

IPS

INVESTING IN PUBLIC SERVICE

– serving Yukon people

APEX

&

Premier's Award of Excellence



Awarding People

for EXcellence



Principles and Guidelines
for a Corporate
Employee Awards & Recognition
Program



Minister's Foreword

June 2005

Awarding People for Excellence – APEX – is a wonderful example of how people of resolve can come together to turn the vision of possibility into reality.

That's what a recent graduating class of the Yukon Government Leadership Forum has done by developing APEX – a new employee award and recognition program.

APEX is the legacy of a key group of YGLF participants. They did the leg-work, conducted consultations with employee groups and individuals and worked until they got it right. They developed the criteria for this program of which the Government of Yukon is pleased to offer its full support.

Over the next while, departments will use the APEX criteria to develop programs to recognize the work of their own employees. The Premier's Award of Excellence also draws on the principles set out in APEX.

Part of the Investing in Public Service – serving Yukon people initiative, APEX is the foundation of how we will continue to recognize public sector excellence – whether it's acknowledging individuals for a high standard they apply to their everyday work, recognizing a team for their efforts in a particular project or honouring individuals and groups for outstanding service, APEX shows how the efforts of a few individuals can have an effect on a broad range of people throughout the Yukon public service.

Elaine Taylor

Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission

Awarding People for EXcellence

Yukon Government Employee Recognition Program

Introduction

A team from the 2003-2004 Yukon Government Leadership Forum (YGLF) wanted to find a project that could be completed in a timely manner and would result in a positive contribution to government.

The team chose to develop and champion principles and guidelines for a corporate employee recognition program. The group felt this program should:

- encourage the development and implementation of specific award and recognition programs;
- establish principles and guidelines for specific programs;
- propose a Premier's award program; and
- provide a corporate set of tips and techniques for staff and managers to informally and regularly recognize fellow employees.

The team acknowledges that the Public Service Commission's (PSC) mandate is to provide a wide range of human resources advice and support services to Yukon Government departments and their employees.

In consideration of this mandate, the team invited PSC to join them in the development of principles and guidelines for a corporate awards and recognition program. PSC accepted and identified two members.

This document contains the results of the team's work – the Awarding People for EXcellence program (APEX).

Contents

APEX Framework	Describes the overall structure of the corporate APEX framework and how departmental and other award programs fit within the APEX framework.
APEX Overview	Explains the purpose of the APEX program and describes the principles, objectives, guiding parameters, and recognition criteria for awards programs under the APEX program.
FAQs	Anticipates some questions people may have about APEX and provides the answers.

APEX Framework

There are two main parts to APEX.

1. A government-wide framework that lays out the common recognition criteria, program objectives and guiding principles for all government recognition programs.
2. Specific corporate, departmental and potential programs which fall under framework.

Corporate examples

- Premier's Award (new)
- Long Service Awards
- Communications Award
- Informal Recognition Tips (new)

Departmental examples

- Energy, Mines and Resources Awards and Recognition Program

Potential Programs

- Departmental Programs (e.g. EMR)
- Sector Specific Programs (e.g. Communications Award)
- Project Specific Program
- Peer Recognition Program
- Partnership Recognition Program
- Volunteer Recognition Program

APEX Overview

Purpose	APEX, the government's employee recognition program, helps public servants, the government and the public celebrate and take pride in the achievements of those people who work in the public service.
Principles	<p>The Government of Yukon values its employees and the work they do and recognizes the importance of their contributions to the public service.</p> <p>The Government of Yukon supports an employee recognition program for its employees.</p>

Objectives	<p>Employee recognition programs are created to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recognize public servants for exemplary work; ➤ Motivate individuals, teams and departments to accomplish department and government wide goals; ➤ Promote positive behavior and reinforce organizational values; ➤ Increase pride of work in the public service; ➤ Increase staff retention; and ➤ Increase the public's view of Government of Yukon as a desirable environment in which to pursue a career.
Guiding parameters	<p>Encourages excellence in behaviour and performance It is important that the employee recognition program recognize changes in behaviour and performance where possible.</p> <p>Fair and transparent The program needs to demonstrate that it has duly considered all nominees or applicants. The process needs to be clearly laid out for all eligible employees.</p> <p>Respectful of workplace diversity The program needs to respect diversity in the types of work done by employees.</p> <p>Not linked to any employee performance evaluations</p>
Recognition Criteria	<p>The criteria for all programs under APEX will represent what this government most values in its public servants and must include at least one or a combination of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. organizational goals, objectives and values; 2. quality service; 3. leadership; 4. innovation. <p>1. Organizational goals, objectives and values</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Where goals, objectives, and values are defined in a department or are defined corporately, they should be reflected in the recognition program.</p> <p>2. Quality service</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Exceptional levels of service to, and in, the public interest by an individual or team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ quality, timeliness, accessibility and reliability of services delivered; or ➤ the use of creativity and initiative to meet client needs.

3. Leadership

Exemplary leadership of a project, program or team that:

- Enhances the quality of the workplace for employees and contributes to the enhancement of diversity, safety and health, workplace culture and employee development; or
- Improves workplace processes by changing existing procedures for the better, reducing costs or increasing efficiencies; or
- Delivers a one-time or ongoing product to clients or the public.

4. Innovation

Development of new ideas into tangible initiatives, including:

- The use of new technology to enhance program and service delivery or improve existing processes and procedures;
- The creation of new programs, services or opportunities for Yukoners; or
- The identification and pursuit of new opportunities for Yukon.

Each program will establish clear guidelines on how criteria will be met.

APEX FAQs

How fair will it be? Are we just awarding people for special projects, working long hours, etc. What about employees who consistently do their jobs well?

APEX is a set of guiding principles, goals and objectives for how we can reward and recognize employees for the work they do. More specific programs and awards exist or are being developed under APEX ranging from the Premier's Award of Excellence, which recognizes employees for extraordinary work on larger projects and in day-to-day work, to an informal recognition program which is for employees to recognize and thank co-workers for the work they do on a regular basis. There's something for everybody in APEX.

What will the award be?

Again, there are various awards depending on the program or award, although none offer cash. The Premier's award is a memento and a certificate along with a letter from the Premier while the informal program has a range of possibilities including lunches, coffee cards, mugs, certificates and other items. Departments may come up with their own awards depending on input from employees.

Who is driving this? Why now?

A group of Yukon Government Leadership Forum participants initiated the project. The group wanted to work on a corporate project that would be of benefit to all employees as a way of giving something back to the organization and decided to tackle this project.

How much will all of this cost?

Each award or program will have its own costs.

Is this a program that will simply die when a new government is elected?

No. This is a project that is driven by public servants throughout the government with the support of deputy ministers and Cabinet. As an employer, the government values the work of all employees and would like to be able to recognize the good work they do. Many programs, such as the Long Service Awards, have existed for years and will continue.

What consulting was done?

The YGLF group developed a comprehensive consultation strategy that involved discussions and presentations with a variety of government employees, groups, departments and individuals. Consultations took place during the last quarter of 2004.

Are all departments setting up an employee recognition program?

It is up to each department to establish its own program but departments are being encouraged to establish a program. The APEX framework is intended to enable departments to establish an employee recognition program.

