



## Applying for an Award – A Guide

Never rush into putting an application together for an Environmental Award as the over-riding judgement will be based on the quality of the information and statistics included. Environmental improvements are almost always quantified – if you are only telling a story with words your application will not score well.

What are the elements that will assist your application in getting onto the Shortlist and then score well with judges.....

**A Reviewed Application** – clear to the judges that the application was reviewed internally/externally rather than rushed out by one person. A number of signatures/identifications should be included – even in the cover note. Organisations should have a policy that all external award applications should be approved, and signed off, by their Senior Management. Remember – an award application represents your organisation and should portray your organisations values and professionalism. (Don't forget the value your Sales/Marketing colleagues/advisors can bring to any application with respect to presentation)

**Clear, Easy to Read, Easy to Understand** – Do not get caught up in Jargon – Winners applications are often published or turned into case studies and the audience could be quite wide. Does it make sense? When charts, data is included do you explain and interpret that information correctly.

**Quantifiable** – the sign of an effective environmental champion is having the data available which shows continuous monitoring and measuring. If your improvements appear small but historically you have made great reductions/improvements show a timeline beyond the dates of the award – judges recognise that incremental improvements for Good Practice businesses can be the hardest ones.

**Comprehensive** – do not assume the judges know all about your other great efforts underpinning this application – they don't. If the information is part of the story, include it.

**Blurb** – otherwise known as Bulls\*\*t – tell the facts, tell the story – forget embellishments – if it is relevant to your application include it – if not, leave it out.

**Answer the Questions** – It is quite surprising how many applications fail to give answers to specific questions on application forms, or fail to address other clear guidelines included within the form. Often the judging scoring process is included and all applicants should write their applications to ensure these elements are included. No matter how good some applications are they may not get to the shortlist as they leave out sections and then get no scores for them.

**The Story** – most stories have a start, middle and end. So should yours. What were the motivations behind the Objective/Goal/Target, how did you get buy in/support, what information/data was available, how did you plan to measure success, what steps were taken to achieve the Objective, what were the quantifiable results, what lessons were learned, how will this success be maintained, what next....



*When planning an application for an award you should remember a number of the golden rules....*

- Identify the award and category you are going to apply for at the beginning of each year and include this within your environmental action plan for the year
- Identify what actions you will need to implement, what information will be required for judging, what are the application dates, methodologies, etc.
- Download copies of the application forms and read them thoroughly and make sure that you understand how they want you to make your application.
- Create a draft application and have someone else read the judging criteria and then assess your draft. Ask them to be critical. Remember, the judges will only judge your application on the basis of the information supplied - they do not know your business - they only read what you supply
- Before submitting your application ask your Owner/General Manager/etc. to read and critique and sign off on the application. If the award is for a business this is a document that represents your business and its profile - you want to be sure that your business is happy with how you present it.
- Do not assume any other business has a better application
- Do not assume that the story you are telling is of little value
- Do not assume that there will be a flood of applicants, yours may be one of very few
- **If you don't apply, you cannot be shortlisted and cannot win**
- Quantify the savings, reductions, environmental improvements your actions have delivered - show yr/yr, show %'s - data scores well
- List all the actions, no matter how small, that you have implemented that supports your specific application
- Tell your people story – how your team, fellow employees, engaged to support your actions
- Direct the judges to your online environmental story where you can show them how you are communicating your efforts to all your stakeholders - in this day and age if your website does not back up your application it will not receive much credence by the judges.
- Winning awards is good PR, involve your Sales & Marketing colleagues in your presentation – to give it an edge
- GreenHospitality.ie can assist you in your application - ask us how we can support you.

So, Good luck - Select and start the process to **APPLY for an Award Now!**