



Jim McGuire, Chair of Judges, offers some tips on how to improve your chances of winning

It is an honour to again be chairing the judging panel for The 2nd Annual CIPS Australia Procurement Professional Awards. I am looking forward to reading the numerous high-quality entries which your organisations will undoubtedly be submitting. I'd like to take this opportunity to provide you with some tips that should help you prepare your entries for the 2008 Awards. While I cannot guarantee that these tips will ensure success, I am certain that, if followed, they will significantly increase your chances!

Jim McGuire MCIPS

- Former Director of Contract Services, South Australian Government
- Founding Chair of CIPS Australia Steering Group
- PP Awards Chair of Judges 2007-2008
- Director of McGuire-Major Consulting

Tips on entering

1. Start early

This will allow you time to collect and collate your supporting data and information. It will also give you time to have someone outside the submission team read the entry and provide any feedback. The deadline for entries is 15 August 2008 (no extensions).

2. Appoint a leader

The leader should be supported by the rest of the submission team. The person in charge should take responsibility for planning the entry submission process and allocating responsibilities and due dates for action.

3. Structure your entry

Ensure there's a flow to your entry. Like any good business proposal it should have a beginning, a middle and an end.

Introduction

You will need an introduction (a bit like an executive summary) that talks about aims and objectives. Be clear about these and give some brief background on the organisation, but don't get carried away as you have limited space. In terms of the 5 Ws, this would be the Why.

Project outline

The main part of your entry should be "the meat" of the submission, where you should consider the other 4 Ws – Who, What, Where and When. You should include an outline of how you achieved your project, including the business benefits to the organisation.

Summary

As your conclusion, include a short summary that outlines the key points of your entry.

4. Submit completed projects

Do not submit entries where the project is not complete or hasn't been completed for long enough for the results to be quantified. Such projects would best be submitted next year.

5. Use examples and references

Use supporting data and input from other departments and key stakeholders. Testimonials from senior personnel (e.g. your CEO) would be beneficial, as would external references.

6. Be honest

Stick to the facts and do not exaggerate, as this could alienate your internal stakeholders and damage your reputation. If you've had external help (e.g. from consultants), tell us about it and explain briefly how you've used them. We all need outside support from time to time!

7. Stick to the brief

No more than three sides of A4 means just that! If you cannot get your submission into three A4 pages, then you have not considered your audience and have not got straight to the point. We do accept appendices, but use these for supporting evidence, such as supplier testimonials or further detail of savings calculations. These won't be marked, but they may help to give the judges a better feel for your organisation. On the other hand, do make use of all the space. A two-page entry won't allow you to provide sufficient detail about your project and the benefits resulting from it.

8. Present it well

The quality of presentation of your entry is marked, so ensure it looks professional. Innovation is great, but don't make your entry too gimmicky. And remember that there are 12 judges, each of whom will require a copy of your entry. Therefore you don't want to make it difficult for your entry to be reproduced and circulated. Whatever the presentation format ensure it sticks to the overall aims and the page limit.



Some samples of last years submissions can be found on the PP Awards page www.cipsa.com.au