

Best Practices Self-Benchmarking Tool Instructions for Use

1. Download the Self-Benchmarking Tool (Excel file) to your computer from the Best Practices project website (<http://www.eebestpractices.com/>). The file name is BP Self Benchmarking Tool _Final 110707_with Scoring Sheets.xls
2. Open the file and navigate through the worksheets to find your program area. If none of the program areas seems to fit, use the Cross Program Best Practices worksheet.
3. You may either do the Self Benchmarking electronically (in the spreadsheet) or on paper.
 - a. If you choose to do it on paper, you will need to print the appropriate scoring sheet (Download the print version file) for your program area.
 - b. If you choose to do it electronically, you may copy your program area worksheet(s) into a new file and save separately. This will be simpler than trying to find your results among 23 other worksheets in the Master file.
4. Once you have selected your sheet and saved to a separate file, or printed off the scoring sheet, you are ready to self-benchmark your program.
 - a. First, you will need to fill in column F, Applicability. If the Best Practice is applicable to your program (most should be), leave the cell blank. If the Best Practice is **not** applicable (very few should be), put an NA in the column. The spreadsheet will use the NAs to recalculate your maximum score. (If you are doing this on paper, you will need to recalculate your maximum score yourself, by subtracting 2 points from the maximum possible points shown for each Best Practice that you listed as NA.)
 - b. Next, you will need to fill in column G, Self-Benchmark Score. *This is where you do the actual scoring.* For each Best Practice that is applicable, carefully read and consider the descriptions which are associated with each score. Then you will need to decide which description **best** describes your program's current activities. The

score associated with this description should be filled in the scoring sheet into column G.

- c. If you are doing the Self Benchmarking electronically, the spreadsheet will automatically populate column H, Item and Program Score, and total up your score (at the bottom of column H).
- d. Now you are ready to see how you did. There are 2 ways to do this:
 - i. You can get the most value from this Self-Benchmarking by examining the areas you are weak in and determining how you can make your program stronger. Review the Best Practices report for ideas on what to do. And then do them!
 - ii. Or, you can use a traditional grading scale to perform a high-level assessment of how your program performs against these Best Practices.
 1. $\geq 90\%$ of the maximum score is **Excellent**
 2. 70 to 89% of the maximum score is **Fair - some improvement needed**
 3. $\leq 69\%$ of the maximum score is **Poor - Needs significant improvement**

Even if you choose this high level assessment, you should pay special attention to weak spots and commit to making your program stronger