

# Connecticut Better Business Bureau

## CALL FOR ENTRIES

### WHY?

To promote the highest standards of business ethics and conduct in the marketplace

### WHO?

Open to all Connecticut for-profit companies that have been in business for at least 1 full year or more

### HOW?

By filling out the enclosed Official Entry Form, following the criteria and returning it to your BBB by the entry deadline

### WHAT?

A wonderful opportunity to stand up for integrity and stand out as a business that cares about service excellence

## 2009 Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence

### Application Guide & Application Form



## About the 2009 Competition

### BBB Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence

The coveted BBB Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence attracts many entries from businesses of all sizes throughout Connecticut. These awards are presented to companies in recognition of their outstanding commitment to high ethical standards.

BBB Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence helps illuminate the importance of corporate conscience and responsibility for upholding a fair and honest marketplace. Each year, one winner is selected from each of three size categories by an independent panel of judges. The award is open to Connecticut for-profit businesses that provide goods or services to retail and wholesale markets.

Companies entering must carefully review and need to demonstrate that they meet the judging criteria.

**The 2009 Better Business Bureau Torch Award for Marketplace Ethics will be awarded to three companies:**

- Category 1 ( 50+ employees)
- Category 2 (10 to 49 employees)
- Category 3 (1 to 9 employees)

**Nominees must be in good standing with the BBB.**

### About the 2009 Competition

Presented annually, your Connecticut Better Business Bureau Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence honors businesses that demonstrate exceedingly high standards of behavior toward customers, employees, suppliers, shareholders and communities; adherence to truthful and honorable advertising and sales practices; and, an earned reputation for noteworthy contributions to their industries and the communities in which they do business.

The Torch Award is designed to promote the importance of ethical business practices and the willingness and efforts made by outstanding businesses to ensure that our state's marketplace remains fair and honorable for all residents.

The entry deadline for the 2009 Better Business Bureau Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence competition is [Friday, October 3, 2008.](#)

Before preparing and submitting your entry package, please review the judging criteria, contest rules, and on how to enter information.

This year's awards will be presented at our 81st Annual Meeting and Awards Dinner on October 29, 2009 at the Aqua Turf Club in Plantsville, CT. The ceremony will be attended by leaders from the business, government, academic and news media sectors. For additional information on the award, contact the BBB at 203-269-2700 #100.

**You can also enter the  
CT Torch for Marketplace Excellence  
at : [www.ct.bbb.org/torchaward](http://www.ct.bbb.org/torchaward)**

# Torch Award Judging Criteria

A company should demonstrate its commitment to high ethical standards of behavior and provide documentation in the following categories. Below are suggestions of areas to address. Not all areas are required in order for a company to compete.

- I. Management Practices.** NOTE: (If you are the owner of the company, with no employees, explain how ethics are used in everyday business practices.)
- Pertinent sections from an employee handbook, company manual or training program or (formal or informal) showing how ethics policies are communicated to and implemented by employees.
  - Formal training and/or procedures used to address concerns an employee may have in dealing with an ethical dilemma.
  - The existence of an Ethics Officer, Compliance Officer or Ombudsman should be noted, along with information concerning the responsibilities and authority of this position.
  - Formal or informal management practices and policies that foster positive employee relations.
  - Employee benefits and/or workplace practices which contribute to the quality of family life.
  - Actions by the business to assess risks and take appropriate actions to prevent workplace injury.
  - Examples of sound environmental practices.
- II. Customer/ Vendor/ Supplier/ Shareholder Relations.**
- Examples of how your business has prospered because of your belief in honesty, integrity and “doing the right thing.”
  - Complimentary feedback from customers, vendors and/or suppliers.
  - Company policies and practices that assure excellence in quality products and/or services, and demonstrate accountability to customers, vendors and suppliers.
  - Actions taken by your company showing that it went “beyond the call of duty.”
  - Examples of cases where your company had to make tough decisions that had negative short-term consequences and led to long-term benefits.
  - If your company is publicly traded, discuss how the corporation demonstrates accountability to shareholders and adheres to good governance practices.
- III. Marketing/ Advertising/ Communications/ Sales Practices.**
- Descriptions of the methods your company uses to assure all sales, promotional materials and advertisements are truthful and accurate.
  - Examples of efforts by your company to improve communications, advertising, marketing and sales practices which benefit your industry as a whole.
  - Sales training policies and/or codes of ethics used by sales personnel that ensure all transactions are made in an upfront and ethical manner.
- IV. Reputation within Industry and Community.**
- Articles in trade, industry publications and news media that reflect your reputation in your industry and community as an ethical business.
  - Awards, recognition and/or complimentary letters from others within your industry or trade group.
  - Recognition for charitable and/or community service projects.
  - Give 3 references that we can contact to discuss your reputation in the industry and in the community.
- V. Financial Stability**
- To determine that the business is meeting financial obligations, please supply current credit reports, annual certified financial audit and/or current copy of Dun & Bradstreet report.

**Please send entries and supporting materials to:**  
**Better Business Bureau® Torch Awards Entry Committee**  
**94 South Turnpike Road, Wallingford, CT 06492**

# Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence Guidelines

Entries for the BBB Torch Awards for Marketplace Excellence will be reviewed by a panel of judges independent of the Better Business Bureau's staff and Board of Directors.

The judges may request additional information from the company or business regarding any of the four judging criteria. The entrant may not hold an unsatisfactory record with the BBB. Decisions of the judges are final.

## Entries should include the following:

1. entry form below.
2. a two-page summary that:
  - explains why your firm merits being a Torch Award winner;
  - highlights specific business and management practices relevant to the award;
  - illustrates your firm's commitment to fair and honest conduct in the marketplace; and
  - provides your firm's position regarding business integrity and ethical practices, including a formally adopted policy or mission statement.
3. Criteria Binder (see Torch Award Judging Criteria on previous page)

Entries should be submitted on 8.5" x 11" paper, and the total entry is limited to a 2 inch, three-ring binder.

Use tabs to separate the binder into 4 sections corresponding to the judging criteria, and include materials (mission statement, company communications and publications, news media articles, company advertising, letters of recognition or commendation, customer testimonials, etc.) that demonstrate your company's strengths regarding each of the criteria. Sorry, however, video, DVD's and CD media will not be reviewed by the judges.

Please retain a copy of your complete entry. All submitted entries become the property of BBB and cannot be returned.

Winners will be selected in October, and will be notified by mail no later than mid October.

## **BBB Torch Award for Marketplace Excellence Entry Form**

This Official Entry is submitted by the following:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Company being Nominated:**

Name of Company: \_\_\_\_\_ President's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Web Site Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Size of Company Being Nominated (Check One)**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1 to 10 employees      \_\_\_\_\_ 11 to 99 employees      \_\_\_\_\_ 100+ employees

Line of Business \_\_\_\_\_

# of years in business: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement: We understand that the judges may request a site visit. We agree to host the visit and to facilitate an open and unbiased examination. We also understand that by signing the application, we certify our compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations governing our business or industry. And we agree that we will abide by BBB guidelines for referencing the BBB Connecticut Torch Award in any advertising or public announcements. We acknowledge that all the submitted entries become the property of the BBB and cannot be returned.

\* \* Legal Actions: If your company has been involved in major lawsuits, class actions or government action in the past three years, please provide a summary of the nature of the legal/government action. Recent independent audit reports may be submitted in place of such summary. For large size or publicly-traded companies, copies of the two most recent Annual Reports will suffice.

Signature of Authorizing Official: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_