2020 BEST Awards Application Overview

Application Instructions

1. The online awards portal will open on **August 15, 2019**. Entrants do not need to be ATD members to apply.

   It can be accessed here:
   
   https://atdbest.secure-platform.com:443/a/solicitations/home/17

1. **Applications are due on November 1, 2019.**

2. The entry fee is US$175. *It is payable as the last step* in submitting your application online. Payment is by credit card only.

3. The BEST application is a blind application. This means your entry form should contain NO mention of the company name or any identifying programs, people, or achievements. Applications that fail to meet these criteria may be disqualified.

4. Organization name and other information will be collected separately.

5. Most answers have word limits. These are hard-coded into the form and cannot be exceeded.

6. Ensure no company-identifying information appears in any supporting documents or graphics you may upload. This includes the file name of the supporting document.

7. Words included in uploaded documents do not count toward the total word count for the answer.

8. **Do not include** an appendix, addendum, or any supplemental documents with your application beyond the optional uploads noted in the application. Uploads should be limited to 1 page per upload.

9. **Video links or links to outside websites are not allowed.**

Disqualified applications are **not** eligible for a refund of the application fee.
Section A: Scope and Role of the Talent Development Function

1. What is the title of the senior level officer who has responsibility for enterprise-wide learning, knowledge management, or other talent development functions? (Do NOT include the person’s name.)

2. Describe the organization’s talent strategy. (500 words)

3. Explain how c-level and senior leaders support learning in the organization. (250 words)

4. Describe what members of the talent development team do to ensure their skills are up to date? What type of professional development support does the TD team receive? (250 words)

Section B: Strategic Use and Impact of the Talent Development Function

5. Explain how the talent development function supports the strategic goals of the enterprise. Include how talent development partners with and engages stakeholders to develop relevant programs and initiatives. (500 words)

6. Identify THREE critical business issues facing the organization and describe how talent development efforts helped to solve or address these issues. (500 words)

7. Describe your most innovative talent development initiative implemented within the last twelve (12) months and the results it achieved. (500 words)

8. How is the talent development team working to prepare employees for the future of work? In other words, how are you assessing the skills employees will need in the future (as a result of technological or other changes) and upskilling/or and reskilling employees to meet these needs? (300 words)

SECTION C: Evidence That Developing Talent Is Valued in the Culture

9a. Organizations provide development opportunities through different channels and practices. Identify whether employees have access to the following development opportunities and whether they use these opportunities. (Indicate None, Some, or All)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Have Access</th>
<th>Use These Opportunities</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal (event-based) learning activities (e.g., classes, workshops, online courses)</td>
<td>(e.g. All)</td>
<td>(e.g. Some)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal mentoring and coaching programs</td>
<td>(e.g. None)</td>
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<td>Social networking tools that support learning</td>
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<td>Virtual learning spaces (e.g. online corporate universities, etc.)</td>
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<td>Mobile learning applications</td>
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<td>Electronic performance support (e.g. on-demand videos, job aids, etc.)</td>
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<td>Job rotation</td>
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<td>Job shadowing</td>
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<td>Stretch assignments</td>
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<td>Apprenticeships or other work and learn programs</td>
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<td>Employer-supported conference attendance</td>
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<td>Tuition reimbursement</td>
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<td>Employer-paid self-development tools like libraries/books and software</td>
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<td>Financial support for membership in professional associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please describe below)</td>
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</table>

9b. If noted in 9a, explain why certain programs or initiatives are only available for select employees, and why employees who have access to programs don’t take advantage those learning opportunities. (500 words)

10. Are learning offerings connected or curated in progressive series, paths, or curricula, and if so, how are learners rewarded for completing these (e.g. internal certifications, recognition, or
promotion consideration)? If learning pathways are not in place, is there a plan to adopt this practice? Please explain. (500 words)

11. Does your organization have a succession plan in place for the following employee groups? (Select all that apply.)
   - CEO
   - C-Level
   - Senior Leaders
   - Mid-level managers
   - Critical individual contributors (e.g. technical/organizational knowledge)

12. What elements of the talent development function do you outsource? Provide rationale for that decision. If you don’t outsource, please provide rationale for that decision. (500 words)

SECTION D: Evidence of a Link between Talent Development and Performance

13. What performance management practices do you use? (Select all that apply.)
   - Annual performance reviews
   - Documentation of individual competencies
   - Individual development plans
   - Participation in performance goal setting
   - Peer review of performance or 360-degree feedback systems
   - Tracking of employee learning history
   - Other (please describe below)

14. What new or innovative performance management initiatives have you implemented in the last twelve (12) months? (500 words)

15. Which of the following metrics does the enterprise use to measure its performance? (Select all that apply.)
   - Ability to retain essential employees
   - Customer satisfaction
   - Cycle time reduction or improvement
   - Employee satisfaction
   - Market share/market expansion
   - Overall profitability or Progress toward mission
   - Productivity improvement
   - Quality of products/services
   - Risk reduction
   - Sales/revenues
   - Other (please describe below)

16a. From the list above, select TWO (2) items and explain HOW talent development efforts or practices contributed to results achieved in the last twelve (12) months. For EACH of the items selected, indicate beginning and ending metrics in the 12-month span. (500 words)
16b. *OPTIONAL* You may upload a single chart or one-page graphic that visualizes your answer to the above question. (Be sure it does not include any company-identifying information.)

**Section E: Evidence of Effective Measurement and Evaluation**

17. Which of the following metrics are used to rate the efficiency of your talent development function? (Select all that apply.)

- Content development costs
- Content development cycle time
- Cost savings realized through outsourcing learning initiatives
- Cost savings realized through use of technology
- Learning hours delivered
- Lost work time for employees due to attending training
- Number of employees trained
- Time to deploy a new learning initiative
- Time to employee readiness or competence
- Timely completion of training required by law or outside body
- Travel and accommodation costs
- Whether courses are full or there are “empty seats”
- Other (please describe below)

18a. From the list above, select TWO (2) metrics you use and describe the efficiencies gained in the past twelve (12) months. For each of the items selected, indicate your starting and ending metrics for the past twelve 12 months. (500 words)

18b. *OPTIONAL* You may upload a single chart or one-page graphic that visualizes your answer to the above question. (Be sure it does not include any company-identifying information.)

19. What percentage of the programs in your total portfolio of talent development programs are evaluated?

20a. For what percentage of your learning programs do you take pre-event measurements to establish a baseline?

20b. For what percentage of your learning programs do you take post-event measurements three or more months later?

21. What data sources do you use to collect evaluation data? (Select all that apply.)

- Business data from the organization or individual units (e.g. financials, annual reports, and sales reports)
- Emailed survey (not online)
- In-person interviews with employees
- In-person interviews with managers
- Online or networked surveys
- Our LMS collects data
- Paper surveys
• Performance review data
• Results of reviews or audits by government or outside body
• Other (please describe below)
• None

22. Which of the following performance and business objectives have benefited from your organization’s talent development evaluation efforts? (Select all that apply.)

• Compare the costs and benefits of a learning program
• Determine success in connecting talent development and organizational performance
• Determine success in accomplishing employee performance objectives
• Determine the relative contribution of each of the training and post-training factors to business impact
• Establish a database that can assist management in making business decisions
• Identify strengths and weaknesses in the post-training process
• Strengthen connection between talent development and enterprise performance
• Other (please describe below)

SECTION F: Talent Development Support

23. Provide an endorsement for talent development from CEO/COO (Do NOT use the person’s name, just title).

24a. Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) talent development staff.

Includes CLO/CTDO, Learning/Training Managers, Administrative Staff, Designers, Developers, Evaluators, Performance Improvement Specialists. If this application is for a division or business unit, include only the number of staff working on behalf of that division/unit.

24b. Number of employees served by FTE talent development staff.

25. Average number of formal learning hours used per year per employee.

Formal learning hours are stand-alone learning hours that are NOT embedded in work or work processes (they do NOT include on-the-job learning hours). Formal learning hours may be used in-person or with the aid of technology.