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Judges' 20 Top Tips for Winning Award Entries

The 2021 Global Good Awards judges have kindly taken part in a series of 'Ask the Judges' webinars to advise entrants about how best to fine tune their applications. Here, we've extracted their Top Tips for successful entries:

1. Answer the questions being asked:- Make sure you read the questions and criteria before starting as we appreciate it is easy to get carried away and miss precisely what you have been asked for.
2. First paragraphs are key to any application:- Use those first couple of paragraphs to wow the judges and summarise your key activities and impacts in as few words as possible to keep their attention.
3. Don't bury the key impacts:- Include key data, stats and facts in the main application. All too often judges see crucial information hidden in supporting documents instead of front and centre (you can always refer to other information on the application to support your data).
4. Be succinct & use jargon-free language:- A clear and concise application will help the judges understand your entry. Although they have experience in the category you are entering, they may not understand your exact industry sector so avoid sector-based jargon to keep their attention. One judge used the term 'ELI5' (explain like I'm five).
5. Write the application yourself:- Judges want to read well-written applications but they also want to "hear it from the heart". Include the teams involved in the impact your organisation has made and avoid cutting and pasting corporate marketing and PR material. It's important that your marketing and PR departments are involved in the application, but don't allow them to take the emotion out.
6. Collaboration with partnerships:- Judges believe effecting real change is through collaborative working therefore they like to see examples of partnership, so highlight who may have been involved from outside your organisation and even better, how that may have effected positive change in their other activities. What puts a judge off is the partnership being a purely financial arrangement where a company has funded a project with a charity, who has delivered the impact on their own.

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7. No greenwash:- Judges look for authenticity and will see straight through PR greenwashing and will disregard an application that appears to be “box-ticking”.
8. Stick to the word count:- It’s there as a guide and judges don’t have time to read excessively long applications. Long applications also allow for waffling...
9. Supporting documents:- With the best will in the world, judges aren’t going to read a long 60 page PDF. If there is key information in a supporting document, please reference the relevant pages or paragraphs they need to read within the document. Only provide supporting documents that are relevant to your application... we don’t need to see 10 page corporate branding guidelines!
10. Quantify & qualify all claims:- Verify your facts and figures with evidence to support them. If giving stats or improvements, include what your baseline or starting point was. Phrases such as “we’ve made significant changes...” or “we’ve boosted our employee engagement immensely” are not sufficient.
11. Do you have a ‘Business as Usual’ service that is sustainable by default?:- If you have a business that is ‘doing it anyway’ and the application is just about your business as usual operations, it’s not going to blow the judges away. It may be a clean, green, amazing business, but if it’s the business model to offer a sustainable service, it needs to have more to it. A good solution to this is use your business service as the framework and bring in clients who your service as helped and create the application in collaboration with each other.
12. Reporting on your social media:- scrap the references to ‘reach’ and ‘impressions’ and focus on the success in terms of true, measured impact.
13. Knowledge is power:- Demonstrate your knowledge of your competitors and how your product or service differs from the competition.
14. Champion your innovation:- Remember to highlight your good ideas even if you consider them routine as they could be key to your application.
15. Reveal any challenges:- Don’t be shy about sharing obstacles and challenges you may have faced. Show how you overcame them and what you learnt in the process.
16. Share best practice:- Does anything stand out in your entry that could serve as an example to others? Sharing what you have learnt for the greater good of reaching a sustainable world is well-regarded by the judges.
17. Profit and turnover:- Businesses should not worry about revealing how profitable they are. Doing good, after all, is about ‘people, planet and profit’. Sustainable solutions need to be profitable so include your turnover and the impact your actions have had.



18. Check the criteria percentages:- Ensure you read the criteria and description of the category you are entering several times and pay particular attention to the scores available as they can vary from 15% - 40% for each section. For example, scoring 10/10 for an available 15% of the marks won't give as many points as 7/10 for 40% or marks. Be guided by the criteria percentages to make sure you allow the correct amount of time, detail, evidence and word count accordingly.
19. Impact & Outcome is king:- For most categories, impact and outcome form 40% of the criteria scores so focus on these. Think about the 'ripple effect' or reach of the actions you're taking and include them in the application. Don't mistake output (how many people you worked with) with outcome (the impact you had on those people).
20. Campaign evaluation:- Plan what your outcomes need to be from the start and bake that into the campaign from the outset... otherwise, how will you know whether it's been successful or not?
21. Demonstrate an integrated approach:- When entering categories such as Company, SME or Start-up of the Year, judges want to see an integrated approach and a business demonstrating 'purpose' throughout their entire operations not just one area such as waste or community partnership.

And finally, tell a good story, be courageous and have fun!

Closing comment from one judge:

"The Global Good Awards is not difficult to enter. They give sound advice, plenty of information to potential entrants and are very transparent about the entry process. It's a straightforward experience with good solid questions and disclosed weighting percentages, that aren't often published amongst award programmes, to help guide everyone completing the entry form."

See what Capgemini and others have said about the [entry process here](#).

You can still watch the full webinars here.

For further questions or support, contact Karen:

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