



# Torch AWARDS

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## 2009 Torch Awards Entry Application

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# Torch Awards Guidelines and Information

## AWARD PARAMETERS

Candidates for the 2009 Cincinnati BBB Torch Awards will be judged on their ethical practices according to the following guidelines:

- high ethical standards of behavior toward clients, volunteers, donors, employees, and the communities in which they do business,
- demonstrated ethical practices surrounding their client service relationships,
- long-standing history/reputation of ethical practices in the marketplace,
- marketing, advertising, communications, and solicitation practices that reflect a true representation of what is being offered in the marketplace,
- acknowledgement of ethical marketplace practices by industry peers, and in the communities they serve,
- ethics policies that are effectively communicated to employees,
- ethics policies that demonstrate a long standing history of ethical practices and accountability in the community, and
- training programs that assist employees in carrying out established ethics policies.

## MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- The business must have been in operation for at least one year.
- BBB files may not contain any concerns about the business' marketplace practices, and there may not be any concerns about the business' industry. Although BBB membership is not a requirement, the business may not hold an unsatisfactory record. In addition, if the business has been involved in major lawsuits, including class action suits, or government actions in the past three years, this information must be disclosed as part of your entry and will be considered by the judges.
- The business must be physically located within the service area of the BBB counties listed below.
  - Ohio : Adams, Brown, Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Gallia, Hamilton, Highland, Jackson, Pike, Lawrence, Scioto, Warren
  - Kentucky: Boone, Campbell, Kenton
  - Indiana : Dearborn, Ohio, Ripley, Switzerland

## JUDGING PROCESS

Candidates for the BBB Torch Awards are evaluated by an independent panel of judges selected from the business, non-profit, and academic community using the criteria and standards developed by the Council of Better Business Bureaus for the International Torch Awards program. The judging process is as follows:

1. All applications received by the BBB are reviewed to ensure that all criteria have been met and that the applicants have provided all materials on the Application Checklist. Applications received after the deadline or that do not meet all criteria are immediately disqualified.
2. Applicant answers to each question then are sent to the judges for preliminary review and scoring.
3. The judges meet with an independent facilitator to review their preliminary scoring and to discuss all applications. Judges may, at their discretion, review any supporting documentation and revise their scores. Judges rate each question on a scale from 1-10. Ten signifies the best possible answer, a good answer is rated between 9 and 5, and a poor answer is rated between 4 and 1. Judges make a final determination as to the Torch Award recipients and honorees.
4. The judges affirm their choices to the BBB.

## DEADLINE

Entry Application must be received no later than Friday, July 17, 2009 by 4:30 p.m. at: The Cincinnati BBB Foundation, 7 West Seventh St., Suite 1600, Cincinnati, OH 45202

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# Entry Form

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person for Application \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Business Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Years in Business \_\_\_\_\_

Owner/Manager/Principals/CEO \_\_\_\_\_

Nature of Business \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Employees \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Business Website \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about the BBB Torch Awards?  BBB Mailing  Newspaper  Nominated

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **BUSINESS REFERENCES**

Please provide the following business references. (If your company does not have a specific reference, please indicate N/A)

1. Name of Primary Banking Institution \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name and Branch Location \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name of Legal Counsel \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

## **TO BE SIGNED BY OWNER OR CEO:**

I do attest that the information contained in this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge, that my business is in good standing with the BBB, and that it has not been involved in major lawsuits, including class action suits or government actions in the past three years, unless disclosed as part of our entry.

Sign and Date \_\_\_\_\_

**A copy of this signed and dated form MUST accompany your application for entry.**

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# Application

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Your response to each topic in the application must be typewritten on a separate piece of paper. Providing examples will not qualify as a response.
- A signed copy of the Entry Form must accompany your application responses.
- Additional support materials and examples may be provided in a folder or standard two-inch, 3-ring binder. Any oversized materials must fit in the folder or binder.
- Additional materials may include photos, copies of documents, ads, marketing materials, mission statements, and any other documentation needed to provide support for your narrative. Videotapes, CD's, and DVD's are not essential, but will be accepted.
- Please retain a copy of your completed entry. All submitted entries become the property of the BBB and will not be returned.
- Candidates not providing the required information and materials will be disqualified.
- Honorees will be notified the week of August 17, 2009.
- Honoree applications will be on display at the Torch Awards dinner to be held: Thursday, October 22, 2009, at Cincinnati Music Hall.
- The Torch Awards recipients in each category will be announced at the Torch Awards dinner.

## NEED HELP?

Attend our Torch Awards Workshop June 11, 2009. You'll meet past winners and honorees, and get tips on how they made their applications successful. Call 513.639.9146 to register.

## APPLICATION

You must provide your typewritten responses to each of the following 8 topics on a separate sheet of paper. Please be sure to identify the topic at the beginning of each response.

### 1. POSITION STATEMENT

Provide a brief statement describing your business' position regarding integrity and ethical practices in your business. *If your business has adopted a formal policy, mission statement, or other corporate documents relating to ethical standards and practices, please attach a copy.*

### 2. ETHICAL EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

A mark of integrity for a business is its practices concerning the training of its employees and corporate officers in implementing ethical behavior.

- a) Describe two ways in which ethical practices are made part of the day-to-day operations.
- b) Give two examples of training and policies that assist employees, and corporate officers, in carrying out ethical practices and behaviors.

### 3. INVESTOR RELATIONS

A business is considered ethical by demonstrating high standards of behavior, honesty, and integrity in its dealings with investors and shareholders. Describe your investor/shareholder policies and relationships. You may attach samples to corroborate your description. If your business is not publicly traded, please mark N/A.

### 4. DECISION-MAKING

An ethical business is positive, honest, fair, reliable, and responsive to its customers, suppliers, and employees. For each of the three groups listed below, provide an example of one or two situations in which your business demonstrated ethical decision-making. Provide your examples for each group on a separate piece of paper. Include the dilemma or problem, choices you had for resolving the issue, the

pros and cons of each option, any resources consulted, and final outcome.

You may supply testimonials from any involved parties, as well as any relevant media coverage, however, please note that judges are not required to review this supporting documentation.

Group A) Customers

Group B) Suppliers/vendors/subcontractors

Group C) Employees

## 5. MARKETING AND SOLICITATIONS

A business is ethical if its marketing, advertising, communications, and sales practices adhere to the principles of "Truth in Advertising," honesty, and fairness in competition, and accuracy in representation of its products and services.

Provide a description of your business' policies and procedures for ensuring ethical marketing, including substantiation of any claims, adherence to truth in advertising and industry-specific regulations, privacy issues, controversial subject matter, etc. Attach samples of marketing materials, advertising, websites, radio/TV ads, brochures, contracts, policies, etc. that support your description.

*For radio/TV, enclose both the original spot as aired and written transcripts. For websites, include both the URL address for the site and hard copies of the appropriate pages. Please note that judges are not required to review non-print media.*

6. List recognitions or acknowledgements by industry peers, trade associations, and/or the communities in which you do business. Please limit your answer to one page.
7. Provide any examples of longstanding history or reputation for ethical standards of behavior in the marketplace. Please provide no more than three (3) examples.
8. Businesses demonstrate high ethical business practices with programs and activities that return value and support to the communities they serve, often termed 'good will.' Please summarize on a separate piece of paper, and provide no more than 3 examples, of programs, contributions, and activities that return value and support to your community.

## OTHER REQUIRED INFORMATION

### INFORMATION FOR BBB PROMOTIONAL AND MEDIA PURPOSES

Please describe your business in 500 words or less, including: when it was founded, the nature of your primary business, where it is located (and number of locations, if applicable), and owners/principles. *This is not sales or promotional copy. It will be used to provide a short description of the honorees for a special supplement to the Business Courier, as well as for other promotional needs by the BBB. It may be edited as required.*

### PHOTO AND LOGO

Please provide an electronic file of a photo (non product shot) and your business logo to be used with this description. Acceptable formats are .jpg, .psd, .eps, .tif. The photo and logo may be electronically delivered to [memberservices@cincinnati.bbb.org](mailto:memberservices@cincinnati.bbb.org). These materials will not be returned. If an appropriate logo and/or photo is not available, applicants must notify the BBB prior to the application deadline to ensure the materials will be supplied no later than August 28, 2009.

## APPLICATION CHECKLIST

- Completed and signed Entry Form
- Responses to all application questions, each provided on a separate sheet of paper
- 500-word description of your business for promotion and media purposes
- Photo and business logo submitted electronically



The Torch Awards are a program of the Cincinnati BBB Foundation. 7 West Seventh St., Suite 1600, Cincinnati, OH 45202