



P A R A G O N



**2009
PARAGON AWARD &
FACETS OF EXCELLENCE**

Information and Instruction Booklet

Sponsored By:

**Society for Human Resource Management of Greater Kansas City
(SHRM-KC)**

INTRODUCTION

The Paragon Award Philosophy

The Paragon Process is built on the belief that when organizations follow a conscious, systematic approach to human resource programs and actions that are directly related and aligned to the organization's goals and objectives, the result is an effective and successful human resource function that, in turn, supports the overall effectiveness and success of the organization. The Paragon Award Facets of Excellence focus on the PROCESSES an organization uses to:

- **SELECT** what human resource programs/tools/initiatives it undertakes;
- Ensure there is appropriate linkage and **ALIGNMENT** of human resources programs/tools/initiatives to the organization's **STRATEGY**;
- Determine its **SYSTEMATIC PLANNING AND APPROACH** for successful implementation of human resources programs/tools/initiatives;
- **EXECUTE** the programs/tools/initiatives and **COMMUNICATE** with the stakeholders throughout the process;
- **MEASURE AND EVALUATE** the effectiveness of those human resources programs/tools/initiatives and deliver improved **RESULTS** over time.

The Paragon Process is not prescriptive. It is not an audit against some predetermined checklist. The reason it is neither an audit or prescriptive is that the selection of specific actions, programs, etc. usually depends on factors such as business type and size, organizational relationships, the organization's state of development and employee capabilities and responsibilities – all of which are specific to an individual organization. Therefore, the initiatives, programs, etc. that are appropriate and that contribute to the success of one organization may differ greatly from those used in another organization. This focus on a common process, rather than on specific programs, makes it possible for all organizations, regardless of size or industry, to participate in and benefit from the Paragon Process and be compared to a set of standardized criteria, **not each other**.

Paragon Award Objectives

The Society for Human Resource Management of Greater Kansas City (SHRM-KC) Paragon Award process has three objectives:

- **To help improve Human Resources performance practices and capabilities;**
- **To facilitate communications and share best practices information among organizations of all types; and**
- **To recognize organizations for excellence in Human Resources practices and programs.**

AWARD PARTICIPATION

The Paragon Award is comprised of five separate Facets of Excellence. Organizations may apply for the entire Paragon Award, or one or more of the individual Facets of Excellence.

A company that applies for individual Facets over time can receive the Paragon Award once all five Facets have been earned. To receive the Paragon Award based on the accumulation of the five individual Facets over time, the organization must complete the "Measurement, Evaluation, and Results" section for all five Facets in the year the entire Paragon Award is sought. This requirement is necessary to demonstrate continued excellence in the previously-awarded Facets. Below is a brief description of the two types of awards:

- **The Paragon Award** – Awarded for overall excellence in Human Resources practices and programs as evidenced by achievement in all five Facets of Excellence.
- **Facet of Excellence Award** – Awarded to an organization for excellence in one (or more) of the five Facets as compared to the criteria established for each Facet.

FACETS OF EXCELLENCE

The five Facets of Excellence are:

1. Employment and Communication
2. Organizational and Employee Learning & Development
3. Recruitment, Selection and Onboarding
4. Total Rewards
5. Workplace Diversity

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. An **“Intent to Apply”** form should be submitted including the Facet(s) being applied for and the date you expect to submit your application. Ideally the Intent to Apply should be received by SHRM-KC no less than 60 days from your anticipated application submission date.
2. Application fees should be made payable to SHRM-KC, and can be submitted either with your Intent to Apply or at application submission. The fee schedule is as follows:

Number of Facets Applying For	Cost Per Facet
One Facet	\$150
Two Facets	\$125
Three or More Facets	\$100
Maximum Fee	\$400

3. The Intent to Apply, Facet Application(s) and fees should each be mailed to:

SHRM-KC
PO Box 860272
Shawnee, KS 66286-0272
816-472-4762

4. Applicants must adhere to the following submission regulations:
 - One Application Report must be submitted in both electronic and hard copy format.
 - Fees not submitted with the Intent to Apply must be included with the Application Report.
 - Companies can apply for one or more (up to all five) Facets of Excellence in a given year; however, companies can only apply for any given Facet of Excellence one time per year. In other words, if a Facet of Excellence does not meet the criteria in a given year, the company must wait until the following calendar year to re-submit the Application Report for that particular Facet of Excellence.
 - Application Reports should be completed fully yet concisely and may not include supplemental materials such as benefit booklets, employee handbooks, etc.
 - Spacing in the report may not be less than standard and the font used may not be smaller than 10 points.
 - All Application Reports must be completed in the template that is provided for each Facet of Excellence. There is space provided for every question in each Category within all Facets.
5. Applicants are expected to respond fully and accurately to each question within each Category of the Facets of Excellence. Information should be based on the most current and relevant data and pertain to the most recent calendar or fiscal year. Examiners will interpret missing information as an indication that your organization does not currently have a process or program in place to satisfy the requirements of the criteria question. Examiners and Judges will consider factual, objective, reliable information, and applicants are encouraged to avoid excessive embellishment.

APPLICATION REPORTS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH ALL REGULATIONS SHOWN ABOVE WILL BE RETURNED TO THE APPLICANT AND WILL NOT BE EVALUATED OR FURTHER PROCESSED.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Paragon and Facet of Excellence applications are reviewed and evaluated by a Panel of Examiners comprised of Senior Human Resource professionals in compliance with strict rules regarding conflict of interest and confidentiality. A six-stage process is followed:

- Stage 1*-- Independent review and evaluation by members of the Panel of Examiners assigned to a particular Facet and/or Application;
- Stage 2*-- Consensus review and evaluation of each application;
- Stage 3* – Follow-up phone calls with each applicant company for verification and clarification of HR practices and results;
- Stage 4* – Consensus Reports made by Panel of Examiners to Panel of Judges;
- Stage 5* – Panel of Judges reviews Consensus Reports and prepares Final Scorecard to determine merit for award; and
- Stage 6* – Feedback provided to applicants.

AWARD RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Because one of the objectives of the Paragon process is to “facilitate communication and sharing of best practices information,” recipients of the Paragon Award and/or any Facet of Excellence Award may be asked to make a brief best practices presentation at an SHRM-KC event. Additionally, award recipients should prepare for the likelihood they may be contacted by other organizations that are interested in learning more about your Human Resources practices and programs.

Award recipients may be featured in an article posted to the SHRM-KC website to further share best practices with our membership.

SCORING PROCESS

Examiners and Judges

The SHRM-KC Board of Directors identifies subject matter experts who will serve as **Examiners** for all applications received for the Facet of Excellence pertaining to their area of expertise. Additionally, the SHRM-KC Board of Directors assigns a panel of **Judges** who are senior level HR practitioners who possess a body of knowledge encompassing all Facets of Excellence.

The Examiners each review and score the applications for their Facet of Excellence independent of the other Examiners and then come together to prepare a Consensus Report that is provided to the Panel of Judges. The Panel of Judges is responsible for reviewing the applications received from each applicant company in all Facets of Excellence. This process has a built in calibration procedure for consistency and equity among all Facet applications. The Judges review the applications independent of one another and then review the Consensus Report from the Examiner Team for each Facet of Excellence. The Panel of Judges then collaborates to compile the Final Scorecard prepared for the applicant company.

Balanced Scorecard

A balanced scorecard approach is used when reviewing and scoring each application. An overview of the balanced scorecard and the scoring process is included below the scorecard.

		SCORING CRITERIA								
Scoring Dimension		90% - 100%	70% - 80%	50% - 60%	30% - 40%	10% - 20%	0	Raw Score	Weight (%)	Subtotal Score
Scoring Section 1:	Strategic Alignment	5	4	3	2	1	0		25%	0.00
	Systematic Planning and Approach	5	4	3	2	1	0		25%	0.00
	Execution and Communication	5	4	3	2	1	0		25%	0.00
Scoring Section 2:	Measurement, Evaluation, and Results	5	4	3	2	1	0		25%	0.00
								Total Score		0

1. Category: Each Facet has either 3 or 4 Categories
 - a. There is a separate Scorecard for every Category
 - b. The “Final Score” has a “Cum. Score” column that calculates all Category “Total Scores”
2. Scoring Dimensions:
 - a. Scoring Section 1:
 - i. Strategic Alignment
 - ii. Strategic Planning and Approach
 - iii. Execution and Communication
 - b. Scoring Section 2:
 - i. Measurement, Evaluation and Results
3. Scoring Criteria: Refer to the descriptions for each of the percentage groupings
 - a. Included on pages 6 and 7 of this Instruction Booklet
 - b. Raw Score: A raw score of 0 through 5 is input in the purple shaded area
 - c. The raw score (0 – 5) corresponds with the percentage bands at the top of the scorecard
 - d. A raw score of 3 represents a 50% - 60% percentage band score based on the descriptive scoring criteria
4. Weight %: The weights have been assigned equally across all Scoring Dimensions and all Categories
5. Subtotal Score: This is a formula that will calculate automatically based on the raw scores entered multiplied by the weight assigned
6. Total Score: This will automatically calculate as a sum of the subtotal scores within the scorecard
 - a. This represents the total score for the Category within the Facet
7. The Final Score for a Facet of Excellence is a compilation of the scorecards for the Categories within that Facet.

Scoring Guidelines

When scoring an application, Paragon Award Examiners and Judges apply the “Paragon and Facet of Excellence Scoring Dimensions” that are shown on pages 6 and 7 of this booklet. All questions within each Category of the Facet of Excellence should be answered. Responses should reflect what is important to the organization.

APPLICANT FEEDBACK PROCESS

Each applicant will receive an overall scorecard along with a brief summary containing overall feedback on the application.

PREPARING TO APPLY

It is suggested that applicants consider the following steps before beginning the application process:

1. Review this booklet to gain an overall understanding of the Paragon Award Philosophy, objectives of the Paragon Award, application process, scoring rationale, and the applicant feedback process.
2. Complete the Readiness Assessment for any Facet you are considering applying for.
3. Review the Facet of Excellence Application Forms to fully understand the Categories and questions you will respond to.
4. Determine which Facet(s) of Excellence you plan to complete and submit for the coming year.
5. Complete and submit the Intent to Apply.
6. Meet with the HR staff and other stakeholders to:
 - 1) Develop an action plan for completing the application. One suggestion is to assign Facet of Excellence Categories to different individuals or different teams familiar with the subject matter of the Facet.
 - 2) Determine the overall company “image” or “identity” you want to portray in the application, and make sure that each person working on the Paragon team understands it. It is important that your final application captures the true spirit of your organization, especially those features that make it unique or that define the culture.
 - 3) Brainstorm to determine, for each Facet of Excellence Category, the key programs/tools/initiatives that you want to include in your application. This group process often prevents exclusion of important information. Discuss and determine “linkages” that should be evident in your application.
7. Develop a draft response to each item within each Facet you are applying for.
8. Edit and check to see that the overall company image has been accurately portrayed and that appropriate linkages have been demonstrated.
9. Finalize the overall Application Report. The report should be complete and concise and the font should be no smaller than 10 points with not less than standard single line spacing.

CONFIDENTIALITY STATEMENT

The Paragon Award process is administered under a strict code of ethics, which ensures the identities of applicants are not disclosed to anyone other than the SHRM-KC Board of Directors and the group of Examiners and the Panel of Judges unless the applicant receives the Paragon Award or Paragon Facet of Excellence Award, or unless the applicant gives express permission for that disclosure. The individuals to whom applicant identities are disclosed are instructed about, and specifically agree to honor, this confidentiality requirement. In addition, any commentary, feedback, or scoring information developed during the review is kept strictly confidential.

PARAGON AND FACET OF EXCELLENCE SCORING DIMENSIONS

SCORING SECTION 1:

RAW SCORE	SCORE	STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT, SYSTEMATIC PLANNING AND APPROACH & EXECUTION AND COMMUNICATION
0	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No strategic alignment indicated ▪ No systematic planning and approach evident; anecdotal information ▪ No execution and communication efforts stated
1	10% to 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Developing initial strategic alignment of objectives ▪ Beginning of a systematic planning and approach to the Intent & Purpose of Facet ▪ Major gaps exist in execution that would inhibit progress in achieving the Intent and Purpose of the Facet ▪ Early stages of a transition from reacting to problems to a general improvement orientation ▪ Early stages of communication planning that support baseline philosophies and practices
2	30% to 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initial level of strategic alignment stated ▪ An effective, systematic planning and approach, responsive to the Intent and Purpose of the Facet ▪ Approach is applied, although some areas or work units are in early stages of execution ▪ Beginning of a systematic approach to evaluation and improvement of basic processes ▪ Intermediate level of communication planning
3	50% to 60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Intermediate level of strategic alignment stated ▪ An effective, systematic planning and approach, responsive to the overall Intent and Purpose of the Facet ▪ Approach is well-implemented, although execution may vary in some work units ▪ A fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process is in place ▪ Communication approach is aligned with basic organizational needs identified in the other areas of the application
4	70% to 80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Advanced strategic alignment considered ▪ An effective, systematic planning and approach, responsive to multiple requirements of the Facet ▪ Approach is well-implemented, with no significant execution gaps ▪ A fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process and organizational learning/sharing are key management tools; clear evidence of refinement and improved integration as a result of organizational-level analysis and sharing ▪ Communication approach is well-integrated with organizational needs identified in the other areas of the application
5	90% to 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Strategic alignment is clearly stated and supports objectives ▪ An effective, systematic planning and approach, fully responsive to all the requirements of the Facet ▪ Approach is fully implemented without significant weaknesses or gaps in any executed areas or work units ▪ A very strong, fact-based, systematic evaluation and improvement process and extensive organizational learning/sharing are key management tools; strong refinement and integration, backed by excellent organizational-level analysis and sharing ▪ Communication approach is fully integrated with organizational needs identified in the other areas of the application

SCORING SECTION 2:

RAW SCORE	SCORE	MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION AND RESULTS
0	0%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A lack of measurement, evaluation and results in areas reported
1	10% to 20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Some improvements <i>and/or</i> early good performance levels in a few areas ▪ Measurement, evaluation and results not reported for many to most areas of key importance to the organization's Human Resources practices
2	30% to 40%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measurement of improvements <i>and/or</i> good performance levels in many areas of key importance to the organization's Human Resources practices ▪ Early stages of developing trends and obtaining comparative information for evaluation ▪ Measurement, evaluation and results reported for many to most areas of key importance to the organization's Human Resources practices
3	50% to 60%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measurement of improvement trends <i>and/or</i> good performance levels reported for most areas of key importance to the organization's Human Resources practices ▪ No pattern of adverse trends and no poor performance levels in areas of key importance to the organization's Human Resources practices ▪ Some trends <i>and/or</i> current performance levels — evaluated against relevant comparisons <i>and/or</i> benchmarks — show areas of strength <i>and/or</i> good to very good relative performance levels ▪ Human Resources measurements, evaluations and results address most key employee needs, process and organizational requirements
4	70% to 80%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measurement of current performance is good to excellent in areas of key importance to the organization's Human Resources practices ▪ Most improvement trends <i>and/or</i> current performance levels are sustained ▪ Many to most trends <i>and/or</i> current performance levels — evaluated against relevant comparisons <i>and/or</i> benchmarks — show areas of leadership and very good relative performance levels ▪ Human Resources measurements, evaluations and results address most key employee needs, organizational, process, and action plan requirements
5	90% to 100%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Measurement of current performance is excellent in most key areas of importance to the organization's Human Resources practices ▪ Excellent improvement trends <i>and/or</i> sustained excellent performance levels in most areas ▪ Evidence of industry and benchmark leadership demonstrated in many areas ▪ Thorough measurement and evaluation; business results fully address key employee needs, organizational, process, and action plan requirements