



# Top tips on a winning

Want to see your team crowned Manufacturing Champions Award winners, but stumped by the entry process? Never fear, here's your guide to crafting the perfect entry

UK manufacturing sites are a haven for unsung heroes. The men and women who deliver on time, in full, come rain or shine. Giving these gifted individuals and teams some long overdue reward and recognition on the national stage is a founding principle of *Works Management's* Manufacturing Champions Awards. But, conveying why your operator, apprentice or shift team deserve an accolade can get lost in translation. So to help you craft an entry that does justice to your shopfloor superstars, *WM* brings you this eight step guide to putting together a Manufacturing Champions entry.

## 1 Plan ahead

Writing an award entry is no different to instigating a line redesign or sourcing a new supplier. Start by assessing the task at hand, the ideal outcome and identifying your best strategy for success. Deming's Plan, Do, Check, Act (PDCA) system [<http://tinyurl.com/zpkzk2s>] is a powerful tool for enhancing your entry. The planning phase should involve checking out the Manufacturing Champions criteria (see [www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/judging-process](http://www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/judging-process)) and matching employees

to the relevant award category. Put a timeline together for gathering the requested KPI data and sourcing customer testimonials to support your entry. Consult fellow managers on nominees and decide who's responsible for gathering the entry data, and a deadline for doing so. We'll get to the check and act parts of PDCA later...

## 2 Choose your category

There are nine Champions Awards categories. Make sure your employee or team is being entered into the right one. For example, there's no point entering a 27 year-old manager into a Rising Star Award with an upper age limit of 25. Put them in for a Manufacturing Leader Award instead. You can enter multiple employees and teams for different award categories. Just make sure you are putting them in the category, which is most conducive to their chances of success. See the list at [www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/categories](http://www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/categories)

## 3 Be clear and be bold

Approach your citation like a lawyer trying to secure a conviction from

the jury. Build a compelling narrative and back it up with plenty of evidence. If you are entering an Unsung Hero, then give examples of how they went above and beyond everyday expectations. The case should be cogent, referring back to the entry criteria (see tip 6) and how your nominee exceeds in each area. But, remember a little heart alongside the head. The crayoned picture from the local pupil who wants to be an engineer after visiting your plant or the hug from a parent of the operator whose life your safety initiative saved. These flashes of colour can make all the difference in persuading our judges of your case.

## 4 KPIs count

Show the impact of the entrant's efforts on your factory's key performance indicators. This could be an increase in near miss reporting or extended lost time accident rates for a Safe Workplace Champion entry or a percentage scrap reduction for an Employee-led Innovation entry. Provide as many relevant metrics as you can to help our judges understand your colleague's performance enhancing powers.

## 5 Add supplementary material

All Manufacturing Champions Awards entries have a strict word count limit on the main questionnaire. However, there is the chance to attach supplementary information alongside your entry. We encourage you add in photos of kaizen activity, lineside innovations or problem solving. The old adage that a picture paints a thousand words rings true with our judges. Testimonials are also a powerful tool for turning heads. Seek them out from customers, colleagues or teachers – if it's a Community Champion Award entry.



Categories up for grabs include Manufacturing Leader, Unsung Hero and Rising Star Awards

Enter now at

# Champions entry



*The class of 2015: last year's winners displayed innovation and teamwork*

**6 Refer back to the criteria** You'll find a synopsis for what the judges are looking for alongside each Champions Awards category description at [www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/categories](http://www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/categories). Keep it handy when you fill in the entry questionnaire, so you stay on script. And remember that all categories are judged on the four core values we seek to celebrate at Manufacturing Champions. These are innovation; teamwork/leadership; outstanding performance; and adding value to customers/suppliers. If you can relate your entrant's achievements back to these four areas, then you could be onto a winner.

**7 Check and refine** The check and act element of the PDCA tool mentioned in tip 1. This is just as crucial as the planning phase, because it allows you to step back and refine your entry. It's much like a kaizen blitz: you're looking to weed out the small inefficiencies (like typos) as well as spot some big ticket improvements. For example, did you write reams about the challenges facing your team and run out of words when it came to describing

how they overcame them? You can edit and save forms as much as you like until clicking the final submit button.

**8 Think can-do** 'We don't have the time' or 'we don't have the luxury of a PR company compiling entries for us like the global conglomerate up the road'. There are a bagful of excuses as to why you could give entering Manufacturing Champions a miss. But this is, ultimately, your awards. One that shines a light on the people whose pride and professionalism power our factories. And by doing so, fights back against the myth that working in UK manufacturing is dead-end or dirty. The more diverse the entry pool, the more chance we have of showcasing the depth of talent we have in all manufacturing sectors. Our judging panel is made up of your peers: successful site managers who have an eye for what makes a manufacturing talent. These are engineering minds that look for numbers alongside the glitzy citation. Make sure you add both in equal measure and you or your team could be joining us for a

glittering afternoon of celebrating Britain's manufacturing stars in Manchester on 8 December. Good luck and we look forward to receiving your entries. •

## Enter the Manufacturing Champions Awards: it's easy

- \* Log on to [www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/categories](http://www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk/categories). Click the category or categories you want to enter and enter your email address details.
- \* We'll send you a Champions Awards entry account and password details
- \* Log in to your account and complete the entry forms for each category. You can save these as you go and attach supplementary entry material where requested. The Manufacturing Champions grand final takes place on 8 December at the Midland Hotel, Manchester.

**Help! I'm still confused. Contact Max Gosney for assistance on 01322 221144 or [max.gosney@markallengroup.com](mailto:max.gosney@markallengroup.com)**

[www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk](http://www.manufacturing-champions.co.uk)