

What hidden performance "gaps" curb excellence in your organization?

Scorebook Navigator™ service detects buried opportunities for improvement, compares actual performance with potential performance

In the Spring of 2008, Nebraska Furniture Mart (NFM) was in the process of implementing an overall LEAN strategy to improve the accuracy of their warehousing and distribution services. The LEAN implementation strategy was initially designed to achieve some small first wins. The Kansas City store was supported by Daniel Saravia, Aleia Maciula and Nicole Langholz, a Process Engineering Team. Omaha's implementation was supported by the I.T. Process Improvement Team.

The Kansas City Store Director, Jeff Lind, proposed that Brian Van Ormer, a Business Analyst from the Omaha location and the Kansas City Process Engineering Team work together to conduct a Baldrige-based "self-assessment" to help compare its actual performance with its potential performance in the LEAN implementation. The NFM planning team, consisting of the CEO, COO and Directors, endorsed the idea and gave this Team the go-

ahead to direct the gap analysis to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement. Brian had served as an examiner for the Nebraska Edgerton Award where he had worked with the Scorebook Navigator™ (SBN) software. He believed he could expand the software's capabilities to serve as a gap analysis tool.

"The Scorebook Navigator™ software was our catalyst. The tracking data buckets were built-in and ready for our input. It greatly simplified our work."

*—Brian Van Ormer,
Nebraska Furniture Mart,
A Berkshire Hathaway
Company*

The method involved interviews with appropriate personnel, which were carried out in tag-team fashion over several weeks. As each team member gathered answers, the information was entered into the SBN database. Brian, as team leader, compiled the data into a completed report, conferring with the team as needed.

Over the course of developing the self-assessment report, the Scorebook Navigator software became an essential compilation tool, as team members found it "helpful for tracking data as the 'buckets' were already built." Once the data were compiled, the planning team reviewed it, changes were recommended, and the completed analysis was signed off.

The team found that there were no quantifiable, predictable measurements in place for each result area. However, there were no real surprises in the results: the organization had a good foundation of strategic objectives in place. The self-assessment became a "burning platform for moving the LEAN implementation forward." From these findings, the Planning Team has moved forward with additional continuous improvement initiatives, including value stream mapping of one of NFM's key supply chains.

Since completing the gap analysis in late 2009, Brian Van Ormer has found the self-assessment to be a repository of data about Nebraska Furniture Mart's business processes. Recently, marketing staff approached Brian to see what perceptions of the business existed in the community and amongst their customers, and how best to formulate messaging to reach the community. Brian is certain that other such requests can also be answered by the self-assessment in the future.

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What is the Scorebook Navigator™ software?

Jim Shaw, President and Founder of Shaw Resources, first became a Baldrige examiner in 1994 and he knows firsthand the tedium examiners endure when scoring any Baldrige-based assessment using MS Word. To reduce the tiresome task of 'scoring' an assessment, he developed an online, SQL-based alternative to MS Word: **Scorebook Navigator™** (SBN) software. This web-based program pre-loads the Baldrige criteria so the user can answer the criteria questions and use the same maturity scale as examiners (Approach, Deployment, Learning and Integration). The software can be used as a self-assessment or to complete an application at both state and national levels.

An unexpected additional benefit of the SBN software is that it provides assistance to those who wish to perform a formal 'gap' analysis using structured criteria. The Scorebook Navigator software has all criteria fields set up and ready for input. Additionally, Scorebook Navigator software is readily adaptable to use other criteria (e.g. safety).

About Shaw Resources:

Jim Shaw is founder of Shaw Resources, which offers leading-edge management systems and related software. His clients include such household names as Bank of America, Hexcel Corporation, Cedars-Sinai Hospital, and Stanford University Medical Center. A popular speaker, Jim has written articles for multiple journals and a book entitled *Customer-Inspired Quality: Looking Backward Through the Telescope*.



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