



Talent Development

Tips for Preparing a Winning CNY BEST Application

Winning submissions

- Covered all criteria providing appropriate information for telling the practice's story
- Clearly showed the link of practice to organization's strategic success
- Included evidence of the impact of the practice (measurements, testimonials, surveys, etc)

Tell Your Story - What would you tell others about your practice? What would you say as to why it was done, how it was done, and what the outcomes were? Use your story as a starting point to completing your application; **show your passion** for the practice

- **Follow all submission requirements**
 - Include executive summary (*limit summary to 250 words*)
 - Include a brief description of organization and its products/services
 - Be concise in the body of your application. Focus on quality, rather than a lengthy story.
Recommendation – limit body to 10 pages
 - Include supporting material in the appendices (*no limit for appendices*)
- **Show your practice excellence**
 - Clearly describe the practice
 - Provide materials and information to support the practice
 - Support materials could include: practice overviews; copies of manuals; excerpts or examples from tutorials; class work
- **Include your results**
 - Relate your accomplishments to organization's strategic plans/goals
 - Support material could include: customer letters/testimonials, survey results, formal awards, statistics/metrics, charts, graphics
 - Avoid anecdotal comments without supporting evidence
 - Use information/data to support results; Summarize to reiterate key messages
- **Present an application with a polished image**
 - Make it easy for the judges to review your application; Review the Judges' Criteria document
 - Make sure your application is organized and legible
 - Focus on quality rather than length
 - Consider the use of table of contents, sections and appendixes with tabs
- **Use visuals**
 - Make your story more interesting with visuals (e.g. photos, images)
 - Increase understanding with visuals (e.g. charts, graphics)
- **Use assistance**
 - Use materials already created (e.g. proposals created for management, grant applications)
 - Ask others to review your draft for input and understanding (e.g. internal/external colleagues, marketing department, others not familiar with practice)
 - Connect with a CNY BEST Buddy to ask questions and talk through thoughts/ideas
- **Prepare accordingly**
 - Give yourself plenty of time to prepare a thoughtful and insightful application



**Talent Development
FAQs/Definitions**

CNY Area – Submissions should cover practices developed or implemented in the CNY area, the central part of New York State from the North Country to the Southern Tier and from the Seneca-Cayuga Corridor to the Mohawk Valley.

CNY BEST Awards Ceremony – An evening of celebrating excellence in talent development in the CNY area. CNY BEST *Talent Development Award* nominees are recognized and winners are announced at the event. CNY ATD Scholarship winners are recognized, along with other talent development recognitions. The CNY ATD Scholarship Committee holds their annual CNY BEST Silent Auction & Raffle.

Confidentiality - The CNY BEST Committee and Judges treat all applications with confidentiality. If you have concerns or issues regarding confidential information, indicate your confidentiality request at the beginning of your application. If you are describing a confidential client, we suggest using a fictitious name (ex. ABC Company) as an approach to keep your client confidential while making it easier for judges to read the application.

Executive Summaries - Include a concise executive summary that includes a description of the organization and practice, why the practice was initiated, and overall outcome/results showing the link to the organization's strategic growth or success. *Limit summary to 250 words.*

Multiple Categories - One practice can have applications in multiple categories (ex. an excellent practice for an organization may have had consultants involved, and/or may have significant contributions by an individual or team worthy of recognizing). *Note* - it is not recommended to submit multiple applications in the same category (i.e. more than 1 individual nomination per company is not recommended).

Practice – A practice can be a training program, organizational practice, program related to talent development, improvements to talent development departments, offerings, culture, mindset, etc. Review the various functions within the Talent Development framework at https://cnyatd.org/talent_development/

Talent Development – Defined as building the knowledge, skills and abilities of others, and helping them develop and achieve their potential so that the organizations they work for can succeed and grow.

Practice Description- Include what the practice is, why it was initiated, how it was implemented, who the talent development recipients were, when and where it was deployed, and the goals and results of the practice.

Presentation - While your story is the most important criteria for any CNY BEST application, presentation of your content is also important. Make it easy for judges to review, understand and get excited by your application. Focus on quality rather than length. Consider the use of table of contents, sections, appendixes, tabs, etc. Add visuals and graphics for interest and understanding. *Recommendation* – limit body of presentation to 10 pages; use appendixes for supporting documentation.

Supporting Documentation - Include documentation to support statements made in the application. These may include examples of the practice and information to support and demonstrate the impact of the practice. Consider the use of appendixes for supporting documentation. *There is no limitation for appendixes.*

Technical Information - If your practice may be challenging for judges to understand, make sure to use everyday terms to convey the information. *Suggestion* - Have an independent person(s), including someone not familiar with the practice, review your application to see if they understand your story and key messages.

Time Period - Applications should cover practices conducted within or during the last two years. Understanding that practices can cover a span of time, the timeframe is a guideline, not a restriction. If your practice started earlier or runs later than the time period listed, it would still be considered an acceptable practice.