

CYBERSECURITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

When the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program released its revised and updated 2017-2018 criteria, I was surprised to see the significant additions devoted to cybersecurity. Being something of a technology troglodyte, I thought this was only important for organizations involved in top secret ventures. Over the past few years, I've begun to see just how naïve I was.

Since nearly every organization in the United States uses technology of some kind, they all have a need for effective cybersecurity, whether it's to maintain the security of personal identification or medical information, or to keep their organizations operating to serve their customers.

I recently spoke with Mike Parker, Supervisor of Networks for Bristol Tennessee Essential Services (BTES). BTES was named a Baldrige Award recipient in the small business category in 2017.¹

I asked Mike why cybersecurity was so important to his organization. He responded, "We're a utility company that provides electricity, cable, internet and phone service. We're exactly the kind of company that seems to be becoming targets of a variety of cybersecurity threats. Our customers – commercial businesses and households alike – depend on us to provide these critical services."

I also asked him what he would recommend for organizations that want to assess the effectiveness of their cybersecurity practices and systems. Without skipping a beat, he answered, "Any time you can work from standards-based guidelines and best practices, it's the way to go. Another important factor is engaging the IT staff with other employees. If employees understand why you're setting the standards and policy, they support them. This builds a culture of cybersecurity."

NIST GUIDELINES CAN HELP

But where could we find such standards-based guidelines and best practices? Why, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) of course! NIST has a well-deserved reputation for expertise in cybersecurity. Its website also offers numerous resources, reference documents, success stories and downloadable webinars. An updated Version 1.1 of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework was released on April 16, 2018.²

BALDRIGE CYBERSECURITY EXCELLENCE BUILDER

In 2016, NIST began partnering with the Baldrige Performance Excellence Program to develop a cybersecurity self-assessment tool, which leverages Baldrige's 30 years of expertise in developing excellence frameworks and assessment criteria. They solicited feedback from organizations, industry experts and institutions of higher learning.

The Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder (BCEB) is available free of charge on the Baldrige Website under the Baldrige Cybersecurity



National Institutes of Standards and Technology. 2018. *Framework for Improving Critical Infrastructure Cybersecurity, Version 1.1*, U.S. Department of Commerce

Initiative website.³ While downloading the framework from the website, be sure to also download the related Excel files to easily capture your organization's responses to the self-assessment.

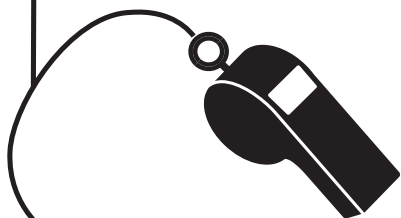
Similar to the Baldrige Excellence Framework, the Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder is holistic in nature and takes into account an organization's key characteristics and operating environment related to cybersecurity across the same categories of leadership, strategy, customers, workforce and operations, as well as the results achieved by them.

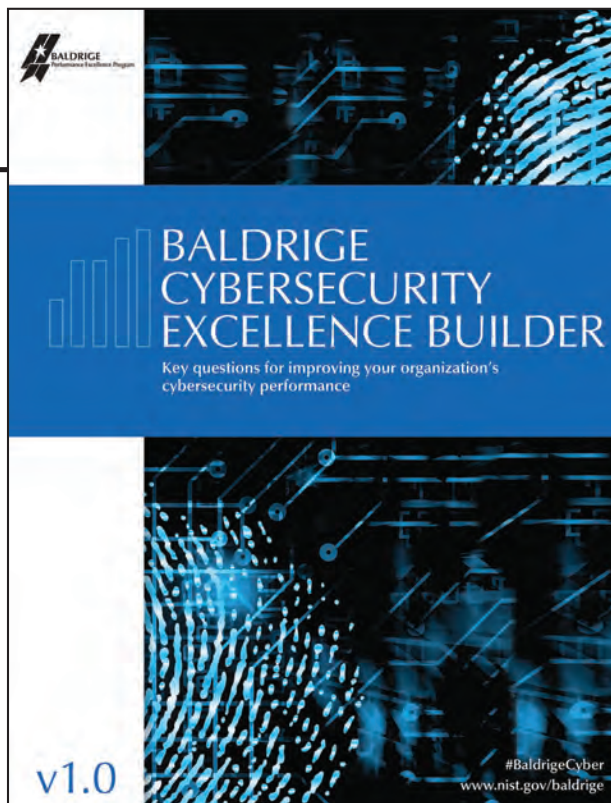
It also provides an assessment rubric that lets users determine their organization's cybersecurity maturity level: "reactive," "early," "mature" or "role model." The outcome of your completed cybersecurity self-assessment should be the development of prioritized action plans to address the most urgent gaps, then progressing on to those less critical.

One of the earliest organizations to pilot the Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder was the University of Kansas Medical Center, which offers educational programs and clinical training through its schools of Health Professions, Medicine, Nursing and Graduate Studies. Serendipitously, John Godfrey (their Associate Vice Chancellor for Information Security and Chief Information Security Officer) recently presented at a Gartner Peer Forum about the Medical Center's experience with the BCEB. Here are some quotes I've noted as highlights of his presentation:

"We used the BCEB because it has a strong business focus, allowing the Information Security staff to deeply learn about the business while adopting more of the language of the business."

"Our first self-assessment using the BCEB criteria provided us with a baseline of our Information Security program to measure against in the future, and the basis now for remediation of current gaps."





Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. 2017. *Baldrige Cybersecurity Excellence Builder*. U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology.

"Start first with your Information Security team. With the second pass of the BCEB criteria questions, invite key customers and other stakeholders to validate your thoughts and to improve your understanding of their needs."

"Was it worth it? Yes!!! A lot of cross-sharing learning has occurred from the process and continues the more we use it. It helped create a common language for the Information Security team and the rest of the business. In the future, we hope to use it for comparisons or benchmarking purposes."

As leaders of Arkansas hospitals, you know how important the protection of patient information is. But, have you considered how vulnerable your networks, electronic medical record systems and even your phone lines are? How could using the Baldridge Cybersecurity Excellence Builder help protect you, your organizations and your patients? ➡

¹ <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/bristol-tennessee-essential-services>.

² <https://www.nist.gov/cyberframework/newsroom>.

³ <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige/products-services/baldrige-cybersecurity-initiative>.



As CEO and Principal of BaldridgeCoach, **Kay Kendall** coaches organizations on their paths to performance excellence using the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award criteria as a framework. In each edition of Arkansas Hospitals, Kay offers readers quality improvement tips from her coaching playbook.

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