

Top 10 Tips on Writing Great ATHENA Nominations

***Pittsburgh Magazine* Publisher Betsy Benson has shared this advice on writing nominations for the ATHENA Award and the ATHENA Young Professional Award.**

1. Tell the nominee what you're doing. This can't be a surprise; you will need to interview her and people who know her.
2. Ask for help reviewing the nomination. Even editors need editors.
3. Share the load. The marketing, public relations or human resources departments in the nominee's organization may be available to help.
4. Considering hiring a freelance writer, especially if you're pressed for time.
5. Skip the adjectives and focus on anecdotes and examples. One potent verb is worth three clichéd adjectives.
6. In that same vein, focus on results – not superlatives.
7. Don't exceed three pages of text. (Each selection committee member will review 30 or more nomination packages.)
8. Don't focus exclusively on the present. Try to establish a pattern of achievement over time. What was the nominee doing in the 1980s? Leadership examples from her time in college just may give her the edge.
9. Include direct quotes about the impact the nominee has had on individuals you interviewed.
10. Remember: ATHENA awards go to women who "actively assist women in realizing their full leadership potential." Invest time to quantify that; it can make the difference when the selection committee is deciding among the top candidates.

Any questions? Contact the Sara Gaal at 412-281-4783 x4572.

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