

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 to 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/a>
- Application is due March 31.
- Entry fee is US \$150. It is payable as the last step before submitting your online application.
- You can pay by credit card or select “alternate payment” for an invoice or wire transfer option.



Tip #1 – Follow the Rules



Tip #1 – Follow the Rules

- The BEST application is a blind application.
 - This means your entry form should contain NO mention of the
 - 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.
- Links to outside websites or videos are not allowed in the entry form.

Tip #2 & #3 – Be Concise and Mind Your Graphics



Tip #2 & #3 – Be Concise and Mind Your Graphics

- 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, Role, Impact of Talent Development Function
- B. Evidence That Developing Talent is Valued in the Culture
- C. Evidence of the Link between Talent Development and Performance
- D. Evidence of Effective Measurement and Evaluation
- E. Talent Development Support

Section A: Scope, Role, and Impact of the Talent Development Function

Section A

- Purpose of section is to determine the strategic contribution of talent development.
 - Describe talent strategy
 - Explain how talent development supports the strategic goals of the enterprise.
 - Senior leader engagement/support
 - 2-3 critical business issues that talent development is helping address
 - Most innovative talent development effort in last 12 months

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.

Section B: Evidence That Developing Talent is Valued in the Culture

Section B

- The purpose of this section is to determine how talent development is done, what is offered, and how employees use what is offered.
 - Show the methods used for delivering learning
 - Identify what opportunities are available to which employee populations
 - What is outsourced and why
 - How is social learning used

Tip #6 – Be Thorough



Tip #6 – Be Thorough

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

Section C: Evidence of a Link between Talent Development and Performance

Section C

- The purpose of this section is to determine how the organization uses talent development for organizational AND individual performance.
 - Identify performance management practices (are any innovative?)
 - Which metrics are used to measure performance
 - Detail how talent development affected two of the selected metrics

Closer Look at Metrics

- Q14: 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...
- Q15: 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



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 in Section A and determine if you have examples to share here.

Section D: Evidence of Effective Measurement and Evaluation

Section D

- 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

Closer Look at Metrics

- Q16: Which of the following metrics are used to rate the efficiency of your talent development function?
 - Content development costs
 - Content development cycle time
 - Time to deploy a new learning initiative
 - Number of employees trained per TD staff member
 - Number of employees trained
 - Learning hours delivered and/or used per TD staff member
 - Etc...
- Q17: 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 D 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

Section E: 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

- You'll need to know
 - Number of full-time TD staff
 - Number of outsourced staff
 - Total number of hours of formal learning available
 - Total number of hours of formal learning used by employees

Tip #8 – Don't Sell Reviewers



Tip #8 – Don't Sell Reviewers

- 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.
 - Acronyms are used sparingly and always explained.

Tip #9 – Edit!



Tip #9 – Edit!

- 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 from outside 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?



Questions?

For more information, or answers to other questions:

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