

14 May, 2012

PRESS RELEASE

Training launched for Business Excellence Awards evaluators

The training of evaluators for the annual Fiji Business Excellence Awards (FBEA) was launched in Suva today, facilitated by a senior evaluator from the US-based Baldrige national quality awards after which the Fiji awards are fashioned.

Launching the week-long training programme, Minister for Labour, Employment and Industrial Relations, Jone Usamate shared his experience as a FBEA evaluator and challenged this year's candidates to implement the principles learned in other organizations.

"Becoming an evaluator is one of the best ways that you can develop your managerial talent in any organization," Mr Usamate said.

He encouraged the evaluators not to limit their share of expertise to the organization they would assess and challenged them to take on pet projects either at a non-government organization, a town council, a local church or mosque, where they could implement these principles.

"The aim of the Fiji Business Excellence Awards is to develop world class organizations, not just the ones you work for, but everywhere. Once we can do that, then we can raise the productivity of the country."

Director National Training and Productivity Centre, Kamlesh Prakash, said this year marked FBEA's 14th year of existence, and to date, 116 awards have been presented to 63 organisations in the country.

A senior evaluator with the US-based Malcolm Baldrige national quality awards, Paul Steel is facilitating the training of 80 evaluators at JJ's on the Park in Suva.

Mr Prakash said more than 200 evaluators have been trained and certified.

"The growing number of applications for the awards makes it imperative to increase the number of evaluators," he said.

"This year we are delighted to include 30 new evaluators with 50 existing evaluators to be trained on the Baldrige framework.

"You are not evaluators of the Fiji Business Excellence Awards but act also as important functionaries and advocates of the FBEA in the country," he told the selected evaluators.

He said an evaluator was required to assess submissions from applicants, conduct site visits and prepare feedback reports.

"As evaluators, you are required to work in teams and carry out your responsibilities with utmost dedication and integrity.

“Your roles will make a great difference to the organizations that you are going to evaluate and hence it is vital that you all have a profound understanding of the business excellence framework, its principles, and how business excellence can translate into organizational improvement.”

Mr Prakash added the FBEA was a tool available for all Fijian organizations to strengthen their management systems and processes holistically.

“It is internationally benchmarked and provides standards for managing people, innovation and service, which are key enablers of business excellence.”

The FBEA evaluator training concludes this Friday.

The Business Excellence Awards will be held at the Sheraton Denarau Fiji on November 10.

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