

October, 2008



2008

Sterling Challenge

**Feedback
Report**

Miami-Dade County
Finance Department

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INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Florida Sterling Council is "To enhance Florida's competitive edge and quality of life through promotion, assessment, and recognition of performance excellence." The goal of the Governor's Sterling Award process is to improve organizational performance excellence throughout the State of Florida by using a proven world-class management system that applies to public and private sector organizations. The Award is designed not only to recognize organizations that are leaders in performance excellence and can serve as role models for others, but also to provide a self-assessment opportunity to help your organization optimize its operations and results.

Your organization has completed its Sterling Challenge application, and a team from the Florida Sterling Council Board of Examiners has been on site to verify and clarify the information presented. This Feedback Report is the culmination of the Examiners' site visit findings.

Managing for quality does not end with receiving this report or even receiving an award, but compels an organization to maintain and continuously improve upon its position of excellence. Consistent with this philosophy, the following report is intended to identify the vital few areas of strengths and opportunities for improvement on which an applicant organization may wish to take action. The Feedback Report also provides an **Executive Summary** of the observations of the Examiners regarding the organization's key strengths and opportunities for improvement. In addition, this report includes a scoring range for each item. This percentage range is based upon the scoring guidelines, which describe the characteristics typically associated with each percentage.

This report does not prescribe specific programs or techniques with which to improve. The intent is to reflect the views of Sterling Examiners *relative to the requirements of the Sterling Criteria for Organizational Performance Excellence* at the Challenge level. These views are expected to enhance your organization's ability to analyze its continuous improvement effort and to achieve consistently higher levels of performance. Ultimately, the success of Florida depends on the success of your organization; by taking your organization to the next level, you are helping make Florida "a state of excellence."

Applicant organizations read and use feedback comments in different ways. We have gathered some tips and practices from prior applicants for you to consider:

- Take a deep breath and approach your Sterling feedback report with an open mind. You applied to get the feedback. Read it, take time to digest it, and read it again.
- You know your organization better than the Examiners know it. There might be relevant information that was not communicated to them or that they did not fully understand. Therefore, not all their comments may be equally accurate.
- Although we strive for perfection, we do not achieve it in every comment. If Examiners have misread your application or misunderstood your staff during interviews on a particular point, do not discount the whole feedback report. Consider the other comments and focus on the most important ones.

- Celebrate your strengths and build on them to achieve world-class performance and a competitive advantage. You have worked hard and should congratulate yourselves.
- Use your strength comments to understand what the Examiners observed you do well and build upon them. Continue to evaluate and improve the things you do well. Sharing those things you do well with the rest of your organization can speed organizational learning.
- Prioritize your opportunities for improvement. You cannot do everything at once. Think about what is most important for your organization at this time and decide which things to work on first.
- You may decide to address all, some, or none of the opportunities in a particular Item. It depends on how important you think that Item or comment is to your organization.
- Use the feedback as input to your strategic planning process. Focus on the strengths and opportunities for improvement that have an impact on your strategic goals and objectives.

Executive Summary

The Miami-Dade County Finance Department is in the intermediate stages of building a fact-based performance improvement system and has made considerable progress in the areas of Leadership and Customer and Market Focus. Some of the most important strengths include:

- Senior leaders actively participate in creating an environment of high ethical standards, fiscal accountability, and sustainable performance. The Department's comprehensive ethics policy goes beyond the requirements of the County and professional standards. Ethics training is required, provided, and tested for all employees. Fiscal accountability is systematically reviewed and validated through a series of internal and external audits. Leaders establish a culture of high performance through the deployment of mission, vision, and values to all employees. Additionally, leaders have developed and started deploying approaches to succession planning, improved use of the Active Strategy Enterprise system to track improvement, and the "What a Difference We Can Make" reward and recognition program to drive employee performance. Finally, performance evaluations for leaders are linked to the goals of the Business Plan.
- The Department's culture is customer-centered and reflected throughout the Divisions. Recognizing the vision of "Delivering Excellence Everyday," the Department has developed and deployed an extensive list of customer contact methods. Either through direct contact at a service window, through telephone interaction, or through the Internet via web surveys, the Department uses these vehicles to maximize input from various customer groups. The Department has utilized the input to make improvements such as creating the Vendor Payment Inquiry website, the expansion of web payment options, and on-line Tax Certificate sales.
- The Department's Continuity of Operations Plan provides a comprehensive approach to sustaining critical operations in case of emergencies. The plan, in tandem with the Department's Emergency Management Procedures Manual documents the process by which mission critical applications and information continue to be available in the wake of up to a category five hurricane or other natural disaster.

There are opportunities for improvement that include:

- The Department has several opportunities in fully aligning and deploying processes across the leadership system and Divisions. There are inconsistencies in the extent of communication including areas such as: understanding of the Business Plan, review of results and progress on the Business Plan, status of suggestions, and feedback on new programs. The Department does not systematically communicate and transfer workforce knowledge or identify, share, and implement best practices across the Divisions. Communication with customers, suppliers, and partners has multiple channels, but there is not a systematic process to incorporate their input in process design.
- The Department is in transition to fully utilizing the Active Strategy Enterprise system as a management tool. There are opportunities for improvement in full deployment of the performance measurement system and tool as input and tracking of data and information vary across plans and processes. Not all Division data is currently captured, and some initiatives and action plans are captured and tracked within the system while others are not.

Some information is tracked in other software programs, and some is tracked on paper. Additionally, aggregation and analysis of customer complaints is not captured here or in other systems. Multiple mechanisms may put the Department at a higher risk of lost or inaccurate data and information.

- The Department does not employ a systematic process to select and use key comparative data, other information, or benchmarks to support strategic decision making, for improvement, or for innovation. There are a few comparisons applied in some areas of the Department, but there is not an overall approach to ensure effective comparisons are utilized to establish targets for strategic objectives, and in other areas to understand its performance relative to others. Additionally, most improvement projects do not include comparative data and benchmarks which may cause missed opportunities for innovation and breakthrough performance.

The Organizational Performance Results category assesses Miami-Dade County Finance Department's trended and comparative performance in those areas of importance to the organization's key business factors. Some of the strengths and opportunities for improvement in the organization's results include:

- The Department's financial and leadership results are positive with strong bond ratings, revenues, and financial reporting timeliness and accuracy.
- The Department's deployment of the Active Strategy Enterprise application provides extensive data tracking and analysis potential. Most of the results provided were directly from this system with some showing positive trends over time. Many of the results have variable trends over quarters and do not have year-to-year trends for comparison of cycle.
- Comparisons are lacking across the Department's key results. The lack of national comparisons limits the Department in understanding how well it is performing, or if its levels are truly impressive.

In order to help the Miami-Dade County Finance Department's management move to the next level on its journey for performance excellence, the Sterling Examination Team recommends the following:

- Continue deployment of all leadership and employee related initiatives. Develop a systematic process to evaluate and review the success of these initiatives and to make appropriate improvements.
- Further develop the Department's communication processes to ensure "closing the loop." Communication needs to be vertical and horizontal, include all key stakeholders, and ensure understanding and appropriate actions are taken when required.
- Evaluate and improve consistent use of the Active Strategy Enterprise system for managing the Business Plan, action plans, Sorties, and other areas important to your success.
- Establish a process to identify and use key comparative measures for results that are important to the Department's performance.

1.0 Leadership

The **Leadership** Category examines how your organization's senior leaders guide and sustain your organization. Also examined are your organization's governance and how your organization addresses its ethical, legal, and community responsibilities.

Scoring Range: 50% - 65%

Strengths

- Senior leaders use multiple methods to communicate organizational vision and values. For example, senior leaders deploy organizational vision and values through a County-wide strategic planning initiative mandated by the County in 2004. In addition, the Department published a Financial Service Guide that includes the vision, mission, and values statements. These statements are further communicated during quarterly, monthly, and section meetings.
- Senior leaders promote an environment that fosters, requires, and results in legal and ethical behavior through professional standards of finance and strict adherence to ethical codes of conduct. For example, the Department initiated a more comprehensive gift policy than that imposed by the County. The Department's policy is a "no-gift allowed" policy, and is publicized on bulletin boards and in areas across the facility. Furthermore, ethics training is available on its website and is required annually for all employees and biannually for some, depending on their roles. The online ethics training also includes a test upon completion. These activities enable the Department to meet its stakeholder and customer requirements of being honest and ethical, while reinforcing the organization's same values, as it provides professional management of services.
- The Department's senior leaders pursue the accomplishment of its mission and strategic objectives and review progress through participation in strategic planning, business planning, and budget process meetings. For example, all senior leaders participate in the annual business planning meeting and attend monthly Active Strategy Enterprise meetings where the achievement of objectives is monitored. Leaders review progress on strategic objectives, initiatives, and action items. Priority actions are set, are tracked through the Active Strategy system or through paper records, and are reviewed and reset, if necessary, on a monthly basis. These initiatives help the Department to support its mission of delivering accurate financial services for sound decision making.
- Senior leaders have developed an approach to succession planning for the Department. For example, when planned retirements are known, such as the Assistant Controller and Director of Cash Management, senior leaders request budgetary support to hire a replacement in advance for cross-training and knowledge transfer. Additionally, the Department has started to identify potential leaders to participate in leadership mentoring and the development of an internal applicant pool. Cross-training efforts have resulted in some internal promotions.
- Senior leaders take an active role in reward and recognition programs across the Department. For example, the Department recently designed and deployed a reward

Strengths

and recognition process "What a Difference We Can Make" that is more comprehensive than the County program and better fits the specific needs of the Department. The Director's Excellence Award, Employee of the Quarter and Year, and the GEM Award are linked to contributions to Department goals and Sorties. Additionally, leaders have allowed for flexibility for individual Divisions to tailor awards to specific Division goals such as the Credit and Collection area's Employee of the Month program, and the Controller's gainsharing. These Department and Division programs may contribute to energizing and engaging all employees to be customer-focused and customer-driven.

- The Department systematically reviews and achieves fiscal accountability and protection of stakeholder interests in a variety of ways. For example, fiscal accountability is achieved and validated through the Department's adoption and deployment of standard accepted accounting practices such as those established by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and Financial Accounting Standards Board. Performance is monitored by reviews of internal control processes and through the involvement of committees, advisors, and the County Attorney's Office. Fiscal Accountability is further ensured through external audits. As a result, the Department is able to meet its stakeholder and customer requirement of transparency in operations as it strives toward its vision of *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.

Opportunities For Improvement

- Senior leaders do not systematically deploy the Department's process to communicate key decisions and encourage two-way communication across the Department. For example, leaders do not systematically share plan progress and results from monthly planning and Active Strategy reviews with all levels of employees across all Divisions. Additionally, although some leaders encourage innovative ideas through the Employee Suggestion Program and the Open Door policy, these are not consistently deployed across Divisions, and there is not consistent feedback on the status of employee suggestions that are submitted. Lack of systematic communication up, down, and across the Department may impede improvement efforts and innovations that could help in *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.
- The Department does not have a systematic process to review and evaluate the effectiveness of its leadership system. For example, there are inconsistencies in leadership deployment in areas such as: communication to and from front-line staff, participation of input to Active Strategies, and implementation of the new reward and recognition program. Without a review process that evaluates full commitment to role model leadership at all levels, leaders may have difficulty creating an environment where employees strive to deliver accurate financial services for sound decision making and excellent public service.
- The Department does not have a systematic approach to identify key communities to support. For example, while the County-wide United Way drive is deployed in the Department, other specific communities are determined on an ad hoc basis. For

Opportunities For Improvement

example, the Department supports causes that are important to employees such as: the Cancer Walk, Bake Sales for the Troops, support of the Autism Society of America, and the local School Supplies Drive, but there is not a systematic approach to determining priorities for where to focus time and efforts. Without a systematic approach to determining priorities, the Department may have difficulty choosing what cause to support as demand grows. This could negatively impact employee morale as well as community support.

2.0 Strategic Planning

The **Strategic Planning** Category examines how your organization develops strategic objectives and action plans. Also examined are how your chosen strategic objectives and action plans are deployed and changed if circumstances require, and how progress is measured.

Scoring Range: 30% - 45%

Strengths

- The Department conducts its strategic planning using a four-step process. The planning process begins with the annual strategic/business planning meeting, the Active Strategy Enterprise business measures meeting, the budget meeting, and the monthly/quarterly business review meetings. Key participants include: the Executive Team, Directors, Department Heads, Chiefs, and Managers. During the planning phase, the Executive Team conducts a Business Plan retreat to review and align the Department's strategy with the goals of the County-wide strategic plan. During this meeting, the team outlines a Business Plan for the Department, and Department Heads develop targets and measures that are tracked in the Active Strategy Enterprise system. The team then conducts budget meetings to align funds with the strategic objectives. The team also conducts monthly business review meetings in which they discuss all measures and targets identified in these four objectives: (1) Customer, (2) Financial, (3) Internal, and (4) Learning and Growth. The Department completed two cycles of this four step process and is expanding its approach to align its measures and targets to the 2008-2009 Plan.
- The Department identifies strategic challenges and strategic advantages as part of its annual strategic planning process. For example, the CEO, outside advisors, and the public provide input at the monthly/quarterly business review meeting. The Department utilizes outside advisors to assist in ensuring the sustainability of the Department through investments and bank relations. This includes making sure the Department is liquid and effectively investing excess cash. These activities support the Department's mission of delivering accurate financial services for sound decision making.
- The Department has identified a list of key short and long-term strategic objectives. For example, key short and long-term strategic objectives are: sound asset management and financial investment strategies; compliance with financial laws and generally accepted accounting principles; cohesive standardized County-wide financial systems and processes; effective County tax collection and property appraisal processes; and a customer friendly environment for regulating businesses and entities doing business with the County. Objectives are identified for each strategic priority of the Department.
- The Department creates, aligns, and deploys action plans to achieve strategic objectives through its business units where initiatives and action items are linked to priorities, objectives, and measures in the Business Plan. For example, the Tax Collector's Ad Valorem Division has developed action plans to achieve the strategic objectives identified in the Business Plan. Some of these plans are tracked and monitored within

Strengths

the Active Strategy Enterprise (ASE) system and are discussed at monthly ASE meetings.

Opportunities For Improvement

- The Department does not have a systematic process to communicate its strategic plan beyond its leadership team. For example, the Executive Team and the Department Heads develop the Department's Business Plan to align with the County-wide strategic plan; however, the plan is not systematically communicated and deployed throughout the Department to supervisors and support staff. Without a process to communicate the plan to the entire workforce, the Department may be hindered in its ability to execute the plan and engage employees in efforts to overcome the strategic challenge of improving customer service in a time of economic uncertainties.
- The Department does not have a systematic strategic process to address threats and shifts in technology and markets. For example, leaders identify strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for improvement; however, the Department does not engage a similar review process to address the impact of potential threats and changes in technology and the marketplace. For example, technology systems across internal Divisions are not fully standardized and coordinated which may put the Department at higher risk of errors in transferring information, and may cause duplication of work. As a result, the Department may be hindered in its ability to effectively and efficiently deliver accurate financial services.
- The Department does not systematically establish timetables for short and long-term objectives to address strategic challenges. For example, during the initial strategic planning process, executives identified strategic priorities such as: Maintain Safety and Adherence to Investment Policy; Maximize Earnings on County Investments; Maintain or Improve Bond Ratings; Maintain Bond/Loan Issuances; Develop Multiyear Budget Control; Monitor Debt Issuances; Complete Annual Financial Audit; and Complete Report to Bond Holders. However, many of the objectives do not have defined timelines for accomplishment. Without specific timetables to accomplish these strategic priorities, the Department may not be able to help employees stay focused on the most important tasks as they continue to deal with the challenges of property tax reform, County Charter changes, population growth, and economic and market uncertainties.
- The Department does not consistently use measures or indicators for tracking progress on defined strategic objectives. For example, during the initial strategic planning process, executives identified strategic priorities and objectives, but many measures are in the development stage. Objectives include: develop multiyear budget control; reissue securities lending request for proposal; review Investment Policy; formulate Debt Policy; implement Quality Review Unit's Private Auto Tag Branch Audit Process; implement County-wide outstanding loan database processing; implement Data Warehouse; and continue assisting in ERP implementation. However, measures have not been developed to track progress and evaluate success. In addition, not all

Opportunities For Improvement

Division plans, including measures, are tracked within the Active Strategy system. As a result, the Department may not be able to consistently understand the status of these objectives, modify plans, and communicate priorities for ongoing improvement activities.

3.0 Customer and Market Focus

The **Customer and Market Focus** Category examines how your organization determines the requirements, needs, expectations, and preferences of customers and markets. Also examined is how your organization builds relationships with customers and determines the key factors that lead to customer acquisition, satisfaction, loyalty, and retention, and to business expansion and sustainability.

Scoring Range: 50% - 65%

Strengths

- The Department identifies customers, customer groups, and market segments from local, state, and federal mandates. For example, key customer groups include the community, government, suppliers, and partners and collaborators. Segments and sub-segments are further identified such as: government includes federal agencies, the State of Florida, and the County. Within federal agencies, customers include the Treasury Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission. In addition, some areas of the Department have informal processes to identify customers and customer segments. The Controller's Division considers other internal departments, the vendors, and employees as key customer groups, and the Tax Collector considers home and business owners, municipalities within the County, the school board, and the State of Florida as key customer segments. By identifying customers and further stratifying groupings to meet customers' unique needs at the Department and Division levels, the organization may be better able to attain its vision of *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.
- The Department uses the voice of the customer to identify customer needs and concerns to improve its services. For example, an increase in vendor calls indicated a customer need for improved information availability to the vendors. This concern resulted in the development of the Vendor Payment Inquiry website, thus making the requested information readily available to the vendors for determining current status of invoice payments. Similarly, other e-commerce opportunities were developed based on customer needs including: expansion of web payment options and on-line Tax Certificate sales, and more recently, an exploration into on-line credit card payment opportunities. This approach helps the Department identify opportunities to enhance customer service and, as an evaluation tool, to assess its service delivery to the public at the point of customer interface.
- The Department builds and strengthens relationships with customers through on-going customer communications. For example, the Department engages in extensive on-going communication with its potential customer base through email, the internet, face-to-face meetings, telephone, fax, and mail. These communication mechanisms help the Department understand customer needs and improve services, thus building and strengthening the relationships. The Department used customer feedback to change its process to an on-line access for tax certificate sales. As a result, in 2008, the Department leads all Florida counties with 97.259% of tax certificates sold, compared to other Florida counties that range from 42.474% for Charlotte, up to a maximum of 95.348% for Pasco.

Strengths

- The Department determines minimum customer contact requirements through local, state, and federal mandates and provides multiple communication mechanisms such as the County's 311 Answer Center, the County television station, and webcasts to provide additional contact opportunities. Contact requirements are communicated to staff through email blasts, staff meetings, and procedure manuals.
- The Department enables customers to seek information and conduct business in several ways such as: the internet, the County's 311 Answer Center, mail, fax, and face-to-face meetings. For example, access convenience was improved in the Auto Tag servicing area through the deployment of twenty-five Auto Tag Branch Agencies across the County. These contract branches provide services to customers who are beyond the convenient reach of main County facilities. Additionally, the residents of the southern part of the County are serviced through a branch office at the South County Government Center.

Opportunities For Improvement

- The Department does not systematically deploy customer contact requirements for all customer groups and segments to all people and processes involved in the customer response chain. For example, multiple methods are used to inform employees about the requirements; however, there is not a systematic process to ensure the requirements are understood, and to evaluate whether or not they are met. Lack of a process to consistently implement and measure the effectiveness of meeting contact requirements for the various customer groups of the Department and different Divisions may make it difficult to increase customer satisfaction.
- The Department does not have a systematic approach to use customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and loyalty information for continuous improvement. For example, some areas collect customer satisfaction data, such as Auto Tag through surveys, and the Department reviews and tracks responses to Buckslips in accordance with the County Manager's Office Requests for Response to Correspondence, but there is not a consistent process to determine satisfaction or track issues and complaints that come to the Department in other ways. In addition, the actions taken to resolve Buckslip issues do not always coincide with an improvement process to help minimize recurrence of the issue that generated the Buckslip. Without a systematic approach for determining, aggregating, and assessing all customer satisfaction, dissatisfaction, and complaint data, the Department may miss opportunities for improvement and innovation, and may be hindered in its efforts to improve its overall customer satisfaction.

4.0 Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management

The **Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management** Category examines how your organization selects, gathers, analyzes, manages, and improves its data, information, and knowledge assets and how it manages its information technology. Also examined is how your organization reviews and uses reviews to improve its performance.

Scoring Range: 30% - 45%

Strengths

- The Department deploys multiple methods to collect and use data and information for tracking overall daily operations. Each Division of the Department determines measures based on the goals and objectives of the Department's Business Plan that are established during the strategic planning process. Data for each measure are collected primarily through the Department's Enterprise applications. Results for each measure are compiled by senior staff, in each Division, from the data collected. Five scorecards have been established in the Active Strategy Enterprise system to track measures: a Department scorecard and a scorecard for each of the four Divisions. Performance measurement data are provided to the appropriate Active Strategy Enterprise administrator for indicators that have been identified for monitoring in the system. Other performance measures that are not included in the Active Strategy Enterprise system are managed by Division managers.
- The Department manages information systems to ensure the continued availability of data and information guided by the County data center, the Department's Continuity of Operation Plan (COOP), and the Department's Emergency Management Procedures Manual. The hardware for the mission critical applications of the Department is located in the County data center. The County ensures continued availability of data and information at the data center through the nightly backup of systems, the County's Offsite Disaster Recovery Plan, and the use of disaster recovery exercises to determine functionality and recoverability. In addition, the data center is located at an inland site hardened to withstand a Category 5 hurricane. The Department has developed the COOP in compliance with federal mandates and it encompasses several areas: the mainframe legacy systems, distributed systems, internally maintained systems, third-party maintained systems, and critical personnel activation and responsibilities. Hardware backup and recovery plans are outlined in the COOP in the event of a disaster. Staff responsibilities in the event of a business disruption or disaster are outlined in the Department's Emergency Management Procedures Manual.
- The Department ensures the integrity, reliability, and security and confidentiality of data, information, and knowledge through a comprehensive set of procedures. Security and confidentiality of data and information is achieved through multiple levels of secured access, electronic approval, and accessibility. Security access to the Enterprise applications of the Department is centralized through the Department's Information Systems group. All end user access to Enterprise systems is tightly controlled through a security request process. Requests are approved by senior-level management and routed to the Department's Information Systems group for approval and to provide the appropriate access. Reliability of data is addressed through a centralized file

Strengths

maintenance function in the Information Systems group, assuring the integrity of all system parameters and transaction codes entered in the system to facilitate successful batch processing. Audits are performed in all areas to ensure the integrity and accuracy of financial data that are being processed in each system. Formal procedures are documented to ensure security and integrity of on-site cash management.

Opportunities For Improvement

- The Department does not have a systematic process for selecting and using key comparative data to support operational and strategic decision-making and innovation. For example, a few areas use some comparative data in their daily operations, and some targets are established on historical internal data; however, the Department does not engage in a systematic process to select, collect, analyze, and use comparative data across all the Divisions or to include it in its Active Strategy Enterprise system. The Department has established some collaborative relationships with other departments in the County, but it has not leveraged those relationships to benchmark or collect comparative data, and there are no formal processes for securing external comparative data. Without an effective process for assuring the selection and use of comparisons in decision-making, the Department may not be able to determine how its services measure up to *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.
- The Department does not systematically analyze and review overall performance to set priorities for improvement. For example, discussions take place at the monthly Active Strategy Enterprise meeting; initiatives have been established throughout the Department; and a Sortie process has been established to improve performance in some areas; however, there is not a systematic process to prioritize initiatives or address performance improvement opportunities. Also, there is not a consistent method for analyzing and reviewing performance measures or making process improvements at the Division level. The Sortie process focuses on providing a more concentrated set of resources to a process over a specific period of time, but does not address taking steps to improve the design of the process through the use of analysis and improvement tools. Without an effective process for reviewing Departmental data and setting priorities for improvement, the Department may find it difficult to meet established targets and effectively and efficiently improve the way it does business to meet and exceed stakeholder requirements.
- The Department does not systematically manage organizational knowledge to collect and transfer workforce knowledge or identify, share, and implement best practices across all Divisions. For example, initiatives and Sorties are used to address improvement, but these efforts do not utilize a formal approach to identify best practices to share across the organization. Some informal knowledge sharing exists such as: sharing knowledge at meetings; summaries of seminars attended; and website publication; but the Department does not have a consistent, repeatable, and repeated process to transfer workforce knowledge throughout the organization. Without a systematic transfer of workforce knowledge and best practices, the Department may hinder its ability to overcome its strategic challenge of finding and retaining the right mix of knowledge, skills, and abilities to address staffing issues and succession planning.

5.0 Workforce Focus

The **Workforce Focus** Category examines how your organization engages, manages, and develops its workforce to utilize its full potential in alignment with the organization's overall mission, strategy, and action plans. Also examined is your organization's ability to assess workforce capability and capacity needs and to build a workforce environment conducive to high performance.

Scoring Range: 30% - 45%

Strengths

- The Department determined its key factors that affect workforce engagement and satisfaction. The Department identifies: consistent and equitable treatment; flexibility to balance work/life issues; fair compensation; comprehensive benefits; job stability; opportunity for training, development, and career advancement; adequate tools to perform job functions; open communications across all levels; and recognition for a job well done as key requirements and expectations of its employees. Additionally, the Department recently deployed an employee survey based on "Are We Making Progress?" More than fifteen follow-up sessions were held to share and clarify results, and gain additional input.
- The Department has an approach to foster a culture of high performance and a motivated workforce to accomplish cooperation across units and locations. For example, the Department uses the Active Strategy Enterprise system to create scorecards and dashboards that focus attention and accountability for goals and objectives concerning projects and daily work which are discussed in monthly Active Strategy Enterprise meetings with the senior leadership team. Some plans and commitments to performance goals, targets, and projects are communicated through the electronic dashboards, meetings, and discussions. These commitments are communicated down through the Department. Communication on performance plans, goals, targets, and projects between Divisions and units may assist the Department in *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.
- The Department fosters a culture conducive to high performance and a motivated workforce through a recently deployed employee recognition program called "What a Difference We Can Make". For example, Sorties, employee recognition, special recognition increases, and performance incentive bonuses are used to reinforce, motivate, and encourage high performance. Some awards include: "Going the Extra Mile," "Employee of the Month," "Employee of the Year," and the "Director's Excellence Award." Examples of rewards include: certificates, plaques, gift certificates, cash up to \$1000, and administrative leave up to 16 hours.
- The Department's workforce performance management system supports high performance and workforce engagement from the senior leadership team through all levels of employees. For example, performance plans for senior leaders have specific objectives that tie into the Department's Business Plan, that are accessed through the Active Strategy Enterprise system, and that are cascaded through the ranks of the

Strengths

Department. For example, attainment of goals and objectives is realized through each unit's execution of the plan. Measures and initiatives can be tracked and reviewed through the Department's Active Strategy Enterprise system, its monthly Active Strategy Enterprise meetings, and annual performance evaluation meetings with each worker. This process, when fully deployed, may cultivate highly engaged and supportive senior leaders to ensure middle management buy-in, which may help the Department accomplish its mission of delivering accurate financial services for sound decision making and excellent public service.

- The Department's approach to leadership development and learning addresses leadership attributes, organizational knowledge, ethics, competencies, and strategic challenges. The Department's senior leaders have specific objectives and competencies that are reinforced through opportunities for professional seminars, conferences, and workshops. Opportunities include: the County Leadership Academy, quarterly Executive Leadership meetings, Ethics Awareness training, tuition reimbursement, association meetings, conferences, and selected professional seminars. Performance improvement and innovation are addressed through performance management discussions, mentoring, Active Strategy Enterprise discussions, discussions with frontline workers, and Sorties. These activities may better equip leaders to drive performance improvements organizationally, and in their Divisions, in support of the Department's mission of delivering excellent public service.

Opportunities For Improvement

- The Department does not have a systematic approach to determine key factors that affect workforce engagement and satisfaction for different workforce groups and segments. For example, an employee survey based on the Sterling Criteria was recently deployed to staff, and the results of that survey are tabulated for all employees as one group, and are not segmented to reflect the Department's diverse workforce groups such as: levels of education, white collar versus blue collar jobs, or field versus main office locations. The Department has identified some overall key requirements and expectations of its employees such as: consistent and equitable treatment; flexibility to balance work/life issues; fair compensation; comprehensive benefits; job stability; opportunity for training, development, and career advancement; adequate tools to perform job functions; open communications across all levels; and recognition for a job well done; however, these may not give the Department enough information about each work group to fully engage and satisfy the workforce. Without a systematic process to differentiate key factors that determine satisfaction for a variety of employee groups, the Department may not provide challenging work that engages the diverse workforce groups in improving and innovating processes and may not overcome the challenge of retaining employees to continue *Delivering Excellence Every Day*.
- The Department does not have a systematic approach to workforce development and learning that addresses the specific needs of its unique and diverse workforce, and supports core competencies and the accomplishment of its Business Plan. For example, opportunities exist for employee learning and development, but they are not

Opportunities For Improvement

driven by needs identified through strategic planning, through systematic employee input, or from key strategic challenges facing the Department. Without a systematic approach to link workforce development and learning to building organizational capacity to address challenges and accomplish action plans, employees may not have the appropriate knowledge, skills, and abilities to sustain and improve performance as the environment changes, or to advance their career paths, and may negatively impact employee retention.

- The Department does not have a systematic process to evaluate the effectiveness of its workforce development, leader development, and learning systems. For example, development opportunities are provided for employees; however, the Department does not have a consistent process to evaluate the effectiveness of these development opportunities on personal growth and improved job performance. Additionally, ongoing collective analysis is not compiled in a systematic way to determine the impact of training on the achievement of Business Plans, efficiency of processes, improvements of systems, and increases in innovations. Without a clear process to monitor and evaluate its approach to workforce development, the Department may not recognize gaps that could adversely affect the ability of the workforce to address key challenges, understand and use new technologies, including Active Strategy Enterprise system, and the Department's ability to effectively plan for succession.
- The Department does not have a systematic process to measure and improve workforce safety. For example, the Department complies with requirements to establish a committee to address workforce safety issues with specific rules, requirements, and procedures, but proactive systems are not in place to assess, measure, and improve workforce safety across all areas. The Department uses an injury inquiry report as an indicator of safety, but it is an "after the fact," or lagging measure, that indicates an injury has already occurred from a safety issue. Lack of a systematic process to proactively identify, track, and improve safety issues may adversely impact the organization's focus on retaining high quality employees and may negatively impact the financial health of the organization.

6.0 Process Management

The **Process Management** Category examines how your organization determines its core competencies and work systems and how it designs, manages, and improves its key processes for implementing those work systems to deliver customer value and achieve organizational success and sustainability. Also examined is your organization's readiness for emergencies.

Scoring Range: 50% - 65%

Strengths

- The Department defines its core competencies as: sound investment strategies; accurate accounting; reporting and controls; collection and distribution of funds; issuance and management of debt; and establishment of sound financial policies. Each of the core competencies is linked and supports the Department's mission of delivering accurate and excellent financial services through sound decision-making policies. Additionally, some areas at the Division level design collaborative relationships for internal work processes with external resources to deliver customer services, while maintaining in-house core competency processes. For example, Portfolio Management within the Cash Management Division outsourced the advisory function to overcome the challenge of a lack of resources and specialized knowledge. The process of making financially responsible purchasing decisions remained in-house, as it is one of the core competencies of the Portfolio Management process. Also, the Tax Collector's Division designed a collaborative relationship in the Tax Certificate Sales Process. Tax certificate sales were held on site and required staff to facilitate the sales process, much like an auction. The function of holding the auction was contracted to the Grant Street Group, and is now automated to provide better service to customers as well as decreasing the cycle time of this process.
- The Department has multiple Divisions and key work processes that support its core competencies. For example, the accounting process within the Tax Collector's section reviews all distributions and fund balances to ensure accuracy, which directly supports the Department's core competencies of accurate accounting, and reporting and controls. The Bond Administration section supports the Department's efforts of issuance and management of debt. The Controller's processes support the core competency of collection and distribution of funds which includes collection of delinquent accounts for multiple County entities. The Cash Management Section supports the sound investment strategies core competency. By linking processes to core competencies, the Department can leverage its greatest strengths to provide high quality service.
- The Department ensures work system and workplace preparedness for disasters and emergencies through a variety of preventative and restorative methods. To ensure the workplace is adequately secured, employees receive emergency preparedness training on a regularly scheduled basis through the County due to the probability of hurricanes, flooding, and other natural disasters. Employees are also involved in other preventative trainings and/or drills related to emergencies such as potential bomb threats, suspicious packages, and terrorist attacks. To ensure that work systems and services are maintained, the Department has designated all employees as essential to maintaining

Strengths

continuity of operations. Staff are aware that, within twenty-four hours of a disaster or emergency, they must report to work or contact a supervisor or manager to provide an update if unable to report to work. Each employee is assigned a phone tree card which provides home and cell numbers of all employees in the section to allow for direct and constant communications. The Department also maintains a current Continuity of Operations Plan with backups for the mainframe legacy systems, other internally maintained systems, and third-party maintained systems. Also, to address continuity of operations and recovery, the Department has created and regularly updates its Emergency Procedures Manual. Staff are also assigned to the Emergency Operation Center to assist in recovery efforts. In addition, several employees have completed the National Incident Management Systems certificate program. By ensuring that efficient and effective services are maintained during and after emergencies, the Department is supporting its key values, such as remaining accountable and responsive to the public through action-oriented service in providing centralized financial management services, when unforeseen factors interrupt normal business operations.

- The Department has an approach to manage and measure its work processes to ensure that they meet design requirements. For example, the Auto Tag customer call center, within the Tax Collector's Division, reviews call data such as: volume of calls, dropped calls, and call length to ensure that customers are served efficiently based on predefined standards. In addition, the Credit and Collections process of the Controller's Division reviews data daily to ensure collection rates and timeliness requirements are met. By managing processes effectively, the Department is responding to the customer requirement of professional management to ensure services are provided timely, accurately, and consistently.

Opportunities For Improvement

- The Department does not have a systematically-deployed approach at some Division levels to design and coordinate work systems including internal work processes and external resources to deliver customer services. For example, with the exception of outsourcing the advisory function in Cash Management and the auction function for Tax Certificate Sales, the Department does not have a process to systematically determine when external resources may be beneficial, because of specialized expertise or cost savings, in delivering services from all Divisions. Without a Department-wide process for designing and coordinating work systems, the Department may miss opportunities to effectively and efficiently provide its customers with prompt, and accurate centralized financial, accounting, cash investment, and debt management services.
- The Department does not have a systematic method to incorporate input from customers, suppliers, and partners in determining key process requirements. For example, the Department has an obligation to process payments to vendors for services rendered. They, in turn, contact the Department usually via the telephone when needing routine information such as status of payments and invoices, and based on input from vendors, the organization created a web-based Vendor Inquiry System to check real-time status for payments. However, the Department does not have a

Opportunities For Improvement

consistent process to incorporate input from their customers, suppliers, and partners, nor has it leveraged its success with vendors to improve its input methods with other stakeholders. As a result, the Department may miss opportunities to better understand varying requirements and effectively improve services in this time of economic uncertainty.

- The Department does not have a systematic method to improve work processes to achieve better performance. For example, the Department seeks to improve performance through Active Strategy reviews and the use of its Sorties; however, these processes do not include the systematic analysis for root cause, examining best practices, or planning for sustained improvement. Without the application of a consistent, proven process improvement methodology based on data analysis, the Department may allocate valuable resources in areas that do not provide sustainable improvement for the delivery of accurate financial services and excellent public service.

7.0 Results

The **Results** Category examines your organization's performance and improvement in all key areas – product and service outcomes, customer-focused outcomes, financial and market outcomes, workforce-focused outcomes, process-effectiveness, and leadership outcomes. Performance levels are examined relative to those of competitors and other organizations providing similar products and services.

Scoring Range: 30% - 45%

Strengths

- Results for some product and service performance show steady improvement and meet targets overall.
 - *Timely Payment of Invoices* (Figure 7.1-1) shows a positive overall trend from the low point of 81% in FY 2006 Q2 to 92% in FY 2008 Q1 and exceeds the target of 85% in most quarters.
 - *Accounts Payable (Emergency Checks)* (Figure 7.1-2) decreased from 1,500 in FY 2005 Q1 to 600 in FY 2008 Q1 favorably falling below variable targets;
 - *ACH Payments (% of Dollars)* (Figure 7.1-3) shows variable performance over 15 Quarters from FY 2005 Q1 to FY 2008 Q1, but is generally above the target. For example, the percent of payments processed through ACH was 55% in FY 2005 Q2 with a target of 50%, 63% FY 2006 Q4 with a target of 50%, 58% in FY 2007 Q2 with a target of 56%, and 62% in FY 2008 Q3 with a target of 60%.
 - *Accounts Payable (Checks Issued)* (7.1-4) increased from 30,000 in FY 2005 Q1 to 34,000 in FY 2008 Q1, with a peak of 70,000 in FY 2006 Q3.
- Results for *Secret Shopper Program* (Figure 7.2-1) show consistent positive results and trend from 2001 to 2007, with an average score of 3.3 in 2001 to 3.7 in 2007.
- Results for financial performance and marketplace performance *Rating of Miami-Dade County* (Figure 7.3-1) show increases or steady ratings. Moody's Aa3 rating was sustained from FY 2004 – FY 2008, S&P's AA- rating was sustained, and FITCH ratings improved from A+ in FY 2004 to AA- in FY 2008.
- *Earning on County Investments* (Figure 7.6-2) met or exceeded the targets overall. Earnings increased from 2.25% in October 2002, to 2.9% in June 2008 while exceeding the moving target.
- *Portfolio Earnings* show a steady increase from approximately \$14.8 million in October 2006 to \$91.4 million in March 2008.
- Results for workforce capacity *Positions – Full Time Filled (Finance)* (Figure 7.4-2) and *Temporary Positions (Finance)* (Figure 7.4-3) show a stable trend of full time positions filled while minimizing temporary positions. Workforce capacity has been sustained in meeting its target at 325 full time positions from FY 2005 Q1 to FY 2008 Q3 while temporary positions have decreased from 10 in FY 2005 Q1 to 7 in FY 2008 Q1.

Strengths

Turnover Rate- Finance Department (Figure 7.4-4) shows the organization outperformed its quarterly goal of 3% turnovers for each quarter from FY 2005 Q1 at .8 turnovers to FY 2008 Q1 at 1.2% turnovers. Finally, *Vacancy Positions (Finance)* (Figure 7.4-4) have decreased from 28 in FY 2005 Q1 to 13 in FY 2008 Q1.

- Results for operational performance show positive trends.
 - *Monitor Cumulative Auto Tag Fees [in thousands]* (Figure 7.5-4) increased from 11,509 in October 2007 to 112,393 in June 2008.
 - *Bed Tax Revenues* (Figure 7.5-7) increased from \$2,630,378 in October 2004 to \$6,924,739 in May 2008.
- Operational results for *Homeless and Domestic Violence Tax on Sale of Food and Beverage [in thousands]* (Figure 7.5-6) show variable but positive trends from May 2007 to June 2008 increasing from \$1,173 to \$1,297.
- Additional positive operational performance results include:
 - *Total Tax Refund Processing Time* (Figure 7.5-17) achieved better than the goal of 60 days for each quarter from January 2007 through January 2008.
 - *Securities Lending* has increased from \$16,195 in FY 2005 Q2 to \$465,751 in FY 2008 Q2.
 - *Monitor Online Local Business Tax Renewals* improved and exceeded goals from FY 2005 Q2 at 4.3% to FY 2008 Q2 at 12.9%.
 - *Monitor Online Auto Tag Registrations* increased steadily from 11,226 in FY 2003 Q1 to 86,648 in FY 2008 Q1.
 - *Tourist Tax Collections* (in millions) have increased from approximately \$4,470 in October 2005 to \$10,951 in April 2008, achieving seasonal targets.
- Results reported for leadership performance are positive:
 - *Earning on County Investments* (Figure 7.6-2) met or exceeded the targets overall. Earnings increased from 2.25% in October 2002 to 2.89% in June 2008 while exceeding the moving target.
 - *Portfolio Earnings* show a steady increase from \$14,892,000 in October 2006 to \$91,375,000 in March 2008.
 - *Compliance with Investment Policy* sustained a 100 percent compliance rate from FY2006 Q1 to FY 2008 Q2.
 - *United Way Contributions* have increased steadily from \$22,564 in 2003 to 33,205 in 2007. *Strides Against Breast Cancer* raised \$750 in FY 2006 and \$3,589 in FY 2007. *Toys for Tots* resulted in 325 toys collected in 2006 and 425 toys collected in 2007. Participation in *Baynanza Biscayne Bay Cleanup Day* rose from 10 in FY 2006 to 33 in FY 2007.

Opportunities For Improvement

- Many results in the areas of product and service outcomes, customer focused outcomes, workforce outcomes, and operational performance outcomes are in the early stages of reporting and do not have established trends over time.
- Results for overall customer satisfaction or satisfaction by customer segment and service are not reported.
- Results for customer satisfaction were not reported for the County Internet website, the Department's website, the Interactive Voice Response System, and the Automated Caller Distribution System.
- Results for workforce reward and recognition are in the early stages of reporting.
- Trends for workforce satisfaction could not be established. The survey results provided during site visit were for one survey and are in the early stages of reporting.
- *Tuition Refund Participation and Promotion* (Figure 7.4-1) shows that 42 people have participated in the program since 2003, and 23 have been promoted, but the results are not reported by year.
- Results for some operational performances show negative trends. For example:
 - *Delinquent Returns* (Figure 7.5-10) increasing from 600 to 700.
 - *Convention Development Tax (CDT) [in thousands]* (Figure 7.5-5) decreased from \$4,630 to \$3,801.
 - *Tourist Development Room Tax Revenue [in thousands]* (Figure 7.5-8) decreased from \$1,639 to \$1,387.
 - *Food and Beverage Tax [in thousands]* (Figure 7.5-9) decreased from \$560 to \$537.
- Results for the project "*Acceptance Of Major Credit Cards For Payment Of Property Taxes*" (Figure 7.1-5) show the project is behind schedule. Since June 2008 the initiative is 30% complete with a target of 50% completion.
- Results for the project "*Procure A New Tax Collection System*" (Figure 7.6-8) is behind schedule. In FY 2006 Q3 – FY 2008 Q3 the project is 55% complete with a target of 70% completion.
- Comparisons and benchmark results are not reported for most results provided in product and service performance, customer satisfaction, financial performance, workforce engagement, operational performance, and leadership.