

Award Categories 2009

Best new share plan

This Award is open to any company that has launched one or more Employee Share Plans during the last year or extended an existing plan to a significant number of employees in countries other than the 'home' country during the last year. The judges will assess entries against the following criteria:

- ★ **Plan design so that it clearly links with business or corporate objectives**
Explain how your chosen plan meets those objectives
- ★ **Effective communication of the plan to encourage participation**
Describe or exhibit communication methods that make the plan attractive to potential participants
- ★ **Ease of participation for employees**
Describe what employees have to do to participate in the plan
- ★ **Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated**
If relevant, give reasons for a low level of participation

Best international share plan

This is a new category for 2009 and is for companies who operate their share plan(s) internationally. Companies operating an employee share plan on a global basis face a number of challenges. We have introduced this category to recognise those companies, who in spite of the challenges faced, operate their employee share plan(s) internationally. To win this Award you will need to offer your share plan(s) in at least 3 countries outside of the UK. The judges will assess entries against the following criteria:

- ★ **Plan design so that it links clearly with business or corporate objectives**
Outline your share plan(s) and how these meet those objectives. Also include details of any innovation used in plan design
- ★ **Challenges of operating an international share plan**
Describe how you dealt with regulatory requirements and any challenges that this presented. Also describe how you overcame any challenges which arose due to cultural differences. Include information on how you dealt with exchange rate issues.
- ★ **Effective communication of the plan to encourage participation**
Describe or exhibit communication methods which make the plan attractive to potential participants.
- ★ **Ease of participation for employees**
Describe what employees have to do to participate in the plan
- ★ **Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated**
If relevant, give reasons for a low level of participation

Most effective communication of an employee share plan

Up to 1,000 employees
1,001–10,000 employees
10,000+ employees

These Awards are for the companies that have most effectively communicated their share plans to employees to encourage and increase their understanding of the plan and to create a closer identity of interest between employees and shareholders. The judges will assess entries against quantitative, qualitative and visual criteria:

- ★ **Clarity and design of documentation**
Provide examples of booklets, circulars, posters, summaries of rules etc
- ★ **Innovation and variety in communication methods**
Describe or provide examples of intranets, financial modelling tools, telecoms, audio, video, face-to-face briefings etc (note there is a separate category for most effective use of technology)
- ★ **Involvement of employees in the design of the communication programme at the time of offering participation and when dealing with queries and follow-up**
Describe how employees are involved before, during and after the launch and at the time of making subsequent offers under one or more employee share plans
- ★ **Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who have participated in the plan**
If relevant, give reasons for a low level of participation

Best commitment to employee share ownership for small companies with fewer than 250 employees:

We introduced this category to encourage small companies to enter for an Award. The company should demonstrate that its philosophy, attitudes and actions are conducive to fostering employee share ownership and participation, whether listed or unlisted. The judges will assess entries against the following criteria:

- ★ **A clear vision of the positive impact that employee share ownership has had on the culture of the company**
Provide evidence of the board's commitment to employee participation and examples of the employees' positive attitudes and behaviours
- ★ **A clear link between employee share ownership and business or corporate objectives**
Refer to rules on eligibility, performance, forfeiture, retention etc
- ★ **Effective communication of the plan(s) to encourage participation**
Describe or exhibit communication methods which make the plan(s) attractive to potential participants

Award Categories 2009

Best financial education programme for employees

ShareGift will be making a special donation of £5,000 to a charity chosen by the winning company in this category.

This Award is for a company that has encouraged and assisted its employees to become more financially literate – it does not just refer to material provided on maturity of a share plan. Success in this category requires a company to be providing a comprehensive facility, or a series of facilities to assist employees in making decisions about participating in employer benefit plans. For example, making contributions to a pension plan, a Sharesave scheme, a SIP for partnership shares, or to transferring shares to a corporate ISA, or to obtaining additional life insurance, PMI, PHI etc.

Some assistance might also be given in respect of financial decisions to be taken outside the workplace on: mortgages, credit cards, insurances, ISAs, premium bonds, bank deposits etc. The judges will be looking for evidence of:

- ★ **Measures taken which enable employees to weigh the pros and cons of committing funds to one type of employee benefit plan rather than another**
- ★ **Creative and practical ways to increase the financial awareness and understanding of employees on financial decisions taken within and outside of the workplace**
Provide details of facilities, financial models, other tools and services made available to employees
- ★ **Understanding of the needs and views of employees in respect of their personal financial circumstances**
- ★ **Evaluating the affects and results of the financial education programme**
Provide details of surveys, individual assessment forms, unsolicited comments, line managers' perceptions, number of hits on websites etc

Most effective use of technology

This Award recognises the increasingly sophisticated technologies being used and ensures that companies entering the best communications category are not penalised if they cannot afford to invest in new technology. The judges will assess entries against the following criteria:

- ★ **Effective implementation**
Explain why the technology was implemented and issue(s) that it addressed. Highlight any areas of innovation.
- ★ **A clear vision of the positive impact that technology can have**
Provide evidence of the impact of technology on share plan participation

- ★ **Clarity and consistency of corporate branding and share plan design and message**

Show how the use of technology fits in with the company's communications and employee profile

Best overall performance in fostering employee share ownership

Up to 1,000 employees

1,001–10,000 employees

10,000+ employees

ShareGift will be making a special donation of £5,000 to a charity chosen by each of the winning companies in this category.

These are the top Awards for employee share ownership and recognise outstanding achievement. Companies that enter this category are likely to have been operating employee share plans for some years. However, a company which has only recently introduced its first share plan could be in contention for one of these Awards if it can demonstrate that its philosophy, attitudes and actions are conducive to fostering employee share ownership in the longer term. The judges will assess entries against the following criteria:

- ★ **A clear vision of the positive impact that employee share ownership has had on the culture of the company**
Provide evidence of the board's commitment to employee participation and examples of the employees' positive attitudes and behaviours
- ★ **Innovative design of the share plan(s) to support the vision**
Describe the features of the plan which might be held to be innovative and supportive of a long term fostering of employee share ownership
- ★ **Plans that link clearly with business or corporate objectives**
Refer to rules on eligibility, performance, forfeiture, retention etc
- ★ **Effective communication of the plan(s) to encourage participation**
Describe or exhibit communication methods which make the plan(s) attractive to potential participants
- ★ **Ease of participation for employees**
Describe what employees have to do to participate with ease
- ★ **Quantifiable success as measured by the proportion of employees at all levels who participate in the plan(s) and the number of employees who are shareholders**
Provide the number of participants in each plan and the number of employees who have retained some shares to become direct shareholders in the company