

WRITING AN AWARDS NOMINATION – BEST PRACTICE

WHAT

Awards are given to clubs, teams and individuals for a variety of reasons. The University, the County Sports Partnership, National Governing Bodies and many others all do awards for reasons from development, to fundraising, to performance and community engagement and many more.

WHO

Nominations can be written by any member of the club but a senior committee member may be best placed to write a really strong bid.

WHY

Apart from being a great way to recognise the efforts of your club/individuals, awards can be great tools when it comes to getting sponsorship deals, marketing events or even getting job interviews!

WHEN

Awards are open throughout the year, the big 2 for us are probably the Sport Brighton awards in May and the Active Sussex awards in the Autumn! NGB's will do their own awards its worth making sure you are effectively linked up to social media for nominations being open!

HOW

Plan Ahead - allow yourself plenty of time to write an awards nomination. Ideally you will have time to write it, go away and come back to it to proof read and edit. As with any kind of bid or request, if you aren't demonstrating that you have put time and effort in why should the panel?

Make sure you are applying to the right award – Make sure you read the criteria properly first and are writing relevant content/qualify for the award!

Involve others – Getting someone to proof read is helpful to check spelling and also that what you are saying is clear, concise and relevant. Remember, the panel may not know the nominee or your club so giving context is important, asking someone removed to read your nomination will help ensure this.

Do the Prep – Exactly why should this person win this award? If you can't sum this up in your opening killer sentence then it means your argument is too woolly.

Intro: Introduce the nominee and the context of your nomination.

- Criteria:** If possible, address each criteria and why the nominee meets it. This can be done in a simple 'Bob is this because he did that' style if that is the clearest way for showing why he embodies that award. Where possible including facts and figures will add to credibility. If the criteria comes in the form of a question, break it down into parts, acknowledge this in your response and then answer each.
- Style:** Make sure you stay clear on reasons and evidence throughout. If there are several criteria try and put your best examples at the beginning and end and 'bury' the weaker ones in the middle of the text where they will have least impact.
- Relevancy:** Bob may be a champion pole-vaulter, but that is irrelevant to a nomination for Volunteer of the Year unless he uses that skill in some way relevant to the criteria.
- Conclusion:** A one sentence summary of how you have covered all the criteria and possibly pointing out the strongest areas.
- Honesty:** Be honest about what they have done and when they did it, panels may check-up and false statements damage the credibility of this, but also any other awards you may have nominated for.

Final Tips:

- Don't use jargon, being clear and easy to understand is the target!
- Don't assume anything – the reader may not know you, or your sport or your strategies and aims. Best practice is always give some concise context, success for one team or individual will not be the same as another.
- Find out what's important to the organisation setting the award and the exact wording of the criteria, if possible try and use similar language or align it with their values!
- Check your spelling and grammar. Sounds silly but poor writing looks rubbish and can dampen the effect of your whole bid. It's partly your content but also how you present it.
- Take your time, stick to the word limit and remember that less is more if there isn't one. The judges may read 100s of nominations, it is quality not quantity; you're after a Michelin star nibble not an all you can eat buffet.
- An awards nomination is not a tick box exercise, just because you meet all the criteria does not mean you have won. Speaking in the nomination as though you have already won or that winning is a foregone conclusion will have a negative effect on the panel.
- Create impact by using examples, case studies, testimonials, evidence, facts and figures to demonstrate any statements you make. *"We have exceptional member retention and much of this is attributable to our new training & development programme."* Is far less impactful than: *"Since implementing our new training & development programme 12 months ago, our member retention has increased by 34%. Additionally, since this upturn in retention we have seen an increase of 24% in our win rate as we have a larger pool of experienced players the pull from."*
- When you think you are finished ask yourself these 5 questions:
 - Have I answered every part of each question that I've been asked?
 - Is there information in my response that is not relevant? (if yes...delete!)
 - Have I got relevant examples, case studies or evidence to make my response more impactful?
 - Have I used UK English spell check and proof read the nomination thoroughly?