

## **OCIABC BRONZE BEACON AWARD TIP SHEET**

(compiled by Shelly Meyer, 6/24/09)

### **Before the Competition . . .**

- As you complete projects, place possible award contenders in a file (or box) so you don't have to hunt for them later. Include a copy of the job sheet, if applicable.
- Study previous years' winners. Consider requesting samples of winning projects.
- Visit IABC's Gold Quill Awards website at [www.iabc.com/awards/gq/judging](http://www.iabc.com/awards/gq/judging). You'll find evaluation forms, samples of award-winning work plans, and comments from judges and past winners.

### **During Entry Preparation . . .**

- Carefully read and follow the submission guidelines. Find out if the deadline is a "postmarked by" or "must be received by" date.
- Enter the right project in the right category.
- Polish your work plan so it's as good as the work itself. Don't assume that judges know anything about your industry – in other words, give your entry context. Avoid jargon.
- Judges have a lot of entries to review and not much time. Make their jobs easier by laying out your copy in skimmable sections with headings, subheads, bullets, etc. Keep the point size manageable and use white space.
- Link your results directly to your objectives.
- Substantiate claims regarding the success of the piece or project. Be specific about your results, citing figures, dollar amounts, sales growth, clients gained, and other performance metrics. How many responses did you receive? How many products were purchased? How many people attended your event?
- Double-check your entries. Spelling and grammar mistakes are instant turnoffs.
- Don't wait until the last minute (hard to do, but a sanity saver – plus, you'll be able to take advantage of the early-bird discount).
- Ask questions. Don't be afraid to contact the judging coordinator for clarification.

### **After the competition . . .**

- If you win, make sure to alert your boss and other colleagues. Highlight the fact that your work was judged by IABC members from another city.
- If you don't win, don't give up! You can't win if you don't enter.
- Make submitting an entry one of your professional development goals. You'll then be able to include this item in your annual self-evaluation or performance review.

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- Consider being a judge for an IABC competition. It's a fun way to meet people and to gain an insider's perspective on how these competitions work.