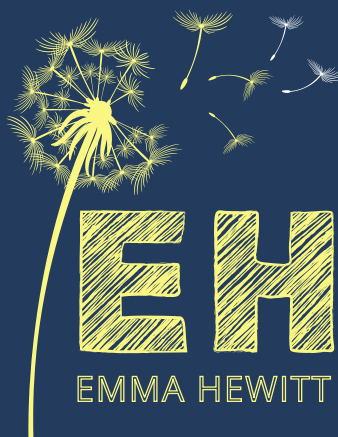


APPLYING FOR A BUSINESS AWARD



10 TOP
TIPS



EMMA HEWITT

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for downloading my 10 Top Tips for applying for a business award.

You might be just starting to think about applying for awards and unsure where to start. You might have applied for one, or two awards already, but not progressed and want to learn how to write better applications and improve your chances of being shortlisted.

This guide will give you tips that you can implement and mistakes that you can avoid when planning and writing an award application.

*Start your journey from winging it
to winning it!*

Award applications are a holistic process that can benefit you on a personal level, as well benefiting your business.

They are not, one shot, one chance. Think of your applications as an ongoing project and portfolio, that you are building over time. Make the most of the entire process and you will notice the little wins on the journey to your big win.

Emma





1. CHOOSE THE RIGHT AWARD

This might sound like an obvious point to start with, but it's not always as obvious as it seems.

Choosing the right type of award, for you and your business, is key. Getting it right will increase the value of the whole process, the significance of winning the award and increase your chances of success.



Things to consider:

- Wider benefits
- Visibility of the award company
- Community - business network
- Focus - sector/regional
- Category options
- Other stages in the process

2. TELL YOUR OWN STORY

Don't wait for someone else to nominate you, or rely on someone else to tell your story for you. This is your opportunity to present yourself and your business in your own words. No one knows your business and your journey as well as you do.



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Be original, authentic and keep it personal



3. BLOW YOUR OWN TRUMPET



Just like when you apply for a job, you need to sell yourself and celebrate your successes in your award application. It is not the time to be too modest or too humble. This is an area that lots of people struggle with. They do not like to boast or brag. The idiom to “blow your own trumpet” simply means to “praise your own abilities and achievements”. It’s the main purpose of an award application!

4. ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

Marks cannot be awarded for information that is not there!

Often applications are let down by simply not putting the relevant information in the right place! If there is a scoring matrix in use, the judges cannot award points for something that you wrote in a different section of the form. They have to award marks for each question, so you need to take the time to answer each question carefully and thoroughly. You should assume that they have no prior knowledge or context.

Make it easy for the judges to award marks





5. CHOOSE YOUR WORDS WISELY

Word counts are set for a reason. Sometimes, they can be incredibly limited, which challenges you to answer the question both fully and succinctly. Sometimes, there is a higher word count, which allows you to use more description and illustration in your answers. Not all long answers are better, obviously, there is a strong argument for quality over quantity. Do consider what you may have missed though, if your answer is significantly shorter than the suggested word count.



6. ILLUSTRATE YOUR ANSWERS



You are describing to the judges how you run your business well, what impact your business has and how you measure success. Enhance your answers with relevant examples and evidence. Evidence can include facts, finance figures and testimonials.

*If you make a statement,
illustrate it with evidence.*



7. PREP AND PERFECT

Applications are often more time consuming than you think. If you are serious about giving yourself the best chance of success, put in the preparation work and allow yourself plenty of time. We are all guilty of leaving things until the last minute, the adrenaline of a looming deadline is often a good incentive, but a rushed application can be obvious and is unlikely to do you justice.

It's good practice to write your application in a separate document for editing, before you submit it. Having a copy saved makes it much easier to check and amend, than typing directly into the form. There is also less risk of losing your work.

Allow yourself plenty of time

8. BUILD AN ASSET

Use your copy of the application form to build a bank of answers and evidence, that you can use when you apply for awards in the future.


Revisiting previous answers is a great tool for self-reflection and development.

Questions about future business vision and goals are often used in applications. These answers can help you to focus and plan and to document and measure your achievements and success.





9. TELL PEOPLE!



Be sure to let people know that you have been nominated for an award!

Look for the hashtags used for the award and engage with other nominees. Is there a social media group or page that you can join? Awards are a great way to build your connections and network.

10. DON'T GIVE UP

When you enter awards, you are pitching yourself against some of the best competition in your sector or field. Don't lose heart if your application is not successful. Make the most of the entire process.



Award applications are a holistic process

Emma Hewitt

Business Awards Adviser

Emma Hewitt is an accomplished awards and scholarship manager with almost 20 years experience of advising on awards, scholarship and university applications. She has managed an annual business awards programme since 2020, which attracts over 300 applications per year. Overseeing the process from setting the criteria, scoring matrix, recruiting and liaising with the judging panel, collating the scores for shortlisting, to the awards ceremony. Self-employed for eight years, initially as a franchise business owner and now a freelance marketing, awards and event manager, Emma has an insight into the challenges and barriers small business owners face and understands the value of business awards for increasing visibility and boosting confidence. She has successfully supported her client in 12 business award applications, leading to 2 award wins and 7 finalist placements.

Emma is a proud Brummie, living in Birmingham with her husband and two children. She is passionate about helping other business owners to find their voice, the confidence and the words, to recognise and reflect on their achievements.



Emma can help you to get started with business award applications, with the tools to help you tell your own story, write better applications and take you from winging it to winning it!

Connect





EH

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