

KAPE Comment Guidelines

What is a good comment?

- It provides meaningful feedback
 - Strengths: Validation/recognition of progress to date and role model practices
 - OFIs: Clear description of KEY gaps and their significance (so what?) to guide future improvement
- It is easily understood
 - Without reading the application (clear and complete)
 - Baldrige expertise not required (plain English)

Who cares if you write good comments?

- Other examiners on your team, who use your comments during Consensus and Site Visit
- Feedback editors, who finalize feedback reports before they are sent to Applicants
- Judges, who use your comments to make decisions regarding Applicant recognition
- Award Program, for whom the feedback report is the primary product of the organization
- Applicants, who use their feedback reports to validate their progress and make improvements

Guidelines for Writing Process Comments

Guideline	Example
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe how specific approaches relate to the Applicant's progress in meeting the Criteria requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The SPP (Figure 2.1-1) uses a SWOT Analysis, an Environmental Scan, and performance analyses to <u>identify potential blind spots</u>. For example, the SWOT Analysis considers data and information relative to operations; shifts in economic, legal, political, market, and competitive environments; regulatory issues; and technology changes. . . . - Although the Applicant notes specific examples of innovations, it is not clear how its strategic objectives address larger <u>opportunities for innovation in products, services, operations, and its business model</u>. . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate the extent to which key approaches reflect and/or align with the Applicant's Key Factors, Values, and/or strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The Applicant's multiple listening and learning methods <u>vary for each of its four stakeholder groups and their needs</u> (Figures 3.1-1 and 3.1-2). For example, the organization places a comment card in each delivery to member agencies to solicit comments on quality and timeliness, and it conducts community surveys and needs assessments to forecast future demand. - The Applicant has not developed systematic approaches for compensation, reward, recognition, and incentives for its employees and many volunteers. The lack of an effective workforce performance management system may impede the organization's efforts to address its <u>strategic challenges of optimizing human resources and recruiting volunteers in competition with other nonprofit organizations</u>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment on the extent to which approaches are or are not deployed and/or on the maturity of the approaches (learning and integration) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Senior leaders use a variety of approaches to deploy the vision and values to the workforce and other stakeholders, including . . . <u>Cycles of improvement have resulted in</u> implementing additional volunteer orientation, reinforcing the value of partnering and participation, and broadening senior leaders' involvement in posting the value of the day.

Guideline	Example
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is not clear how the Applicant translates organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous and breakthrough improvement, and opportunities for innovation. . . . Further, it is not clear how priorities and opportunities are <u>deployed to suppliers, partners, and collaborators, when appropriate</u>. Without a systematic approach . . . , the organization may find it difficult to focus its limited resources on stakeholder requirements and key processes to achieve organizational goals.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw linkages between the approaches described and the approaches and/or results described elsewhere in the application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The organization uses various processes to assess its current workforce capability and capacity needs, including skills, competencies, and staffing levels. For example, <u>these issues are addressed during the biennial SPP</u>, which includes human resource planning activities and uses data sources such as surveys, shift-to-shift communications, quarterly reviews, Balanced Plate Scorecard results, surveys of member agencies, and information from the FBLC and FBA. + <u>The CTQ determination process (3.1a)</u> is used to identify and validate key requirements for the Applicant's four hunger-reducing processes. These CTQ requirements are used to define process measures and guide process improvement activities (Figure 6.1-3), thereby ensuring that these processes are consistently aligned with customer needs.

Guidelines for Writing Results Comments

Guideline	Example
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesize the results presented in the application: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Summarize your analysis of related indicators - Do not state the obvious by simply describing the results that are presented on specific charts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + <u>Several key indicators of performance on key customer requirements demonstrate positive trends for the past three years.</u> These include Nutritional Value and Overall Food Variety (Figure 7.1-5), On-Time Food Delivery to Member Agencies (Figure 7.1-6), and the Number of Emergency Food Boxes Distributed Per Week (Figure 7.1-7). . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relate the results presented to the Applicant's Key Factors or strategies, or to the processes and/or results described elsewhere in the application 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Results for the Overall Number and Type of Complaints Received (Figure 7.2-6), an indicator of customer dissatisfaction, show that in 2006 the organization reversed an unfavorable trend for the number of complaints associated with the availability of food items stocked; <u>this reversal may demonstrate the favorable impact of the RICE inventory tracker implemented in 2005.</u> . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the results to draw conclusions regarding the maturity and/or effectiveness of the Applicant's specific approaches and overall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Workplace health and safety results demonstrate favorable trends. Ratings for sanitation, and food handling and disposal compliance improved over three years, with both meeting the 2006 regional benchmark and approaching the national benchmark (Figure 7.4-14). Employee and volunteer injuries have also improved,

<p>performance management system</p>	<p>approaching the regional best performance (Figure 7.4-4). <u>These results indicate the effectiveness of health and safety education and training.</u></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment on performance relative to the comparisons provided, the appropriateness of the comparisons, or the fact that they are not provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + <u>The Applicant is the local or regional benchmark for a number of product and service outcomes</u>, including Fill Rate (Figure 7.1-4), On-Time Food Delivery to Member Agencies (Figure 7.1-7), and Number of Emergency Food Boxes Delivered Per Week (Figure 7.1-8). These results demonstrate that the Applicant is a leading provider in its market area. - <u>Comparisons are not provided</u> for many customer-focused results (Figures 7.2-6, 7.2-7, 7.2-8, 7.2-10, and 7.2-11). <u>When provided, only 2006 comparisons are shown</u> (Figures 7.2-1 through 7.2-5 and Figure 7.2-9). Without comparative trend data, the Applicant is not able to assess its performance relative to other leading organizations over time.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment on performance of specific segments or if segmented data are not provided in key areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Most of the Applicant’s product and service outcomes are <u>not presented by segment (e.g., by customer group or geographic area)</u>. Without appropriate segmentation of these results, it may be difficult for the Applicant to ensure that it is meeting the expectations of each customer group and to identify opportunities for improvement within segments.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the OFIs, describe key indicators that are required by the Criteria and/or referenced in other parts of the application but that are not included in the appropriate Results Item 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Although the Applicant provides results for some measures of its key product and service outcomes, <u>results related to the customer requirements of consistency and dependability are not provided</u>. This may limit the Applicant’s ability to assess its performance in these areas and identify improvements needed to meet or exceed customer requirements.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use comparative terms that are clear: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Use phrases such as “trends are positive/negative”, “results have improved/deteriorated” or “performance is better/worse” - Do not use phrases such as “results are higher” or “performance is down,” as their meaning is unclear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Workplace health and safety results <u>demonstrate favorable trends</u>. Ratings for sanitation, and food handling and disposal compliance <u>improved</u> over three years, with both meeting the 2006 regional benchmark and <u>approaching the national benchmark</u> (Figure 7.4-14). Employee and volunteer injuries have also <u>improved, approaching the regional best performance</u> (Figure 7.4-4). These results indicate the effectiveness of health and safety education and training.

Comment Examples

This example illustrates a comment that is summarized/synthesized from the ADLI analysis of Item 1.1

These notes from Step 3 in the KAPE Application Evaluation Process – Analyze Each Item – relate to a common theme:

- Many recognition programs; they reinforce values and customer focus
- Role senior leaders play in recognition processes is not described
- Not clear how senior leaders personally promote an environment that fosters legal and ethical behavior
- Good succession planning process; not clear how senior leaders personally participate in the development of future organizational leaders

Comment based on the above notes:

- The role that senior leaders play in several key leadership processes is not clearly defined. Specifically, it is not clear how senior leaders personally promote an environment for ethical behavior, how they participate in the development of future leaders, or how they take part in the Applicant's recognition processes. Without their personal involvement in these key processes, senior leaders may not be successful in conveying their commitment to the Mission and Values to employees and other stakeholders.

Note: Since Category 1 asks only about senior leaders' role in recognition and succession planning processes, comments regarding other aspects of these processes should be included in Category 5.

In the following examples, comments are presented “before” and “after” being revised based on the comment guidelines above.

This strength includes too much detail and the related OFI includes too much information about the strength:

- + Evaluation of senior leaders' performance occurs at various levels. The board conducts an annual self-evaluation to identify improvement opportunities, such as the creation of the interlocking Leadership System Model (Figure 1.1-1) in 2004. The board is responsible for the performance evaluation of the Executive Director, using a 360-degree approach that includes the board, senior leaders, two employees and volunteers, and executives of two member agencies. The other senior leaders are evaluated by the Executive Director in the areas of accomplishing strategic objectives and professional achievement goals. The senior leaders evaluate all employees and core volunteers.
- The Applicant uses specific approaches to evaluate Board members, the Executive Director, other senior leaders, and employees and volunteers. These approaches are systematic; however, there is no indication of how senior leaders use the results of these reviews for improvement.

Examples of Revised Comments:

- + The Applicant uses clearly defined approaches to evaluate the performance of senior leaders. The Board conducts an annual self-evaluation to identify opportunities for improvement. It also evaluates the performance of the Executive Director, using a 360-degree approach that includes input from Board members, senior leaders, two employees and volunteers, and executives of two member agencies. The Executive Director evaluates other senior leaders based on accomplishment of strategic objectives and professional achievement goals. These approaches

ensure that performance is systematically evaluated at all levels of senior leadership.

- The Applicant uses several systematic approaches to evaluate senior leaders. However, it is not clear how senior leaders use the results of these reviews to improve their personal leadership and the effectiveness of the leadership system as a whole. Without systematically improving leadership, it may be difficult for the Applicant to achieve its vision and strategy.

This strength merely repeats the results provided by the Applicant:

- + The number of former clients who became volunteers increased from 3 in 2004 to 15 in 2006 (Figure 7.4-5), the number of court-ordered placements who were retained as volunteers doubled from 2004 to 2006 (Figure 7.4-9), the number of volunteer groups has increased each year from 2003 to 2006 (Figures 7.4-12 and 7.4-13), and core volunteers contributed more hours than the regional average each year from 2003 to 2006 (Figure 7.4-11). In addition, volunteer referrals of family and friends increased from 4 in 2003 to 15 in 2006 (Figure 7.4-8).

Example of Revised Comment

- + Results for several indicators of workforce engagement and capacity show favorable trends over several years, supporting the strategic goal of increasing organizational and resource capacity (Figure 2.2-2). For example, trends are positive for the number of former clients who became volunteers (Figure 7.4-5), the number of court-ordered placements who were retained as volunteers (Figure 7.4-9), the number of volunteer groups (Figures 7.4-12 and 7.4-13), and volunteer referrals of family and friends (Figure 7.4-8). In addition, core volunteers contributed more hours than the regional average each year from 2003 to 2006 (Figure 7.4-11).

This OFI lists the most important issue regarding the Applicant's comparative data last:

- Comparisons with relevant state or national standards are lacking for some key measures of health care outcomes: diabetes care (Figure 7.1-5), asthma care (Figure 7.1-6), and heart care (Figure 7.1-7). In addition, there are no comparisons with competitors.

Example of Revised Comment:

- Competitive comparisons are not provided for any of the health care outcomes presented, making it difficult for the Applicant to assess its position relative to other providers in its key service areas. In addition, comparisons with relevant state or national standards are lacking for diabetes care (Figure 7.1-5), asthma care (Figure 7.1-6), and heart care (Figure 7.1-7).

Key Themes

What is the purpose of the “Key Themes” section of a scorebook/feedback report?

- An Executive Summary of the most important messages to convey to Applicant and Judges
- Four sections
 - Important areas of strength in Processes (Question a)
 - Key concerns or issues in Processes (Question b)
 - Key strengths in Results (Question c)
 - Key concerns or issues in Results (Question d)
- Emphasis on Core Values, Key Factors, and Strategies
- Not just a cut and paste of comments, but a synthesis of multiple comments
 - Recurring Themes
 - Cross-Item and Cross-Category linkages

Key Themes Example

The following example illustrates how a Key Themes comment relates to Item-level comments.

All comments from Category 7 that relate to use of comparisons:

- 7.1 While in some cases the Applicant’s product and service outcomes exceed those of regional and state comparisons, its *performance is below that of the national comparisons* (the FBA and the FBA best). Additionally, comparisons are not presented for more than the current year . . .
- 7.2 **Comparisons are not provided** for many customer-focused results (Figures 7.2-6, 7.2-7, 7.2-8, 7.2-10, and 7.2-11). Additionally, because only the 2006 level is shown for best-in-class results (Figures 7.2-1 through 7.2-5 and Figure 7.2-9) . . .
- 7.3 Limited comparisons are provided for measures of financial and market performance. For example, **no comparative data are provided** for the Applicant’s income results (Figure 7.3-9). Results related to organizational capacity and efficiency (Figures 7.3-1 through 7.3-7) *include comparisons only to the national Assistance Now Finder, and results for Overall Peer Comparison (Figure 7.3-8) include comparisons to only four food banks in the region* . . .
- 7.4 **No comparative data are provided** for many of the reported workplace-focused outcomes, including safety measures of workplace incidents (Figures 7.4-16 and 7.4-17), absenteeism (Figure 7.4-18), volunteer recruitment and retention (Figures 7.4-6, 7.4-9, 7.4-12, and 7.4-13), annual total training hours (Figure 7.4-1), and volunteer segmentation (Figure 7.4-10). In addition, the comparisons provided are for one year only (2006) . . .
- 7.5 **Comparisons are missing** for some key indicators of process effectiveness related to the Strategic Plan and Balanced Plate Scorecard, such as the Inventory and Resource Effectiveness Index (Figure 7.5-13), RICE Percentage of Uptime and User Interface Accuracy (Figure 7.5-19), Fleet Maintenance Index (Figure 7.5-20), and Key Refrigeration and Grounds Maintenance Metrics (Figure 7.5-21) . . .
- 7.6 . . . In addition, **relevant comparisons are not provided** for most of the leadership and social responsibility results, and, when comparative data are provided (e.g., in Figure 7.6-15), the comparison is presented for only one year . . .

Example of Key Themes Comment Question d: "Considering the Applicant’s key business factors, what are the most significant strengths, vulnerabilities and/or gaps (data, comparisons, linkages) found in the Category 7?"

- **Comparisons are not provided** for many results included in Category 7. In addition, when

comparisons are available, they are presented only for the current year. Without comparative data trended over time, it is not possible for the Applicant to assess its rate of improvement and level of performance relative to other leading organizations.