10 Tips for the ATD BEST Awards Application

Agenda

✓ Overview of BEST Awards

✓ Walk through application

✓ Tips for creating a solid entry

BEST Awards

- Recognize organizations that demonstrate enterprise-wide success as a result of employee talent development

- They use talent development as a strategic business tool to get results.

- BEST winners are...

  Building talent
  Enterprise wide
  Strategically driving a
  Talent development culture and delivers results.

BEST Awards

- Talent development has an enterprise-wide role
  - Involved in the executive team, creating solutions to business issues, and setting organizational strategy

- Learning has value in the organization's culture
  - Learning opportunities for employees, C-level involvement, learning for growth of the organization, and innovation

- Learning links to individual and organizational performance
  - Alignment with the business, efficiency, measurement of the effectiveness of learning, and success with non-training solutions for business needs

- Investment is made in talent dev and performance initiatives

Why Apply for BEST?

Applicants tell us:

✓ Holistic review of talent development efforts

✓ Identify gaps

✓ Identify value proposition to business

Application FAQs

- The online awards portal can be found at:
  https://atdbest.secure-platform.com

- Application is due **November 2, 2020.**

- Entry fee is US $175. It is payable as the last step before submitting your online application.

- You can pay by credit card.

Tip #1: Follow the Rules

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- The BEST application is a blind application.
  - Entry form should contain **NO mention of:**
    - company name
    - any identifying programs
    - people
    - achievements

- A few questions offer the option to upload a supporting graphic, do NOT include an appendix, addendum or any supplemental information beyond what is asked in the relevant question. Limit the upload to two pages.

- Links to outside websites or videos are not allowed in the entry form.

Tip 2 & 3: Be Concise and Mind Your Graphics

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- Open-ended questions have word limits. These are hard coded into the online form. Be concise in your answers.

- Ensure no company identifying information appears in any supporting documents or graphics you upload. This includes file names of supporting documents.

Application Walk Through

Application Sections

A. Scope and Role of Talent Development Function

B. Strategic Use and Impact of Talent Development Function

C. Evidence That Developing and Managing Talent Is Valued in the Organizational Culture

D. Evidence of the Link between Talent Development and Performance

E. Evidence of Effective Measurement and Evaluation

F. Talent Development Support

Section A:

Scope and Role
of the Talent Development Function

Section A

Purpose of section is to determine the strategic contribution of talent development.

✓ Describe talent strategy

✓ Senior leader engagement/support

✓ TD Team Skills Up to Date

Tip 4: Think Holistically

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Think about the strategic value of talent development to the organization and communicate that theme throughout the questions in Section A.

Tip 5: Pay Attention to the Question

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- Answer the question asked.

- Distinguish between "what," "why," and "how" questions.

Strategic Use and Impact of the Talent Development Function

Section B

- The purpose of this section is to determine whether and how the TD function contributes strategically to the organization.

    - ✓ Explain how strategic goals are supported
    - ✓ How TD helped THREE critical business issues
    - ✓ Innovation
    - ✓ Skills gaps and upskilling/reskilling
    - ✓ Bonus: impact of pandemic on strategy/business approach

Section C

Evidence That Developing and Managing Talent Is Valued in the Organizational Culture

Section C

- The purpose of this section is to determine how talent development is done, what is offered, and how employees use what is offered.

    ✓ Modalities of formal learning/development opportunities
    ✓ On-the-job training
    ✓ TD function's role in organizational culture
    ✓ Learning plans/pathways
    ✓ Succession planning
    ✓ Performance management
    ✓ Talent management initiatives

Tip 6: Be Thorough

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Include relevant detail and thought processes to help reviewers understand intent of efforts or business reasons for decisions.

Section D

Evidence Of A Link Between Talent Development And Performance

Section D

- The purpose of this section is to determine how the organization uses talent development for organizational AND individual performance.

  ✓ Identify metrics used to measure performance

  ✓ Describe how talent development affected two of the selected metrics

Closer Look at Metrics

- Q16: Which of the following metrics does the enterprise use to measure its performance?

    - Ability to retain essential employees
    - Employee satisfaction
    - Quality of products/services
    - Customer satisfaction
    - Cycle time reduction or improvement
    - Sales/revenue
    - Etc…

- Q17: Select 2 items, explain how talent development practices contributed to results achieved. Indicate beginning and ending metrics in the 12-month span.

Tip 7: Metrics Matter

- Pick two examples where you have strong examples of how talent development contributed to performance. You should show starting data and ending data for your example.

  - ✓ This is a big miss for many applicants.

  - ✓ Look at your critical business needs and determine if you have examples to share here.

Section E:

Evidence of Effective Measurement and Evaluation

Section E

- The purpose of this section is to determine how efficient the talent development function is.

  ✓ How do you measure efficiency

  ✓ Explain two examples and give data to support

  ✓ Percentage of programs measured/evaluated

  ✓ Collecting eval data

Closer Look at Metrics

- Q18: Which of the following metrics are used to rate the efficiency of your talent development function?

    - Content development costs
    - Content development cycle time
    - Cost savings realized through outsourcing
    - Cost savings realized through use of technology
    - Learning hours delivered
    - Etc...

- Q19: Select 2 metrics you use and describe the efficiencies gained. Indicate starting and ending metrics for the past 12 months.

Remember Tip 7!

METRICS MATTER

✓ Pick two examples where you have strong examples. You should show starting data and ending data for your example.

✓ This is a big miss for many applicants.

✓ Look at your critical business needs in Section A and determine if you have examples to share here.

Section E ...cont'd

- In addition to efficiency, this section also looks at the depth of evaluation efforts.

  - ✓ What percentage of programs are evaluated

  - ✓ Pre- and/or post-measurements

  - ✓ Types of data collected for evaluation

  - ✓ Business impacts

Talent Development Support

Section E

- The purpose of this section is to demonstrate that the talent development function is adequately supported given all of the information previously share.

- Reviewers ask themselves, "Does this make sense?"

Section E

- CEO/COO endorsement (no names!)

- You'll need to know:

  - ✓ Number of full-time TD staff

  - ✓ Number of employees served by TD staff

  - ✓ Average number of formal learning hours used PER employee PER year

Tip 8: Don't Sell Reviewers

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- Reviewers can tell when a marketing or PR department writes an application. The language is too flowery or too salesy.

  - ✓ The most effective applications are written in the language of the talent development profession and use appropriate terms without relying on jargon.

  - ✓ Avoid using acronyms – but if you, explain what it stands for

Tip 9: EDIT!!!!!

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- If English is not the first language of the person writing the application, it is recommended that someone proficient in English review and edit the application.

- A best practice is to have someone <u>from outside</u> the talent development function read the application to ensure it makes sense.

Tip 10: Tell Your Story Well

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Your story matters.

Think of the application as telling your talent development story. There should be a thread running through from beginning to end.

Tip 10: Tell Your Story Well

Advice from a reviewer:

"When a paper-based application is your only vehicle for sharing the [work], the way the story is told becomes very critical."

10 Tips - Review

- ✓ 1. Follow the Rules
- ✓ 2. Be Concise
- ✓ 3. Mind Your Graphics
- ✓ 4. Think Holistically
- ✓ 5. Pay Attention to the Question
- ✓ 6. Be Thorough
- ✓ 7. Metrics Matter
- ✓ 8. Don't Sell Reviewers
- ✓ 9. Edit!
- ✓ 10. Tell Your Story Well

Questions?

2021 BEST Awards

Deadline to apply: November 2, 2020

Visit www.td.org/best-awards

to download an application worksheet.

For more information, please email

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