

Facilitate Organizational Success Through the Awards Games



Each year numerous organizations across Canada are selected and recognized as “award winners.” Being an award winner can bring not only prestige and public awareness to an organization but it can also attract and help retain employees and even boost employee morale and engagement. Employees who work for one of “Canada’s most family friendly” or “greenest employers” might just feel more committed to an organization where they feel their values and needs are recognized and valued.

The wide array of possible awards are generated by many different types of organizations including media companies, staffing/HR agencies, social and community organizations, professional associations and more. It seems there are more awards created and awarded every year. One of the more widely cited “top” award granters in Canada is MediaCorp. Media features Canada’s top employers in a few categories including:

- Canada’s Top 100 Employers
- Canada’s Top Family Friendly Employers
- Canada’s Top 100 Employers for Young People
- Canada’s Best Diversity Employers
- Canada’s Greenest Employers
- Canada’s Top 100 Small and Medium Employers

There are also the “excellence awards” from Excellence Canada, which includes a 4 level design of bronze, silver, gold and platinum. The “standards and frameworks” for these awards include:

- *Excellence, Innovation and Wellness Standard*
- *Healthy Workplace® Standard*
- *Mental Health at Work® Framework*

There is also the Canada’s Safest Employer Awards for organizations in 9 categories:

- Building and Construction
- Health Care
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing
- Retail and Services
- Oil and Gas

- Mining and Natural Resources (includes fish and forestry)
- Public Sector / Non-profit
- Transportation (land, sea and air)
- Utilities and Electrical

Other Canadian employer awards include:

- The Canadian Fairtrade Awards with 12 categories
- CPAs, through the Chartered Professional Accountants Canada offer “Awards for Excellence in Corporate Reporting”
- Ceridian Canada includes awards such as the ‘Employees Choice Award,’ “Network Product Guide’s 10th Annual 2015 Hot Companies and Best Product Awards”
- AON offers their “Best Employers in Canada” award (based on employee, leader and human resource practices surveys)
- The Canadian HR Awards, last year the Insider reported on how a small Cambridge Ontario Company, Fibernetics won the “Accompass Award for Best Employer Branding”

This is only a very small list of the potential awards available to an organization who is looking to win an award.

How Can You Become an Award Winner?

You may not be able to compete with some large organizations in some categories but the odds are if you look around you will find your opportunity to shine and shape the message you want about your organization.

Consider these 6 steps on your way to becoming an award winning organization:

Identify what you want to be known for – as an organization your identity and your brand are important components of your success. Take the time to consider what message you want the public and your employees to have about your organization.

Take a look at the criteria for Two of MediaCorps categories as an example of goals you can choose and set for your organization.

Canada's Top 100 Employers: Employers are evaluated using eight criteria

- (1) Physical Workplace;
- (2) Work Atmosphere & Social;
- (3) Health, Financial & Family Benefits;
- (4) Vacation & Time Off;
- (5) Employee Communications;
- (6) Performance Management;
- (7) Training & Skills Development; and
- (8) Community Involvement.

Canada's Top Family Friendly Employers: employers evaluated in terms of the programs and initiatives they have to help employees balance work and family commitments including: maternity and parental leave; daycare assistance; paid personal- and earned-days-off (EDO) programs; flexible work arrangements; compassionate leave and elder care assistance; adoption assistance; reproductive assistance, including fertility drugs and IVF; and even academic bursaries for employees' children, in addition to other programs each employer may have to address specific work-life balance issues unique to their industry.

2. **Research and select potential awards** – Identify the awards available and research the application criteria and process. You might choose to begin with

small local awards in your community or awards that recognize a contribution your organization can make to the local community.

3. **Evaluate your Awards potential** – Not everyone is going to win an award simply because they apply. Take some time to evaluate and then plan for the awards you want to win. You may need to make changes to your organization to increase your chances of winning the awards you choose.
4. **Develop a campaign strategy** – preparing and applying for these awards can take some time. Put together a small committee who can help you qualify by identifying what you need to do to be an awards contender. This strategy might include 2-3 stages including identifying changes you may need to make in your organization and how to make the changes.
5. **Apply and keep applying** – The application process for some of these awards will require time and work, but this can be an opportunity to further engage your employees in working together towards a common goal.
6. **Celebrate and share** – If you are fortunate enough to win an award that recognizes your organization, take the time to share this success internally and externally. Even if you do not snag the award you were seeking you can offer internal awards and recognition for the changes your organization has made in your progress towards your goals. Organizations that have common goals and recognize their success in working together towards common goals can increase their goodwill among their employees, which can bring more success in the future.

Regardless of your size or industry there are awards out there for you to pursue and opportunities to make positive changes and show your employees the elements of your employer brand you feel proud to celebrate.