BALANCE TO BASELINE

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BETTERMENT PILLAR WORKBOOK

Improve - Defect Resolution, Training, Culture, Retention & Incentives

Interior Climate Solutions

Meet the baseline. Not more. Not less.

Be In Balance.

The Balance to Baseline Approach

Balance to Baseline is an operating philosophy that assigns a measurable standard (a baseline) to every activity in the company and holds the entire organization accountable to meeting that standard. Not exceeding it recklessly. Not falling short of it quietly. Meeting it. Consistently. Predictably. In balance.

The Employee-Up Principle: This workbook is built on a fundamental belief: the people who do the work are the best people to document the work. Management does not write your SOPs. YOU do. You are the expert in your process. You know the steps, the shortcuts, the pitfalls, and the nuances that no manager sitting in an office could capture. When you document your process, you own it. When you own it, you take pride in it. When you take pride in it, you improve it. That is Balance to Baseline.

How This Workbook Works

This workbook contains task worksheets for every baseline that must be established within the BETTERMENT Pillar. For each task:

1. **A Process Owner is assigned.** This is the employee who currently performs or is closest to this work. They own the documentation.
2. **Items to Define are listed.** These are the specific decisions, metrics, values, or standards that must be established. Fill in the “Baseline Value / Decision” column.
3. **An SOP Framework is provided.** For every process, the owner documents the step-by-step procedure using the standard template. This becomes the official SOP.
4. **Management reviews and approves.** The owner presents their completed worksheet to peers and leadership. Feedback is incorporated. The SOP is published to the central repository.
5. **The owner maintains it forever.** When the process changes, the owner updates the SOP. Ownership can be transferred, but the principle remains: the person who does the work owns the documentation.

Completing a Task Worksheet

Step 1 - Read the task description. Understand what baseline needs to be established and why it matters to the business.

Step 2 - Fill in ownership. Management assigns the Process Owner (employee) and the Reviewer (manager). Set a target completion date.

Step 3 - Answer every question in the Items to Define table. Be specific. Write numbers, not feelings. “48 hours” not “quickly.” “85%” not “high.” If you don’t know the answer, write your best estimate and flag it for discussion.

Step 4 - Document the SOP. Using the framework provided, write the step-by-step process as if you were teaching a brand-new hire who has never done this before. If they can follow your steps and produce the right result, your SOP is good.

Step 5 - Present and get approved. Share your completed worksheet with your team and your manager. Accept feedback. Revise. Get the final sign-off. Your SOP is now official.

The BETTERMENT Pillar: Improve - Defect Resolution, Training, Culture, Retention & Incentives

The Betterment Pillar is what makes Balance to Baseline a living system rather than a static policy manual. Betterment uses the data collected from operating at baseline to continuously refine baselines. It also owns the human side of the business: developing skills, maintaining a positive culture, retaining good people, and aligning incentives so that everyone benefits when the company operates in balance.

This is where the employee-up philosophy is most visible - employees own their SOPs, drive their development, and share in the rewards.

B-to-Baseline areas in this pillar:

- **Bug to Baseline:** Process defect identification and resolution.
- **Breakdown to Baseline:** Incident response and failure recovery.
- **Build-Up to Baseline:** Training, skills development, and certifications.
- **Behavior to Baseline:** Culture, conduct, and professional standards.
- **Belonging to Baseline:** Team morale, engagement, and retention.
- **Bonus to Baseline:** Incentive structure and compensation alignment.

Task Index

#	Task	B-to-Baseline Area	Owner	Status
36	Create Process Defect Log & Review Cadence	Bug to Baseline		
37	Define Incident Response Protocols	Breakdown to Baseline		
38	Build Skills Matrix by Role	Build-Up to Baseline		
39	Create Individual Development Plans	Build-Up to Baseline		
40	Document Code of Conduct	Behavior to Baseline		
41	Design Employee Engagement Survey & Action Plan	Belonging to Baseline		
42	Design the Bonus Structure	Bonus to Baseline		
43	Establish Monthly Recognition Program	Belonging to Baseline		
44	Define Retention Strategy & Exit Interview Process	Belonging to Baseline		

TASK 36: Create Process Defect Log & Review Cadence

Build the system for employees at every level to report process defects without blame, and establish the weekly review and resolution cadence.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* __________________ *Role:* __________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* __________________ *Role:* __________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	□ *Not Started* □ *In Progress* □ *Draft Complete* □ *Reviewed* □ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What tool will be used for the defect log (google spreadsheet, Sharepoint project board, Zendesk ICSNext forms)?	
2	Who can submit a defect report (everyone - no restrictions)?	
3	What information is required for a defect report (process name, description of defect, frequency, impact)?	
4	How are defects prioritized (revenue impact, customer impact, frequency)?	
5	Who reviews the defect log weekly (leadership meeting)?	
6	What is the target time to assign an owner after a defect is reported?	
7	What is the target time to resolve a defect after assignment?	
8	How is resolution verified (not just declared fixed)?	
9	How is defect count trended over time?	
10	How are resolved defects celebrated to reinforce the improvement culture?	

SOP Documentation Framework:

The employee who owns this process documents it below. This becomes the official SOP. You do the work - you write the steps. Management supports, but YOU own it.

Process Name	
Purpose (Why does this process exist?)	
Trigger (What starts this process?)	
Inputs (What do you need before starting?)	
Step-by-Step Procedure	*1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8.*
Tools / Systems Used	
Output (What is produced?)	
Handoff (Who gets it next?)	
Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 37: Define Incident Response Protocols

Document response protocols for the top 10 failure scenarios including communication chains, response time SLAs, and post-incident review procedures.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	◻ *Not Started* ◻ *In Progress* ◻ *Draft Complete* ◻ *Reviewed* ◻ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What are the top 10 incident scenarios (critical equipment failure at customer, project budget blowout, safety incident, vehicle accident, customer escalation, portal outage, tech no-show, weather emergency, data breach, others)?	
2	For each scenario: what is the response SLA?	
3	For each scenario: who is the first point of contact?	
4	For each scenario: what is the communication chain (who notifies whom)?	
5	For each scenario: what immediate actions must be taken?	
6	What is the on-call escalation schedule by zone?	
7	What is the post-incident review template (what happened, root cause, corrective actions, owner, timeline)?	
8	What is the timeline for post-incident review (target: 5 business days)?	
9	How are corrective actions tracked to completion?	
10	How is incident data used to update SOPs, training, and preventive procedures?	

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Output (What is produced?)	
Handoff (Who gets it next?)	
Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 38: Build Skills Matrix by Role

Define the required competencies, certifications, and skill levels for every role in the company. Assess all current employees against the matrix.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	☐ *Not Started* ☐ *In Progress* ☐ *Draft Complete* ☐ *Reviewed* ☐ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What technical competencies are required for technicians by level (apprentice, journeyman, lead)?	
2	What certifications are required (EPA 608, NATE, state licenses, OSHA 10/30, CFCs)?	
3	What equipment-specific training is required (VRF, controls, refrigeration)?	
4	What competencies are required for dispatchers (portal proficiency, scheduling software, customer communication)?	
5	What competencies are required for CSRs?	
6	What competencies are required for Service Managers (leadership, coaching, technical troubleshooting)?	
7	How is each employee’s current skill level assessed against the matrix?	
8	What gaps exist by zone?	
9	What is the annual training hours target per employee (target: 40 hours for techs)?	
10	What is the budget for training and certifications annually?	

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Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 39: Create Individual Development Plans

For every employee, create a development plan that closes the gap between current skill level and the skills matrix requirements.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	☐ *Not Started* ☐ *In Progress* ☐ *Draft Complete* ☐ *Reviewed* ☐ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What is the format for individual development plans (goals, training activities, timeline, mentor)?	
2	How frequently are development plans reviewed with the employee (target: semi-annually)?	
3	What training resources are available (manufacturer training, distributor classes, online, trade schools)?	
4	What manufacturer partnerships exist for equipment-specific training?	
5	What is the apprentice-to-journeyman progression path and timeline?	
6	What cross-training opportunities exist (tech learning dispatch, dispatcher learning quoting)?	
7	How is Balance to Baseline philosophy training incorporated into ongoing development?	
8	What is the budget allocation per employee for development?	
9	How does training completion factor into performance reviews and bonuses?	
10	Who is responsible for tracking development plan completion by zone?	

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Tools / Systems Used	
Output (What is produced?)	
Handoff (Who gets it next?)	
Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 40: Document Code of Conduct

Create the written code of conduct covering professionalism, honesty, customer interaction, safety, and the specific behavioral standards that make Balance to Baseline work.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	☐ *Not Started* ☐ *In Progress* ☐ *Draft Complete* ☐ *Reviewed* ☐ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What are the core values of ICS (reliability, precision, honesty, respect, balance)?	
2	What customer interaction standards apply (appearance, communication, site etiquette)?	
3	What honesty-in-reporting standards are critical (time tracking accuracy, defect reporting, no gaming)?	
4	What safety standards are non-negotiable?	
5	What internal communication standards apply (respectful disagreement, constructive feedback, no gossip)?	
6	What social media and public representation guidelines exist?	
7	What is the progressive discipline process for conduct violations?	
8	How is the code of conduct reviewed with employees (annual, signed acknowledgment)?	
9	How do managers model the expected behaviors?	
10	How are conduct standards incorporated into performance reviews?	

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Tools / Systems Used	
Output (What is produced?)	
Handoff (Who gets it next?)	
Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 41: Design Employee Engagement Survey & Action Plan

Create the annual engagement survey, communication plan for sharing results, and the action planning process for addressing feedback.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	☐ *Not Started* ☐ *In Progress* ☐ *Draft Complete* ☐ *Reviewed* ☐ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What survey tool will be used?	
2	What questions will be asked (satisfaction, belonging, clarity of expectations, manager effectiveness, growth opportunity, work-life balance)?	
3	When will the survey be conducted (annually? semi-annually?)?	
4	How will anonymity be ensured?	
5	How will results be shared with employees (transparency)?	
6	What is the action planning process for areas scoring below threshold?	
7	Who owns engagement improvement actions by zone?	
8	What is the target participation rate (target: 85%+)?	
9	What is the target engagement score?	
10	How are results compared year-over-year to measure improvement?	

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Tools / Systems Used	
Output (What is produced?)	
Handoff (Who gets it next?)	
Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 42: Design the Bonus Structure

Create the quarterly bonus structure tied to baseline attainment metrics by role. The structure must reward meeting baselines, not exceeding them.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	☐ *Not Started* ☐ *In Progress* ☐ *Draft Complete* ☐ *Reviewed* ☐ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What is the total annual bonus pool budget?	
2	How is the pool funded (percentage of revenue, percentage of profit, fixed budget)?	
3	What is the bonus calculation formula by role (composite score of baseline attainment metrics)?	
4	What is the full bonus payout at 90%+ baseline attainment?	
5	What is the partial payout at 75-89% attainment?	
6	What is the threshold below which no bonus is paid (below 75%)?	
7	Must the company also meet its overall budget baseline for the pool to fund?	
8	How are individual metrics weighted in the composite score?	
9	What is the payout frequency (quarterly)?	
10	How is the bonus structure communicated to all employees?	
11	How is attainment tracked in real-time so employees can see progress?	

12	What is the annual review process for adjusting the bonus structure?	

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Baseline Standard (How do we know it was done right?)	
Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 43: Establish Monthly Recognition Program

Create a structured recognition program that celebrates baseline attainment consistently across all zones.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ___________________ *Role:* ___________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ___________________ *Role:* ___________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	☐ *Not Started* ☐ *In Progress* ☐ *Draft Complete* ☐ *Reviewed* ☐ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What recognition categories align with the five pillars?	
2	What is the recognition cadence (monthly team, quarterly company-wide)?	
3	What are the recognition awards (verbal, written, gift cards, public acknowledgment)?	
4	How are nominees identified (manager nomination, peer nomination, metric-based)?	
5	How is recognition communicated (team meeting, email, company-wide announcement)?	
6	What is the budget for recognition awards?	
7	How does recognition tie to baseline attainment specifically (not just heroics)?	
8	How are remote/field employees included in recognition?	
9	What is the Zone Manager’s role in driving recognition?	
10	How is recognition participation tracked by zone?	

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Common Mistakes to Avoid	
Time Budget (How long should this take?)	

Notes / Additional Context:

TASK 44: Define Retention Strategy & Exit Interview Process

Establish the proactive retention strategy and the systematic exit interview process for capturing data on why people leave.

Process Owner (Employee)	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Reviewer / Manager	*Name:* ____________________ *Role:* ____________________
Date Assigned	____/____/________
Target Completion	____/____/________
Status	◻ *Not Started* ◻ *In Progress* ◻ *Draft Complete* ◻ *Reviewed* ◻ *Approved*

Items to Define, Decide, or Document:

#	Question / Item to Define	Baseline Value / Decision
1	What is the current voluntary turnover rate by zone and role?	
2	What is the target turnover rate?	
3	What are the top reasons for voluntary departures (compensation, management, growth, work-life)?	
4	What retention strategies are in place (competitive pay, benefits, career path, culture)?	
5	What is the exit interview format and who conducts it?	
6	What data is captured in exit interviews and how is it analyzed?	
7	How frequently is turnover data reviewed with leadership (quarterly)?	
8	What proactive retention checkpoints exist (6-month, 1-year, 2-year conversations)?	
9	What is the 90-day new hire retention rate target (target: 85%+)?	
10	How does Balance to Baseline philosophy support retention (clarity, fairness, shared reward)?	

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Notes / Additional Context: