

# Scoring System

The scoring of responses to Sterling Criteria for Performance Excellence items is based on two evaluation dimensions: process (categories 1–6) and results (category 7).

To score Criteria responses, consider the following information relative to the item requirements and the scoring guidelines:

- The key business factors presented in the Organizational Profile
- The maturity and appropriateness of the approaches, the breadth of their deployment, and the strengths of the learning and improvement process and of the results presented

## Scoring Dimensions

### Process

Process refers to the methods your organization uses and improves, which address the requirements in categories 1–6. The four factors used to evaluate process are approach, deployment, learning, and integration (ADLI). Sterling-based feedback reflects strengths and opportunities for improvement in these factors. A score for a process item is based on a holistic assessment of your overall performance, taking into account the four process factors.

**Approach** comprises:

- the methods used to carry out the process;
- the appropriateness of these methods to the item requirements and your operational environment;
- the effectiveness of your use of the methods;
- the degree to which the approach is repeatable and based on reliable data and information (systematic)

**Deployment** is the extent to which:

- your approach addresses item requirements that are relevant and important to your organization;
- your approach is applied consistently; and
- your approach is used by all appropriate work units.

**Learning** comprises:

- the refinement of your approach through cycles of evaluation and improvement,
- the encouragement of breakthrough change to your approach through innovation and
- the sharing of refinements and innovations with other relevant work units and processes in your organization.

**Integration** is the extent to which:

- your approach is aligned with the organizational needs identified in the Organizational Profile and other process items;
- your measures, information, and improvement systems are complementary across processes and work units; and
- your plans, processes, results, analyses, learning, and actions are harmonized across processes and work units to support organization-wide goals.

In scoring process items, keep in mind that approach, deployment, learning, and integration are linked. Descriptions of approach should always indicate the deployment—consistent with the specific requirements of the item and your organization. As processes mature, the description should also show cycles of learning (including innovation), as well as integration with other processes and work units.

### Results

Results are the outputs and outcomes your organization achieves, which address the requirements in category 7. The four factors used to evaluate results are levels, trends, comparisons, and integration (LeTCI). A score for a results item is based on a holistic assessment of your overall performance, taking into account the four results factors.

**Levels** are:

- your current performance on a meaningful measurement scale.

**Trends** comprise:

- your rate of performance improvement or continuation of good performance in areas of importance (i.e., the slope of data points over time).

**Comparisons** comprise:

- your performance relative to that of other, appropriate organizations, such as competitors or organizations similar to yours; and
- your performance relative to industry leaders or benchmarks.

**Integration** is the extent to which:

- your results measures (often through segmentation address important performance requirements relating to customers, products and services, markets, processes, and action plans identified in your Organizational Profile and in process items;
- your results include valid indicators of future performance; and
- your results reflect harmonization across your processes and work units to support organization-wide goals.

In the scoring of results items, look for data on performance levels, trends, and relevant comparisons for key measures and indicators of your organization's performance, as well as integration with your organization's key requirements.

Results items should also show data on the breadth of the performance results reported. This is directly related to deployment and organizational learning; if improvement processes are widely shared and deployed, there should be corresponding results.

## **“Importance” as a scoring consideration**

A critical consideration in Sterling evaluation and feedback is the importance of your reported process and results to your key business factors. The areas of greatest importance should be identified in your Organizational Profile and in items such as 2.1, 2.2, 3.2, 5.1, 5.2, and 6.1. Your key customer requirements, competitive environment, workforce needs, key strategic objectives, and action plans are particularly important.

## **How to Score an Item Response**

Follow these steps in assigning a score to an item response.

### **Review the scoring guidelines.**

Decide which scoring range (e.g., 50%–65%) is most descriptive of the organization's achievement level as presented in the item response.

Choose this range based on a holistic view of either the four process factors (ADLI) or the four results factors (LeTCI) in aggregate; do not tally or average independent assessments of each of the four factors. The “most descriptive” range is not necessarily a perfect fit and often reflects some gaps between the response and the description of one or more of the factors in the chosen scoring range.

**Read the next higher and the next lower scoring ranges.** Assign a score (e.g., 55%) within the chosen range by evaluating whether the item response is closer to the statements in the next higher or the next lower scoring range.

As you assign scores, keep in mind these descriptions of the midpoint of the scoring continuum.

**A process item score of 50%** represents an approach that meets the overall requirements of the item (is responsive to the leading questions), is deployed consistently and to most work units, has been through some cycles of improvement and learning, and addresses key organizational needs. Higher scores reflect greater achievement, demonstrated by broader deployment, significant organizational learning and increased integration.

**A results item score of 50%** represents a clear indication of good performance levels, beneficial trends, and appropriate comparative data for the results areas that are covered in the item and that are important to the organization's business or mission. Higher scores reflect better performance levels and trends, stronger comparative performance, and broader coverage and integration with the organization's requirements or mission.

## Process Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Categories 1-6)

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0% or 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to item requirements is evident; information is ANECDOTAL. (A)</li> <li>• Little or no DEPLOYMENT of any SYSTEMATIC APPROACH is evident. (D)</li> <li>• An improvement orientation is not evident; improvement is achieved by reacting to problems. (L)</li> <li>• No organizational ALIGNMENT is evident; individual areas or work units operate independently. (I)</li> </ul>
10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item is evident. (A)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is in the early stages of DEPLOYMENT in most areas or work units, inhibiting progress in achieving the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item. (D)</li> <li>• Early stages of a transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation are evident. (L)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is ALIGNED with other areas or work units largely through joint problem solving.(I)</li> </ul>
30%, 35%, 40%, or 45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item, is evident. (A)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is DEPLOYED, although some areas or work units are in early stages of DEPLOYMENT. (D)</li> <li>• The beginning of a SYSTEMATIC APPROACH to evaluation and improvement of KEY PROCESSES is evident. (L)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is in the early stages of ALIGNMENT with the basic organizational needs identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other process items. (I)</li> </ul>
50%, 55%, 60%, or 65%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the OVERALL REQUIREMENTS of the item, is evident. (A)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is well DEPLOYED, although DEPLOYMENT may vary in some areas or work units. (D)</li> <li>• A fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement PROCESS and some organizational LEARNING, including INNOVATION, are in place for improving the efficiency and EFFECTIVENESS of KEY PROCESSES. (L)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is ALIGNED with your overall organizational needs as identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other process items. (I)</li> </ul>
70%, 75%, 80%, or 85%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the item, is evident. (A)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is well DEPLOYED, with no significant gaps. (D)</li> <li>• Fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement and organizational LEARNING, including INNOVATION, are KEY management tools; there is clear evidence of refinement as a result of organizational-level ANALYSIS and sharing. (L)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is INTEGRATED with your current and future organizational needs as identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other process items. (I)</li> </ul>
90%, 95%, or 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An EFFECTIVE, SYSTEMATIC APPROACH, fully responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the item, is evident. (A)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is fully DEPLOYED without significant weaknesses or gaps in any areas or work units. (D)</li> <li>• Fact-based, SYSTEMATIC evaluation and improvement and organizational LEARNING through INNOVATION are KEY organization-wide tools; refinement and INNOVATION, backed by ANALYSIS and sharing, are evident throughout the organization. (L)</li> <li>• The APPROACH is well INTEGRATED with your current and future organizational needs as identified in response to the Organizational Profile and other process items. (I)</li> </ul>

## Results Scoring Guidelines (For Use with Category 7)

SCORE	DESCRIPTION
0% or 5%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are no organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS, or the RESULTS reported are poor. (Le)</li> <li>• TREND data either are not reported or show mainly adverse TRENDS. (T)</li> <li>• Comparative information is not reported. (C)</li> <li>• RESULTS are not reported for any areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (I)</li> </ul>
10%, 15%, 20%, or 25%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item, and early good PERFORMANCE LEVELS are evident. (Le)</li> <li>• Some TREND data are reported, with some adverse TRENDS evident. (T)</li> <li>• Little or no comparative information is reported. (C)</li> <li>• RESULTS are reported for a few areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (I)</li> </ul>
30%, 35%, 40%, or 45%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good organizational PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported, responsive to the BASIC REQUIREMENTS of the item. (Le)</li> <li>• Some TREND data are reported, and most of the TRENDS presented are beneficial. (T)</li> <li>• Early stages of obtaining comparative information is evident. (C)</li> <li>• RESULTS are reported for many areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (I)</li> </ul>
50%, 55%, 60%, or 65%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good organizational PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported, and responsive to the OVERALL REQUIREMENTS of the item. (Le)</li> <li>• Beneficial TRENDS are evident in areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (T)</li> <li>• Some current PERFORMANCE LEVELS have been evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or BENCHMARKS and show areas of good relative PERFORMANCE. (C)</li> <li>• Organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER, market, and PROCESS requirements. (I)</li> </ul>
70%, 75%, 80%, or 85%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good-to-excellent organizational PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported and responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the item. (Le)</li> <li>• Beneficial TRENDS have been sustained over time in most areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (T)</li> <li>• Many to most TRENDS and current PERFORMANCE LEVELS have been evaluated against relevant comparisons and/or BENCHMARKS and show areas of leadership and very good relative PERFORMANCE. (C)</li> <li>• Organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER, market, PROCESS,</li> </ul>
90%, 95%, or 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent organizational PERFORMANCE LEVELS are reported that are fully responsive to the MULTIPLE REQUIREMENTS of the item. (Le)</li> <li>• Beneficial TRENDS have been sustained over time in all areas of importance to the accomplishment of your organization's MISSION. (T)</li> <li>• Industry and BENCHMARK leadership is demonstrated in many areas. (C)</li> <li>• Organizational PERFORMANCE RESULTS and PROJECTIONS are reported for most KEY CUSTOMER, market, PROCESS, and ACTION PLAN requirements. (I)</li> </ul>

*Terms in CAPS are defined in the Glossary of Key Terms*

