



Woman of the Year

Providing recognition for our members is an important part of ABWA's mission and is a qualifying standard for Best Practices in Group Management. It also provides your Chapter/Express Network® with an opportunity to celebrate the success of your most influential and revered members.

The Woman of the Year program was designed so that every Chapter/Express Network can annually recognize a member who has made notable contributions and outstanding achievements. Being named Woman of the Year is a great honor – one that's highly respected by ABWA members.

Chapters and Express Networks are encouraged to create their own method for selecting a Woman of the Year and celebrating the honor. This guide offers a sample step-by-step process committee chairs may use or

Step One

Meet with your president or former Woman of the Year committee chair to review information about your Woman of the Year program. Suggested items to discuss include:

- Current criteria for choosing a recipient or a selection process.
- Recommendations for changes.
- Budget to cover committee expenses, honor the recipient and hold a special recognition event.
- Dates and established timeline.

Step Two

- Appoint two women to serve on the Woman of the Year Committee for this initiative.
- Report committee names to the newsletter editor/vice president of communication so they may be posted in the newsletter.

Step Three

- Meet with the committee to share information you gathered from meeting with the president.
- Identify selection criteria, application, selection process and a judging point system, if you choose to use one.

Suggestions for developing your Woman of the Year criteria, application and selection process are included later in this guide.

- Prepare a report outlining your committee's decisions on Woman of the Year selection criteria, selection process and judging system.
- Send a copy to your president so she can add the ratification of your criteria and process to the next meeting's agenda.
- Send a copy to the newsletter editor/vice president of communication so she can publish it for members to read before the next meeting.
- Post the criteria in your Team Board in the Women's Instructional Network (WIN).

Step Four

At your regular monthly meeting:

- ❑ Outline the committee's recommendation for the Woman of the Year selection process.
- ❑ Advise that members considered for this award must be in good standing both nationally and locally.
- ❑ Address any questions raised about the program.
- ❑ Have members vote to ratify your recommendation the Woman of the Year Selection Process.

Step Five

- ❑ After determining your selection process, distribute the candidate nomination forms.
- ❑ Be sure to widely publicize the submission deadline.

Step Six

After the submission deadline:

- ❑ Verify that candidates have paid their local and national dues.
- ❑ Select your candidate according to your approved selection process and judging standards.

Step Seven

- ❑ Send the name of your Woman of the Year to ABWA National Headquarters. You can do this by emailing abwa@abwa.org.
- ❑ Announce the Woman of the Year at the next Chapter/Express Network meeting and recognize your recipient with a special presentation.
- ❑ Order Woman of the Year merchandise through ABWA's online store. The price of all items includes the Woman of the Year certificate and ribbon.
- ❑ Write a press release and send it to the local media to announce this honor. Also, consider sending a letter to your recipient's employer or business associates to inform them of this honor.

Create a Personal Gift for your Chapter/ Express Network Woman of the Year!

Visit ABWA's' online store at www.abwa.org to purchase customizable gifts for your Chapter/Express Network Woman of the Year.

Choose from a wide variety of official ABWA merchandise at www.abwa.org by searching "Woman of the Year" under All Products.

(All ABWA Woman of the Year merchandise includes a Woman of the Year certificate and ribbon.)





ABWA Chapter/Express Network Woman of the Year Samples

Sample Eligibility Requirements

1. Be a primary member of the Chapter/Express Network selecting her
2. Be an ABWA member in good standing locally and nationally for at least three years
3. Be a current ABWA member in good standing locally and nationally

Sample Selection Criteria and Judging Point System

Embodiment of ABWA's mission – the candidate's participation in ABWA in the areas of leadership, education, networking support and national recognition, for example:

- **Leadership** (15 Points)
 - ABWA offices, committee chairs, committee participation
 - Has made a major contribution in time or effort to the Chapter/Express Network
- **Education** (10 points)
 - Accredited
 - Continuing Education
 - Women's Instructional Network (WIN) Course completions
 - ABWA District and National Conferences attendance
- **Networking** (10 Points)
 - New members sponsored in the past year
- **Recognition** (15 Points)
 - Career accomplishments – The candidate's career progression
 - Community involvement – What the candidate has given back to her community
 - ABWA Awards and Achievements

TOTAL POINTS POTENTIAL: 50

A sample Woman of the Year judging form is included here and a modifiable Excel document is available in the Women's Instructional Network (WIN).

Sample Selection Process

There are many options for selecting your Woman of the Year. Determine the best method (one that is fair and unbiased) and include your recommendation in your committee report. A majority of your members should vote to approve the option.

Here are a few tips for ensuring a fair selection process:

- Replace candidate and company names with anonymous number codes.
- Develop a points system and assign points to the ABWA-related sections of eligible candidates' forms.
- Utilize a standardized judging form.
- Tally results and select your recipient based on highest score.

Sample Selection Process Continued...

Sample Option #1

- You and your committee select the Woman of the Year.
- Choose a convenient judging location and date.
- Provide committee chairs with anonymous applications and judging forms.
- Assign all points in every section of the candidate form and select the recipient based on the highest score.

Sample Option #2

- The entire membership votes on the recipient.
- Ask either a panel of non-ABWA members or your committee to assign ABWA-related points to the candidate forms.
- If there are many candidates, either the non-ABWA member panel or your committee can determine the top three.
- Submit the three forms to the newsletter editor/vice president of communication to print prior to the Woman of the Year election meeting.
- Conduct the voting process at the meeting. A vote should be taken for the Woman of the Year even if there's only one candidate. Balloting should continue until someone wins a majority vote of members in good standing at the meeting.

Sample Option #3

- A non-ABWA member panel adds objectivity to the selection process.
- Select three judges. They should be prominent community business leaders.
- Choose a convenient judging location and date.
- Prior to the judging date, assign ABWA-related points earned to each application.
- Provide judges with anonymous applications and judging forms.
- Judges complete the process and advise of the selection they made.

Sample Application

A pre-formatted sample application follows and can also be found in the Women's Instructional Network (WIN). It is formatted as a Microsoft Word document for easy editing and personalization for your Chapter/Express Network needs.

A sample Woman of the Year application is included here and a modifiable Word document is available in the Women's Instructional Network.

To make the application readily available, consider providing printed copies at your monthly meetings, a downloadable version in your Team Board in WIN, and a version in your newsletter.



AMERICAN BUSINESS WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

XYZ Chapter/Express Network

Woman of the Year Candidate Form – Sample

Instructions: Complete form neatly and return to _____ by _____.
For Chapter/Express Network use only. Do not send to ABWA National Headquarters.

Contact Information and Demographic Section

Name: _____

E-mail address: _____ Phone: _____

Company Name: _____

Title: _____ Years with firm: _____

Date joined ABWA: _____ Date joined Chapter/Express Network: _____

(For Chapter/Express Network officer/WOY Committee use only)

Applicant current in her National membership dues: YES / NO

Applicant current in her local membership dues: YES / NO

ABWA Participation Section: Embodying the Mission of ABWA

Leadership...

List offices/committees/committee chair positions held.

List major contributions in time or effort to the Chapter/Express Network.

Total Leadership Points: _____

Education...

Accredited Education (Degree/Certificate, Field of Study, Institution/City, State, Year)

Total ABWA Continuing Education Credits earned (CEUs): _____

Women's Instructional Network (WIN) Courses completed: _____

ABWA District and National Conferences attended: _____

Total Education Points: _____

Networking Support...

Total number of new members sponsored: _____ Number of new members sponsored this Award Year: _____

Total Networking Points: _____

Recognition...

Career Accomplishments (In résumé form, describe the progression of your career or attach a current résumé.)

Community Involvement (Describe leadership, recognition and philanthropic efforts in your community. If you're attaching a résumé from the above section and your community involvement is included here, you may leave this section blank.)

ABWA Awards and Achievements

Total Recognition Points: _____

TOTAL WOMAN OF THE YEAR APPLICATION POINTS: _____

