



Good Communication is
ELEMENTAL

**AIR.
WATER.
FOOD.
GOOD
COMMUNICATION.**

IABC Silver Quill 2016
Call for Entries



International Association
of Business Communicators
Pacific Plains Region



Silver Quill 2016: Good Communication is Elemental

THRIVING WITH GOOD COMMUNICATION.

You really need only a few things in life to survive: air to breathe, food to eat, water to drink. A roof over your head is nice, too. But to really thrive, you need communication — good communication — that brings people and ideas together, all while creating forward motion and engagement.

So, let's celebrate the best of good communication throughout the region in the IABC Pacific Plains 2016 Silver Quill Awards. These awards recognize the work of business communicators – work that has exceeded expectations, demonstrated outstanding creativity, and furthered organizational goals. In short, the Silver Quill honors work that stands above the rest.

ENTERING? IT'S AS EASY AS BREATHING (SORT OF).

We have aligned the Silver Quill Awards with the international IABC awards process by offering an easy online submission method with our partner AwardSentry. The alignment means that once you obtain judges' feedback on your Silver Quill entry, you can quickly make any needed adjustments and enter your work in the Gold Quill Awards program. Our trained judges provide constructive feedback, which makes it easier for you to refine your entry to submit in future award programs – and it also helps you prepare for your next communications challenge.

To enter, go to <https://bq.awardsentry.org/ppsilverquill>. Entrants must submit a work plan and work sample that trained business communicators will evaluate using an approved standard for communications excellence.



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Breaking Down the Basics

ABOUT THE AWARDS

WELCOME TO THE 2016 IABC PACIFIC PLAINS REGION'S SILVER QUILL AWARDS.

Skilled communicators can take the complicated and make it understandable. They cut through jargon and corporate-speak. They bring lofty ideas into reality. They plan, craft, write, edit, design, evaluate, measure and pull their hair out until they get it just right. All to bring forth a program, a document, a design or a story that communicates what is needed for their audience.

When you take on an IABC Pacific Plains Silver Quill Award submission, you are among the best communicators across the region. You're among those who aren't afraid to take creative risks and those who understand how to achieve a successful outcome. To you, good communication is right up there with breathing.

Are you among this group?

SILVER QUILL AWARDS HONOR COMMUNICATIONS THAT ACHIEVE GREATNESS:

- *Setting and meeting objectives that deliver valuable, measurable results to the organization*
- *Using strategic thinking, creativity, ingenuity or whatever it takes to get the job done*
- *Measuring the outcomes to demonstrate success*

YOU DON'T NEED TO BE AN IABC MEMBER TO PARTICIPATE.

- *Award programs at the regional and international Gold level use the same criteria, which allows you to enter your projects at all levels. Each entry receives serious and constructive feedback from trained evaluators. This feedback provides you with insight and may be used to improve an entry for submission at the next level.*
- *For Communication Management entries (Divisions 1, 2 and 3), 50 percent of the evaluation score is based on the work plan and 50 percent on the work sample. For Communication Skills (Division 4), the score is based on the work sample's creativity, professional execution and alignment. For student entries, 35 percent of the score is based on the work plan and 65 percent on the work sample.*

Eligible projects must be implemented, published or broadcast between January 2015 and the day of submission. If a long-term strategy was developed prior to January 1, 2015, and hasn't been entered in this competition, it is eligible for entry as long as the measurement period extended into 2015.



Review Your Data... and Start Your Entry

PREPARING YOUR ENTRY

Divisions 1, 2 and 3: An entry includes two elements – a work plan and a work sample.

Division 4 (Communications Skills): Instead of a detailed work plan, you will complete a brief entry form on the awards entry website and submit it along with your work sample. The work sample should represent the full scope of your work.

THE WORK PLAN (DIVISIONS 1, 2 AND 3)

1. Name this file "Work Plan."
2. Your work plan must be a single PDF file.
3. The file should include your work plan and a copy of your client authorization permission letter (if needed).
4. Work plans are limited to four printed pages, excluding the permission letter.
5. The minimum font size is 10 point.
6. Acceptable paper sizes are 8.5" x 11" or A4 (21 x 29.7 cm).
7. Margins should be at least one-half-inch (1.3 cm) on all sides.
8. Follow the outline included in the Call for Entries.

If you're entering the same program or elements of the program in multiple categories, be sure to tailor your work plan to ensure that it fits each category.

Your work plan is an executive summary of your communication strategy. It should:

- Describe the context for your program or project
- Clearly state the communication challenge or opportunity

- Provide an analysis of your target audiences
- Demonstrate high-level goals and measurable objectives stated as outputs or outcomes
- Provide insight to your strategic approach
- Highlight your budget and how you effectively used resources
- Provide an abbreviated tactical execution plan
- Discuss any challenges that you faced during planning and execution
- Demonstrate collaboration with stakeholders, if appropriate
- Provide measurable, meaningful results that are aligned with your stated objectives and audience and business needs

We know it can be challenging to fit your entry into the required page length — but it's not impossible! Edit your plan to be clear and concise. Bullets, tables and lists, rather than full paragraphs, can save space. Use the score sheets as guides to make sure you have covered all the bases and that your entry achieves the highest possible score.

OUTLINE FOR WORK PLAN

1. Entrant's name. The entrant is the project lead who has worked on the project and is submitting for himself/herself or for the project team. The entrant's name must match the entrant named on the work plan and be the primary lead on the project.
2. Title of entry.
3. Division and category.
4. Submitting organization's name.
5. Client organization or outside agency (if applicable). Include written permission (on the company letterhead of those granting permission) to submit the entry from clients, agencies, suppliers and other key project participants. A printed copy of an emailed

letter of permission that includes the signature line of the client or other key participants is also acceptable.

6. Time period of project. Specify when the communication project took place.
7. Brief description. Provide a one- or two-sentence description of your entry.
8. Explain your project using these subheadings:
 - *Business need/opportunity*
 - *Intended audience/stakeholders*
 - *Goals and objectives*
 - *Solution overview*
 - *Implementation and challenges*
 - *Measurement/evaluation of outcomes*

THE WORK SAMPLE

1. Maximum number of work sample files is five. If you have more, combine them into files no more than 2GB (2,000MB) in size.
2. Include the words "Work Sample" in the file names.
3. The file should contain a representative overview of your project.
4. The following file formats are acceptable for work samples: .pdf, .png, .jpg, .gif, .mp4, .wmv, .m4v.
5. For websites, please provide the URL or IP address of the site in your entry.
6. For intranets or internal, secured access sites, provide instructions on how to register for the site, along with an account name or password. If access may be a barrier to evaluation, or if there's a chance the site may change after submission, consider submitting a "Tour of Work Sample" video (five minutes or less).
7. Electronic files will be disqualified if they contain viruses, if they disable or require disabling of any part of the computer system used during evaluation or if evaluators cannot view work samples using the instructions provided.

8. Large files are difficult to upload and download. Please condense the file size as much as possible. The maximum file size is 2 GB. If you have a single file larger than 2 GB, contact support@awardsentry.org for other uploading options.

The work sample is the supporting material that illustrates how you planned and implemented your communication program. It can include video and audio files, Word documents, files created in iWork, PDFs, magazines, brochures and website links. Your work sample should represent the full scope of your work. Name this file "work sample."

Organize and condense your work to showcase a representative overview of your project. Choose examples (clips, photos, etc.) that best support your work plan and represent your strategy. Be creative in demonstrating how the elements of your work sample are aligned with the business needs and audience preferences.

Be sure to include:

- *An executive summary of any research used to inform your strategy*
- *Your communication or creative strategy or both*
- *Work samples that are specific to the category entered and that showcase the material produced such as – but not limited to – media clippings, scripts, brochures, emails, presentations, print or electronic ads or video presentations, writing samples, photographs of large or specialty items, publications and other communication or marketing vehicles as appropriate*
- *Key results that align with that section of your work plan*

If you're submitting both print and electronic material as part of your work sample, you may upload this material in independent files.



Eat, Sleep, Breathe... Now Get Recognized

DIVISIONS AND CATEGORIES

The IABC Pacific Plains Region Silver Quill Awards offers four divisions and 28 categories where you can enter your work.

- *Division 1: Communication Management*
- *Division 2: Communication Research*
- *Division 3: Communication Training and Education*
- *Division 4: Communication Skills*

DIVISION 1: COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT

The Communication Management division covers projects, programs and campaigns that are guided by a communication strategy. Entries to this division can be submitted by any type of organization, from governments to retail companies to services such as utilities and healthcare. Entrants must demonstrate how their project applied a full range of planning and management skills, including research, analysis, strategy, tactical implementation and evaluation. Entries may include a wide range of communication materials.

CATEGORY 1: INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

- *Programs or strategies targeted at employee or member audiences*
- *Includes programs that create awareness and influence opinion or behavioral change, including those focused on ethics, morale, internal culture or change management*
- *May involve improving employee understanding and alignment with business direction, improving face-to-face communication, preparing employees for change, integration of organizational cultures*

caused by an acquisition or downsizing, an internal brand ambassador program or a program to inspire pride in the organization

CATEGORY 2: EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

- *Local, regional, national or international programs or strategies that profile the role of strategic communication as a driver in improving employee engagement*
- *Entries must focus on the communication elements of these programs, which could include contribution to program development and promotion through various communication vehicles and channels*
- *May include employee recognition and employee volunteer programs, including programs that benefit charitable or philanthropic causes, or that recognize employees' organizational contributions or achievements in the organization*

CATEGORY 3: HUMAN RESOURCES AND BENEFITS COMMUNICATION

- *Programs or strategies targeted at internal audiences that relate to communication of health and welfare, savings and pension, stocks and compensation, or recruitment and retention initiatives*

CATEGORY 4: CHANGE COMMUNICATION

- *Communication strategies that support organizational change*
- *May be directed at internal or external audiences, or both*

CATEGORY 5: SAFETY COMMUNICATION

- Programs or strategies that focus on improving awareness, understanding and behaviors related to safety issues within an organization

CATEGORY 6: LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION

- Programs or strategies that help leaders become more effective communicators, improve the quality of leadership communication within an organization, or improve leader knowledge and the ability to use communication as a business driver
- Tactics may include tool kits with speaking notes, games or other tools that help leaders communicate a specific topic, and special publications with information and support for leadership communication

CATEGORY 7: MARKETING, ADVERTISING AND BRAND COMMUNICATION

- May include various activities designed to sell products, services, destinations, organizations or ideas to external audiences, and is generally delivered through a variety of communication vehicles and channels
- Strategies for new brands and the repositioning of existing brands in relationship to internal and external audiences
- May include brand characteristics and attributes, changes to corporate identities and design solutions that address the challenges of brand communication (must be more than a logo redesign)
- Strategic advertising campaigns designed to build brand awareness, influence opinion, motivate audience behaviors, or sell products and service

CATEGORY 8: CUSTOMER RELATIONS

- Strategies or ongoing programs targeted at customer audiences that educate, inform, engage or otherwise connect the organization and its employees to the customer
- Programs may influence reputation, brand awareness and loyalty, and market position
- May include relationship management, experience standards or appreciation programs, but must be focused on communication and marketing elements

CATEGORY 9: MEDIA RELATIONS

- Strategies or ongoing programs that use the news media as the primary channel to reach target audiences and seek to influence awareness, understanding and opinion or motivate action
- Should demonstrate the quality of media coverage and its impact on the organization—quantity of media stories alone is not considered a valid measurement in this category

CATEGORY 10: COMMUNITY RELATIONS

- A one-time or an ongoing program that enhances stakeholder understanding of issues affecting business operations within the community served
- Seeks to build trust and credibility with stakeholder groups generally through consultation and other communication-based activities
- Tactics and supporting strategies may include formal and informal meetings, town hall discussions, workshops, presentations, open houses, and electronic or printed material



CATEGORY 11: GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

- Short- or long-term programs that influence the opinion or actions of government bodies or agencies
- May seek to create awareness, or influence the attitudes and behaviors of decision-makers toward the organization or industry

CATEGORY 12: FINANCIAL COMMUNICATION

- Entails strategies, tactics and tools used to share financial data and recommendations with investors and other interested parties
- Includes investor relations functions that integrate finance, communication, marketing and securities laws compliance to enable effective two-way communication between a company, the financial community, and stakeholders

CATEGORY 13: ISSUES MANAGEMENT AND CRISIS COMMUNICATION

- Programs targeted at external and/or internal audiences that address trends, issues or attitudes that have a significant impact on an organization, such as labor relations, crises, mergers, acquisitions, public policy or environmental concerns
- Programs may demonstrate proactive planning and preventative action during an extraordinary event, or show the actions taken to address trends, issues and interest group attitudes that have a major impact on an organization

CATEGORY 14: CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- Programs or strategies that communicate social responsibility and encourage positive actions while building awareness and reputation and positioning the organization as a good corporate citizen

- May be targeted to multiple audiences and influence share price and customer loyalty, retention and recruitment, operational efficiency and increased sales
- Generally long-term and focused on enhancing the well-being of communities and populations through causes such as the environment, energy sustainability, food safety, economic stability, employment, poverty reduction, literacy, education, health, cultural preservation, and indigenous and heritage protection

CATEGORY 15: SOCIAL MEDIA PROGRAMS

- Engages internal and external audiences in conversation through social media
- Encompasses tools and practices that allow individuals and groups to collaborate and share knowledge and experiences online
- May use conversation-enabled publishing platforms such as blogs and podcasts; social networks such as Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook; democratized content networks such as wikis and message boards; content-sharing sites such as YouTube and Flickr; and virtual networking platforms

CATEGORY 16: GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATION PROGRAMS

- Programs and strategies specific to government organizations at the municipal, state, provincial, regional, federal, national or international level
- May be targeted to one or more audiences, and include internal, external or integrated communication strategies or programs

CATEGORY 17: NONPROFIT CAMPAIGNS

- Programs recognizing the particular challenges of the nonprofit sector

- May include multiple internal or external audiences
- Promotes nonprofit organizations or causes
- May be paid projects or pro-bono projects donated to the client by an organization, agency or consultancy; entries generally have a small budget or none at all

CATEGORY 18: COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT, STUDENT ENTRY

- Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student

DIVISION 2: COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

Entries in this division recognize the importance of research and measurement as a foundation for strategic communication work and a competency that's integral to success throughout the career of a communication professional.

CATEGORY 19: COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

- Formative research conducted during the initial stages of the strategic communication planning process that benchmarks internal audience opinions or behaviors, profiles the marketplace or internal communication environment in which the organization operates, aligns best practices against organizational needs or informs strategic direction for internal communication programs
- May include audience analysis, competitive benchmarking, secondary research related to best practices, program or product test markets, and reputation or brand studies

CATEGORY 20: COMMUNICATION RESEARCH, STUDENT ENTRY

- Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student

DIVISION 3: COMMUNICATION TRAINING AND EDUCATION

This division recognizes the mentorship and education role of consultants and senior communicators in developing and delivering workshops, classes, seminars or training that educates an audience about any aspect of the communication profession. This division includes all communication disciplines and professional competencies.

CATEGORY 21: COMMUNICATION TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- Training or educational programs delivered to an internal or external audience that help to improve their communication competencies
- For internal audiences, may include supervisor/manager/leader training in communication skills, presentation skills and employee ambassador development, in addition to media training, speaker's bureau training, and other communication disciplines
- For external audiences, may include presentations for conferences, university classes, seminars or workshops, and media and executive coaching

CATEGORY 22: COMMUNICATION TRAINING AND EDUCATION, STUDENT ENTRY

- Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student



DIVISION 4: COMMUNICATION SKILLS

The communication skills division includes marketing and communication elements that showcase technical skills such as editing, writing, design and multimedia production. Entries in this division are generally tactical in nature. Entrants must demonstrate strategic alignment, the creative process and measurable results.

CATEGORY 23: SPECIAL EVENTS

- Planning and execution of a special event for an internal or external audience
- For internal audiences, may include employee appreciation events, or events that mark a significant occasion such as an anniversary, internal conference or meeting, or a celebration or special retirement
- For external audiences, may include conferences, workshops, anniversaries, official openings, product launches, road shows and customer events.

CATEGORY 24: DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

- Computer-based communication vehicles defined as the end product that are produced for internal or external audiences, and that rely on a digital communication channel for delivery
- Electronic and interactive communication channels such as websites, intranets, online stores, blogs and podcasts; social networks such as LinkedIn and Facebook; democratized content networks such as wikis and message boards; micro-blogging sites such as Twitter; content-sharing sites such as YouTube and Flickr; and virtual networking platforms
- May also include electronic newsletters, electronic annual reports, special publications, CDs or DVDs, e-cards, banner ads, buttons, pop-ups and similar material
- Generally one-way communication that offers published content online

CATEGORY 25: AUDIO/VISUAL

- Communication vehicles produced using sound, images, video, film, slides, CDs or a combination of these elements
- May include video, audio, PowerPoint or other presentations, and films
- Does not include advertising commercials

CATEGORY 26: PUBLICATIONS

- Publications produced for internal or external audiences in all formats, including hard copy and electronic
- May include magazines, newspapers, newsletters or tabloids, annual reports, books, special publications, brochures and other advertising material, e-newsletters, and similar material

CATEGORY 27: WRITING

- Writing in traditional and electronic formats

JOURNALISM:

- Material written in a journalistic style, either by a corporate communicator or a journalist in which the news media is the primary communication channel
- May include but is not limited to editorials, interpretive/expository articles, news releases and feature stories

CORPORATE WRITING:

- Material written primarily for use by an organization to inform or educate employees or external stakeholders
- May include recurring features or columns, magazines, newsletters, internal or special publications, stand-alone features, speeches and presentations, executive correspondence, scripts for corporate use, writing for the intranet, internal publications, technical writing, and annual and special reports

PROMOTIONAL WRITING:

- Material written to persuade customers, consumers, employees or stakeholders to adopt a point of view, or to purchase goods or services
- May include commercials, advertising, marketing or sales promotion material, advertorials and writing for the web

NONPROFIT WRITING:

- Material written to promote nonprofit organizations, including IABC regional and chapter events

WRITING—SPECIAL PROJECTS:

- Books (fiction and nonfiction), educational material, scripts for theatrical use and other writing projects not covered above

**CATEGORY 28:
COMMUNICATION SKILLS,
STUDENT ENTRY**

- Entries to any category in this division submitted by a student

Essential Facts and Figures
ENTRY FEES AND TIMELINE

**THE 2016 SILVER QUILL AWARDS
TIMELINE IS AS FOLLOWS:**

CALL FOR ENTRIES

August 2016

FINAL DEADLINE

September 30, 2016

EARLY BIRD DEADLINE

September 23, 2016

WINNERS ANNOUNCED

November 2016

ENTRY FEES (PER MEMBER)

Early-Bird

Member: \$100

Non-member: \$125

Student member: \$35

Standard (September 24 – 30, 2016)

Member: \$135

Non-member: \$160

Student member: \$35

Frequently Asked Questions... FAQ

WHO CAN ENTER THE SILVER QUILLS?

Anyone producing organizational communications can enter. Entries must be original material, not syndicated, borrowed, reprinted or stock material. Agencies may submit client's work with written authorization from the client. Gold Quill and Bronze Quill entries can easily be repurposed for the Silver Quill.

You don't need to be an IABC member to participate.

WHAT CAN I ENTER?

You can enter work you produced and measured in 2015 and up to the date of submission. You may also enter work that was produced in 2014, if the work and/or measurements extended into 2015.

CAN I ENTER THE SAME PROJECT IN MORE THAN ONE DIVISION?

Yes, you may submit the same entry into any category where it fits the category description. For example, if you are submitting a multimedia campaign targeted at several audiences, you may enter it in marketing communication, community relations, multi-audience communication, and customer-member relations. If you enter in multiple categories your work plan must be customized to each category description. You may submit elements of the campaign to different categories within communication skills. You must pay a separate entry fee for each category you enter and provide separate supporting documents with each entry.

HOW ARE AWARDS PRESENTED?

The Pacific Plains Region will publicize the winners of the Silver Quills. Each winner will receive an award by mail to put in a prominent place at work. And IABC chapters will celebrate local winners.

WHAT WILL THE AWARD LOOK LIKE?

Winning entries in each category will receive an awards crystal that will be engraved with the entrant's name and category (as specified on your entry form). Duplicate awards for your team members are also available upon request. In addition to the awards crystal, winners will be recognized within IABC at the regional and chapter levels and with website mentions and supported publicity. You do the work, and we'll help you get the recognition you deserve!

WHO JUDGES THE ENTRIES?

All entries will be judged by a panel using IABC Gold Quill judging guidelines to provide consistency in judging. Two judges will score each entry separately. They will then compare their results to combine their scores for a final rating. The rating determines whether your entry qualifies for an Award of Merit or an Award of Excellence. An evaluator, trained in aligning to the seven-point scale of excellence, will review the results and check for accuracy and consistency.



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Creative sponsor:





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Leadership Group

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