



J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award Criteria

*Please describe why the nominee should receive the J.C. Brown CEO Communication Leadership Award. Provide written descriptions for each of the four criteria, which are defined below. **Written descriptions are limited to 500 words per criterion.** Point values have been assigned to each criterion to guide the panel of judges. (Supporting evidence is optional and, while illustrative, will not enhance the point values assigned to the four criteria. If included, supporting material must be uploaded using the area provided in the Online Nomination Form.)*

(1) The Cooperative Difference (35 points) – In what ways does the CEO's commitment to communication, both internal and external, help advance the seven cooperative principles, philosophy and way of doing business?

- Statement/evidence may include any type of leadership action, communication activity or product that promotes the cooperative principles to staff, member-consumers, or other audiences.

(2) Strategic Approach (25 points) – In what ways does the CEO integrate communication into the organization's strategic planning and management processes?

- Evidence may include, but is not limited to, a well-defined strategic communication plan, as well as adequate annual budgets and resources devoted specifically to communication. (Note: budget size alone is not a major factor; it is part of the overall plan.)
- How often is the strategic communication plan updated and reviewed for its effectiveness?

(3) Integrated Approach (20 points) – In what ways does the CEO demonstrate support for the cooperative's communication staff?

- Does the CEO view all employees of the organization as part of the communication team? For example, are staff members in all areas of the organization—particularly those who have contact with member-owners—kept informed about the co-op's priorities and kept up to date on important organizational developments?
- Is there evidence of an effective employee communication program at the co-op, as well as two-way communication within the co-op, i.e., top-down and bottom-up? Statement/evidence may include, but is not limited to, demonstrating how information on critical projects and management decisions is shared in timely and open fashion in executing the cooperative's communication plan.
- Other examples include a dedication to hiring professional communication staff people, as well as providing adequate educational and training opportunities for staff.



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(4) Measures of Success (20 points) – Please note indicators of the success of the cooperative’s communication/marketing programs during the CEO’s tenure, and on which he or she has had an influence. This criterion is not intended to be an evaluation or showcase of the cooperative’s communication products and services as defined in the larger Spotlight on Excellence awards program.

- Statement/evidence may include awards received by the cooperative during the CEO’s tenure, but should not be limited to that. For example, the statement/evidence should include how the organization measures the success of its communication programs and projects, i.e., what evaluation techniques and methods are used to determine whether strategic communication goals have been met. CEO involvement or endorsement should be described.
- Statement/evidence should include how the organization’s communication programs have led to changes in thinking, attitudes, or actions among member-owners and/or other key publics, and how the CEO has been a part of this result.

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