Appropriate dress
- Any non-applicant employees at various sites and how to distinguish them from applicant employees

Logistics Planning:
All **team members** make their own travel arrangements to/from the site visit location. **The applicant** will coordinate hotel and airline travel to ***remote*** sites

outside of Missouri in conjunction with the Team Leader (if necessary). If the sites are within Missouri, the team will drive to those sites on their own.

STEP 2: Conducting the Site Visit

The primary purpose of the site visit is to verify the contents of the original Application Report, clarify questions that have been generated during the examination process, and uncover any relevant information that was not included in the Application Report.

The site visit review begins with the Opening Meeting with the applicant and ends with the Closing Meeting.

Team members will arrive at the hotel no later than 3 p.m. the Sunday afternoon before the site visit begins and participate in a planning meeting. During this meeting, all team members will review materials and finalize the agenda.

Items the Applicant Will Provide for the Site Visit Examination Team:
The applicant is asked to provide materials at both the hotel and on site.

The following will be provided at the hotel:

- A copy machine
- Administrative supplies (Team Leader will specify)
- Computer-related equipment requested by the team leader
- List of key personnel
- List of attendees at kick-off meeting
- Contact person for each category (list to contain name, title, phone, and location)
- Schematic of facilities (site and production operations)
- Organization chart(s)

In addition, the applicant should pre-position the following materials at the hotel in time for the team's planning meeting:

- List of key personnel
- Contact person for each category (list to contain name, title, phone, and location)
- Schematic of facilities (site and production operations)
- Organization chart(s)

The following will be provided at the applicant site:

- A secure meeting room for use by team members
- Three meeting rooms for Category specific meetings
- Data, information or reports supporting or referenced in the Application Report, organized so that it can be referred to quickly by the team (preferably classified by Category and Item number)
- Access to copy machine and telephones
- Luncheon arrangements as necessary

Applicant Interface with Site Visit Team:
The Opening Meeting will be held first thing Monday morning and will adhere to the following guidelines. The Team Leader will:

- Review Missouri Quality Award process;
- Describe mechanics of site visit;
- Explain decision process by the Judges;
- Describe feedback process;
- Ask for questions; and
- Afford the applicant 30-45 minutes to present information as desired.

Should applicants have a number of sites in widely dispersed locations, special arrangements for site visits by individual team members may be necessary.

The Team Leader then reviews the proposed schedule for the site visit, the sequence of reviewing each of the seven categories and team assignments. Any necessary modifications are made, and all members record the changes. The Team Leader will provide a tentative agenda for Monday. A next-day agenda will be provided to the applicant before 10 p.m. the day before.

Team members meet with their applicant counterparts to identify specific information, data, or records necessary to validate the Application Report. The applicant may identify and schedule activities or individuals to be seen by the team. This not only includes counterparts for the immediate category to be reviewed, but those to be visited at a later time on the schedule. This allows the applicant to collect additional data and reports in advance of later meetings.

Team members may wish to meet privately at this time to discuss material already presented, and to schedule the time and place of the first team caucus.

A tour of the applicant's operating facilities may be desirable. Where such a tour will add value in informing the team about the organization, a tour may be scheduled. However, the total time should be limited to activities directly related to the mission of the team. The Team Leader should ensure adherence to the agenda.

Alternatives to a group tour include:
- An illustrated overview presentation describing facilities;
- Selective tours for individual team members as needed to make their evaluation; or
- Postponement of tour portions until a second day, then conduct if time is available.

Team Caucuses:
Team caucuses will be scheduled each day to exchange information and make mid-course adjustments to the daily schedule. Many applicants will use these times to meet with their MQA team to review the process to date.

Closing Meeting:
At the end of the site visit the evaluation team meets with representatives of the applicant on Wednesday. The Team Leader conducts this meeting informing the applicant that the visit is concluded.

The Team Leader does **not**, however, discuss the findings of the visit. These findings will be included in the written report the applicant receives at the conclusion of the Award Cycle. The Team Leader offers the applicant an opportunity to make any closing remarks they would like.

The team then leaves the site and prepares its report at the off-site location. On rare occasion, the team might need to utilize a "go back day" to either call or show up in person and ask additional questions if it feels as though there is significant missing information as it is compiling its report. This is done with the concurrence of the Team Leader, Overseer, and Award Office at (573) 526-1725.

Should the applicant have any questions or concerns during the site visit they are encouraged to discuss them with the overseer or call the award office. The Overseer will meet with the Senior Leader daily during the site visit and is available to answer any questions during the visit.

Sample Site Visit Agenda

(Agenda will be altered as necessary to fit individual team needs)

Day	Time	Activity
Day One (Sunday)	3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Preliminary team meeting at off–site location.
	4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Team exchange STEWs
	4:30 pm – 8:30 pm	Category Leaders and Back-ups confer
	8:30 pm - 9:00 pm	Category Leaders review requested documentation, Criteria, and approach for first day's on-site meetings
Day Two (Monday)	8:00 am - 9:00 am	Opening meeting
	9.00 am - 9:30 am	Tour (At applicant discretion)
	9:30 am - 10:30 am	Item Meetings (3 meetings)
	10:30 am - 11:00 am	Break and Category Pairs confer
	11:00 am - 12:00 pm	Item Meetings (3 meetings)
	12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Working Lunch, Team Caucus. and afternoon meeting prep
	1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	Item Meetings (3 meetings)
	2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Break and Category Pair confer
	3:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Item Meetings (3 meetings)
	4:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Return to hotel
	4:30 pm - 5:00 pm	Caucus
	5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Category Pairs confer and individual dinner arrangements
	7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Category Pairs meet with Team Leader and Overseer
	7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Category Pairs confer and build next day's schedule
	9:00 pm - 9:15 pm	Team builds next day's schedule
	9:15 pm – 11:00 pm	Category Leads examine documentation and Results

Day Three (Tuesday)	8:00 am - 8:30 am	Category Leads meet with applicant counter-parts and review the day's schedule
	8:30 am – 9:00 am	All examiners walk-around
	9:00 am - 9:30 am	Focus Meetings (3 meetings)
	9:30 am – 10:00 am	Pair Caucus
	10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Continue Focus Meetings as above
	12:00 pm - 1:30 pm	Lunch, caucus, and prepare for afternoon meetings
	1:30 pm - 4:30 pm	Continue Focus Meetings as above and conduct walk-arounds
	4:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Return to hotel
	5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Caucus
	5:00 pm – 7:00 pm	Category Pairs confer and individual dinner arrangements
	7:00 pm - 9:00 pm	Category Pairs meet with Team Leader and Overseer
	7:00 pm – 9:00 pm	Category Pairs confer and build next day's schedule
	9:00 pm - 9:15 pm	Team builds next day's schedule
	9:15 pm – 11:00 pm	Category Leads examine documentation
Day Four (Wednesday)	8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Close out all STEWs
	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	Lunch and caucus (determine if any final meetings needed)
	1:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Final meetings
	2:00 pm – 2:15 pm	Closing meeting with applicant
	2:15 pm – 3:15 pm	Return to hotel
	3:15 pm – 3:30 pm	Review schedule for remainder of the visit
	3:30 pm – 11:00 pm	Category Leads finalize STEWS andUpdate Consensus Item Worksheets
Day Five (Thursday)	8:00 am – 9:00 am	Category Leads and back-ups exchange Item Worksheets
	9:00 am – 9:30 am	Category Leaders update Item Worksheets and provide to Storybook Editor
	10:00 am – 4:00 pm	Consensus
	4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Develop Key Themes
	5:00 pm - 5:30 pm	Category Leaders update Item Worksheets and provide revisions to the Scorebook Editor
	5:30 pm - 7:00 pm	Team dinner
	7:00 pm –10:00 pm	Scorebook Editor builds Site Visit Report
Day Six (Friday)	8:00 am – 10:00 am	Refine Site Visit Report
	10:00 am –11:00 am	Finalize report and make copies for the Award Office and Team Leader. Scorebook Editor e-mails Report to the Award Office.
	11:00 am –11:30 am	Turn in all documentation

STEP 3: Site Visit Report and Feedback Development

The completion of the site visit report is the culmination of the site visit review process for the team. All Examiners must remain until the report is completed and all the Examiners sign the site visit report indicating they fully support its contents. The final report consists of the following:

- Final Key Business Factors
- Summary of Sites Visited
- Site Visit Issues Worksheet

- Final Item Summary
- Final Key Themes Summary
- Final Scoring Overview

The final score book will be sent to the Panel of Judges for review. The Panel of Judges will make MQA recipient recommendations to the Board of Overseers upon completion of their review. The Award Office will notify all applicants of their status in the process after the Board of Overseers meeting on October 22nd. The Award Office will edit and send the feedback report to the Applicant. It endeavors to meet a 32-day turnaround time. Additionally, the Award Office will provide the applicant a customer satisfaction survey at the close of the process to assist us in our pursuit of continuous quality improvement.

However, if applicants have any questions or concerns about the process they are encouraged to contact the award office immediately at 573-527-1725.

Frequently Asked Questions:

What do I need to provide to the Examination team?
At the hotel, the applicant should provide a copy machine, administrative supplies, and computer-related equipment requested by the team. While the team is on-site they will need a secure meeting room for use by team members, access to a copy machine and telephone and luncheon arrangements as necessary. The team will also need data, information, or reports supporting information in the application, preferably categorized by Category and Item number.

How is the Examiner team selected for the site visit?
The Examiner team is based upon sector expertise as well as Category expertise within the Criteria, taking into consideration any conflicts of interest the Examiner might have with the applicant. The Board of Overseers is responsible for putting the team together, while considering factors such as providing a balance of new and returning Examiners.

What is the best way to prepare?
That will vary from organization to organization, but you should attempt to update any section of your application where there has been significant change or improvements made. This is not limited to your approach-deployment items in Categories 1-6, but also includes the results you listed in Category 7. Chances are you might have new data to share with the team, or they will ask for it. We know that applicants were limited to 50 pages in the application, so any additional information you want to share with the team would be appropriate to give them upon their arrival at the hotel or on site. The Team Leader is in close contact with the applicant's point of contact to help give guidance about employees or staff with whom the team will want to speak.

How is the team organized?
Each team will have a Team Leader and Back-Up Team Leader, both of whom are Senior Examiners. The Team Leader will have direct contact with the applicant, through the OPC, to pre-plan the visit. In addition there are four to five additional

Examiners. Each Examiner is responsible for leading a Category of the Criteria. They will be interfacing with a Category expert from the applicant to get a better understanding of what was in the application or ask questions about information that might not have been addressed. Each team also has an Overseer who works to ensure the same process is followed from site to site. Their role includes interfacing with the applicant during the visit to determine the applicant's perspective of how the visit is progressing.

What do I tell my employees about the site visit?
Please let them know the Examination team is coming to get a better understanding of the organization and they might be talking to them to ask some questions. Please let them know that this is not an audit environment, instead, the team is simply looking for strengths and possible next steps. The Missouri Quality Award Examiners will wear blue badges denoting them as Examiners so there should not be any confusion about who they are.

When will we know about the status of our application?
The Missouri Quality Award Panel of Judges will meet October 20th and 21st to recommend recipients of Missouri Quality Award. They will forward their recommendations to the Board of Overseers, which will have a final vote on October 22nd. Organizations will be notified by October 23rd regarding their status. Recipient organizations will be honored at the annual Missouri Quality Awards Banquet on Thursday, November 19, 2009 at the Lake of the Ozarks, in conjunction with the annual Excellence in Missouri Conference.

Sample Background Check Letter

(Please prepare on your organization's letterhead)

September 2, 2009

Excellence in Missouri Foundation
PO Box 1085
Jefferson City, MO 65102

To whom it may concern:

In connection with insert organization's name here application for the 2009 Missouri Quality Award, we hereby authorize Missouri Government officials to provide the Excellence in Missouri Foundation and the Missouri Quality Award with information pertaining to the organization limited to the following:

1. Whether the organization has filed returns with respect to Missouri income taxes for the immediate preceding three years.
2. Whether the organization has failed to pay any tax within 90 days of notice and demand, or has been assessed any penalty under the Missouri statutes, for negligence, in the current years or immediately preceding three years.
3. Whether the organization has been or is under investigation for possible criminal or other offenses under Missouri laws or policies, and the results of such investigation in the current year or immediately preceding three years.
4. Whether the organization has been assessed in any civil penalty under Missouri statutes, for fraud in the current year or immediately preceding three years.

In the event of an adverse response to the above, we hereby authorize Missouri government officials to provide the Missouri Quality Award upon request, additional information pertaining to such adverse response.

In order to assist in locating state tax information, I am voluntarily disclosing my Missouri Employer Identification number, which is ______. We have filed corporate income tax returns for the last five years, listed at the bottom of the page is the name, address, and EIN of the corporation under which the return was filed.

__________ ________________________________

Date Signature

Corporation Name:
Address:
EIN: