



The Ability First CHAMPIONS AWARDS APPLICATION

The Ability First Coalition brings businesses together to share best practices and experiences related to hiring and retaining persons with disabilities. The Coalition also recognizes businesses that have imbedded human resources policies and practices that promote innovative solutions to current staffing challenges. The goal is to encourage businesses to actively promote ability first human resources initiatives and policies in their workplaces, regardless of size or industry.

There will be 3 awards:

1. Large business award – companies over 50 employees
2. Small business award – companies up to 50 employees
3. Champion award, recognizing a person, or organization of under 10 employees, that has continuously and tirelessly promoted the concept of ability first, supported people in their efforts to obtain meaningful employment, and who has brought new and innovative perspectives to the workplace.

These Awards are designed to stimulate and recognize human resources excellence in companies and individuals that develop and apply best practices in recruitment, retention, and talent management. Formal and informal mentoring as a tool to retain and develop the workforce is encouraged. Businesses must demonstrate a focus on diversity through: creating an organizational community that includes all employees, employing people with a broad range of backgrounds and abilities, and participating in community outreach.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The Ability First Coalition CHAMPIONS AWARDS are open to all companies and individuals that have successfully implemented innovative and sustainable human resources policies and practices relating to recruiting, hiring and retaining persons with disabilities.

The award will be judged in relation to:

- Organizational strategic objectives and goals linked to human resources
- Human resources policies and practices
- Employee satisfaction
- Workforce description
- Partnering, outreach, and community activities

To be eligible, the nominated business and individuals must have been active for at least 2 years, doing business in the City of London, and in the Counties of Elgin, Middlesex and Oxford.

RULES

- 1) The decision of the Selection Committee is final. All material used in the judging and scoring process is kept in strict confidence and will be destroyed after the awards are presented.
- 2) The awards will be presented to designated officials of the business organizations at a Gala Banquet on Tuesday, November 16, 2010.
- 3) Information provided within this questionnaire or additional material will be disclosed to the judges on a strictly confidential basis and exclusively for the purpose of judging. **The Ability First Coalition** cannot return any documentation provided in this submission.
- 4) The Award recipient will be required to participate in media coverage of the award.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS is September 30, 2010 at 12:00 Noon



ABOUT THE PROCESS:

All submissions will be reviewed and evaluated by a team of preliminary judges. Scores are awarded for each varying criteria and the individual judges' scores are averaged. The two top ranked companies in each category will be considered finalists and will be visited by a team of final judges to determine who will receive the Award. The final recipients in each category will be announced at the gala.

Please identify the award for which you are submitting this application:

__ Large Business Award __ Small Business Award __ Champion Award

STEP 1 TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

BASIC INFORMATION

Company Name: _____

Street Address: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

Contact Person:

Name: _____

Title: _____

BASIC DESCRIPTION OF THE BUSINESS:

Number of employees: _____

Please indicate type of business:

- Sole Proprietorship
- Corporation
- Partnership
- Other(describe) _____

Nature of Business:

- Agriculture
- Manufacturing
- Tourism
- Education
- Professional Services
- Wholesale
- Retail
- Other (briefly describe) _____

Geographic Scope:

- Greater London area only
- Ontario only
- Canada only
- International (briefly describe) _____

Please attach this page to the front of your submission. Do not bind your submission.

STEP 2

TELL US ABOUT YOUR BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENTS

Statement of Application and Biography

Prepare an application to **The Ability First Coalition**, not to exceed 10 typed pages, that tells us how your company meets the award criteria detailed in this Section. Give an overview of the nature and scope of your company's achievements. **Be as brief as possible. Point form is encouraged.** Each criterion, along with their related percentage weighting, is described below.

The judges recognize that each business and industry has unique issues and resources to promote related policies and practices, but have identified several common areas that can be considered. Please tell us about achievements in all applicable areas.

Organizational Strategic recruiting and retention Objectives and Goals Linked to hiring those with disabilities (15%).

- I. Describe your business or enterprise's strategic direction and how you have imbedded HR practices that support hiring and retaining people with disabilities
- II. Describe your leadership's involvement
- III. Describe examples of continuous improvement initiatives and subsequent measurement

Disability-related Policies and Practices (40%) - Please include examples of new, innovative or best practices for:

- I. Recruitment
 - a. Describe assessment tools or methods used to measure recruitment activities of people with disabilities
 - b. Describe continuous improvement activities
 - c. Provide examples of your access to new labour pools for the organization
- II. Retention
 - a. Describe assessment tools or methods used to measure retention
 - b. Describe continuous improvement activities
 - c. Indicate percentage turnover in each year for the last 3 years, reasons for turnover, and the calculation used
- III. Training and Development
 - a. Describe assessment tools or methods used to measure training and development
 - b. Describe continuous improvement activities
- IV. Succession Planning
 - a. Describe assessment tools or methods used to measure succession planning
 - b. Describe continuous improvement activities
- V. Recognition
 - a. Describe assessment tools or methods used to measure or celebrate success
 - b. Describe methods to recognize employee achievements and milestones

Employee Satisfaction (20%)

- a. Describe practices related to work environment, work/life balance, social activities, employee wellness, etc.
- b. Describe continuous improvement activities

Workforce Description (15%)

- a. Demonstrate policies, practices and activities in place to generate and maintain a workforce encompassing people with disabilities
- b. Demonstrate the benefits of employing people with a broad range of abilities, cultural and social backgrounds, and ages
- c. Discuss accommodation policies and how they are communicated to demonstrate support for people with disabilities

Partnering, Outreach and Community Activities (10%)

- a. Describe ways in which staff are developed and encouraged through participation in community boards or community activities

STEP 3 ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

BUSINESS PROFILE: If available, attach a copy of your company's brochure and/or annual report to provide basic information on your company. Otherwise, submit an overview of your company outlining history, nature of the business. Feel free to include promotional CD's or videos for the judges to view.

LETTER OF AGREEMENT: The president or principal of the company or their designate is required to sign a release statement enabling **The Ability First Coalition** to provide the media with the company name. If your company is selected as an award finalist you will be required to attend the awards ceremony on November 16, 2010, and participate in the media coverage generated around it.

COMPANY LOGO AND PHOTO: As part of the program, **The Ability First Coalition** produces a video profiling the finalists, as well as written profiles for the award night using information provided by the nominees. The company logo will also be used in the promotions. We require an electronic copy of your **logo** in both **EPS** and **JPG** formats. Please forward your company logo to sheila.creighton@abilityfirst.on.ca

BUSINESS REFERENCES: Please enter the name and address of at least two business references that we may contact, and who are familiar with your business or enterprise and familiar with your human resources practices as they relate to your application for this Award. You are encouraged to inform your business references that you have been nominated for the **Ability First Award**, and that they may be asked to provide a reference.

STEP 4 SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

Please mail or deliver 3 copies of your completed application to:

Sheila Creighton, Communications and Special Event Consultant
Ability First Coalition
24 Longbow Place
London, ON N6G 1Y3
(519) 852-8505

Or,

Please send a completed application in electronic format to (accessible MS word format available upon request): sheila.creighton@abilityfirst.on.ca

Should you have questions, please use the above email address. **Please note for questions during the period of September 1 – 15th** please contact Richard Weston at richard.weston@rogers.com
Responses will be sent within 24 hours.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS is September 30, 2010 at 12:00 Noon