



SNA Awards Program

Tips for Writing and Judging a Great Awards Nomination

Below are examples of “good” responses and “better” responses to questions on the Employee, Manager and Director of the Year award nomination forms. Use these examples as inspiration when writing your nomination of a colleague you admire or as benchmarks to help you judge the nominations within your state.

EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR:

Section 1: Customer Service Skills—“Good” Example: Sally is always ready to go the extra mile to provide customer service. She developed and implemented Mentoring Meals Monday to encourage the school staff to come and dine with the students. Not only did this provide an opportunity for the staff to taste the delicious meals we serve each day, but staff also was able to role model good nutrition choices to the students!

Section 1: Customer Service Skills—“Better” Example: Mae works in a school where over 50% of the students are ESL. She noticed that they struggle to read the menu since they are not proficient in English. Since there are too many different languages to post the menus for everyone, Mae takes special care to draw pictures of the menu items (a drawing of a chicken + a bun for a chicken sandwich), so the kids know what’s on the menu. Teachers have told us that this also has helped the younger students who cannot read yet, too!

Section 2: Creativity—“Good” Example: In order to ensure meeting USDA's requirement of the fruit/vegetable component for lunch, the Nominee placed the fresh fruit/vegetables choices at the beginning of the serving line. This gave every student the opportunity to first choose what they like, rather than making that choice last and more likely caused food waste.

Section 2: Creativity—“Better” Example: In order to ensure meeting USDA's requirement of the fruit/vegetable component for lunch, the Nominee placed the fruit/vegetable choices at the beginning of the serving line. This gave every student the opportunity to first choose what they like resulting in increased consumption of fresh fruit and vegetables by 15%.

Section 3: Commitment to Professional Development—“Good” Example: The nominee is really dedicated to her education. She has her Certificate in School Nutrition and participates in trainings offered by her local chapter.

Section 3: Commitment to Professional Development —“Better” Example: The nominee is really dedicated to professional development. She has held a level 1 Certificate in School Nutrition Level starting in 2010 and this year, she earned her Level 2 Certificate. She also participates in trainings offered by her local chapter on a regular basis and has served as the local chapter president. She has attended the state association’s conference for the past two years and participated in the SNA Future Leaders Program on behalf of the state last year.

Section 4: Dedication to School Nutrition—“Good” Example: She comes to work every day with a smile on her face and is willing to help anyone that may get behind.

Section 4: Dedication to School Nutrition—“Better” Example: She never shows if she is having a bad day; she always comes in with a smile on her face and a loving attitude. She is the first to offer to help her coworkers if they get behind or are struggling to complete their task. She truly knows it takes all of our staff to get the job done and our priority is serving our students hot, healthy and nutritious meals. She very rarely misses work and has had perfect attendance for the last 5 years and is never tardy.

MANAGER OF THE YEAR:

Section 1: Cafeteria Environment—“Good” Example: The nominee has posters about healthy eating and nutrition hanging in the cafeteria.

Section 1: Cafeteria Environment—“Better” Example: The nominee has large, bright colored posters about healthy eating and nutrition hanging in the cafeteria that encourage students to make healthy choices as they go through the lunch line. She displays seasonal decorations appropriate for a school cafeteria that keep it interesting and fun for the students to come to the cafeteria. She encourages the kitchen staff to dress up on fun days to participate in school events, such as Spirit Day before Homecoming. This helps to make the cafeteria and kitchen staff a part of the school and show their support of school activities.

Section 2: Management and Staff Development—“Good” Example: The manager uses the bulletin board in the staff lounge to train employees. Each week a new training tip is placed on the board. All staff are asked to read and sign that they have read and understand the tip. Once the sheet is completed, the manager randomly questions the staff to insure they the tips are understood.

Section 2: Management and Staff Development—“Better” Example: The manager is aware that good food safety principles are adhered to in the cafeteria. Understanding the importance of ServSafe training, the manager holds weekly training sessions from the ServSafe Manual for the entire staff. At the end of the 12 week training, each staff member is given the opportunity to take the ServSafe examination. The desire of the manager is that the entire staff, including all cafeteria workers, are ServSafe certified.

Section 3: SNA Involvement—“Good” Example: The nominee has been an SNA member since 1996. She joined her local chapter one week after starting to work. She joined the state association six months later.

Section 3: SNA Involvement—“Better” Example: The nominee joined her local SNA chapter one week after starting to work as a 3 hour cashier in August of 1996. She joined the state association six months later so she could attend a regional training. She has not missed a regional training or state conference in fifteen years.

Section 4: School and Community Involvement—“Good” Example: Mary is really great with the kids at her school and has an excellent relationship with the faculty staff and principal at her school. She’s on the school wellness team and is involved with the Fuel up to Play 60 program at our school. Mary also started a breakfast program this year that the kids really like.

Section 4: School and Community Involvement—“Better” Example: Since 2012 the nominee has been the nutrition staff representative on the district’s “Student Food & Fit Committee” which is made up of Physical Ed teachers, Nutrition Staff & Students. In 2015, the nominee led a Fuel up to Play60 initiative by helping kids start a morning “walk & talk” program where students walked in the gym while listening to music before classes begin each morning. The nominee capitalized on this initiative by setting up a grab & go breakfast kiosk by the gym after the “walk& talk” program and as a result increased breakfast participation by 42%.

DIRECTOR OF THE YEAR:

Section 1: Program Enhancement—“Good” Example: The candidate, has been active in implementing “Farm to School” projects over the last 5 years. Working with local farmers / distributors, to bring in items such as kale, apples, tomatoes, and romaine lettuce. They has documented positive results- with students consuming more fresh fruits and vegetables, instead of discarding. They also have arranged farm visits, so that the students have a better understanding of where there food comes from.

Section 1: Program Enhancement—“Better” Example: The candidate has created a very robust, self-sustaining” Farm to School” program. They were able to do this by receiving two farm to school grant awards equaling \$150,000. They worked with community partners to identify “GAP” certified farmers, created educational pieces for the class room, and train staff on to how handle farm fresh products. They also partnered with the local food bank who is now transporting the produce from the farmer to the school. Local purchase has increased from 2% of total food purchase to 23% of total food purchases.

Section 2: Management and Staff Development—“Good” Example: Holds monthly “Idea Meetings” where staff members can share tips and tricks or new procedures they have discovered. Those ideas are then researched and reviewed to insure current guidelines are followed. Once processes are confirmed for usage, manager trains staff on new procedures.

Section 2: Management and Staff Development—“Better” Example: The director provides monthly training to the staff, highlighting a different part of the HACCP Plan. The training is done on a monthly basis. Topics discussed each month include proper hand washing, proper cooking temperatures, preventing cross contamination, and proper storage of products.

Section 3: SNA Involvement—“Good” Example: The nominee believes that it is not enough to just be a member; everyone should contribute to the success of the organization. She has actively encouraged her staff to run for local and state office and volunteer for committees. She has nominated one of her staff for a national committee.

Section 3: SNA Involvement—“Better” Example: The nominee believes that it is not enough to just be a member; everyone should contribute to the success of the organization. She has actively encouraged her staff to run for local and state office and volunteer for committees by allowing them to take time off from work. She has even been known to babysit and deliver meals to families when their loved one is away on SNA business. In the past ten years, eight members of her staff have served in offices at the local and state level and one has served on a national committee.

Section 4: School and Community Involvement—“Good” Example: Mary is a great director and really does an excellent job managing the school district meal program. The kids love the menu items and promotions she does for breakfast, lunch & summer food service and participation has increased since she took over. Mary has does a great job at getting kids to eat more fruits and vegetables during the school year & during the summer food service program. The school gardens that she helped the kids this summer were a big hit with the kids and they are eating a lot more fruits and vegetables than ever before!

Section 4: School and Community Involvement—“Better” Example: Since 2013, the nominee has led the expansion of the Summer Food Service Program in the District from one site to four and has grown participation by _____% with each year’s success building upon the next. Over the past _____ years the nominee has led several initiatives that have engaged the community, district and students. For example, in the spring of 2015, the nominee spearheaded a school garden project in District wide where the nominee teaches kids gardening skills and cooking skills during after school hours and at summer food service program sites.