



IABC Heritage Region Silver Quill Entrant Checklist for Division 1 Communication Management

For the best possible entry, follow this checklist when creating your entry or when reviewing before submitting to ensure all of these items are covered.

The Work Plan

Section	Elements to Include	Check When Complete
Business Need and Communication Opportunity (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the business and communication environment, including specific challenges establishing need for the communication. <i>TIP: Assume your evaluator is completely unfamiliar with your organization.</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how the communication opportunity aligns with the business need by explaining how the project helped the organization impact business performance. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include research to substantiate the need and inform the direction of the communication project. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stakeholder Analysis (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe relevant audience characteristics such as prior knowledge, education, geography, demographics, psychographics, preferences, attitudes, opinion, motivations, etc. <i>TIP: Showing you know your audience is key. Do not refer to the general public.</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you know the above characteristics of your audience? Share audience research that provides insight into the audience and/or the project. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how the relevant audience research influenced the communication decisions, determining the strategy and tactics used. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Goals and Objectives (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe an overall goal for the entire project that is linked to the organization's mission, vision, values, goals, strategic direction and brand. 	<input type="checkbox"/>



IABC Heritage Region Silver Quill Entrant Checklist for Division 1 Communication Management

Section	Elements to Include	Check When Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullet out (or put in a table) several specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) objectives that align with the stakeholder analysis and the business need, and show they can produce an effect on the stated business need. <p><i>TIP: SMART objectives are CRUCIAL. You'll need them to earn an award. Outcomes are preferred over outputs. Focus on outcomes as much as possible. For more information, see the section on Goals and Objectives in How-To Guide for IABC Awards.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Solution Overview (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain what you did by providing an executive summary of the action plan or tactical execution plan. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how the choices you made in your strategic or creative approach—including tactics, vehicles, media or communication channels—aligned with the business needs, audience analysis and objectives. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include key messages for each of your audience groups and explain how your audience analysis helped shape these messages. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include stakeholder input, if possible, and show how research helped determine the solution.. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and address any potential ethical issues. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Implementation and Challenges (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include the budget you had to work with. If you are not permitted to share specific figures, explain your constraints/include ranges. <p><i>TIP: Even if you spent no money, estimate the value/cost of staff time and other resources.</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how time and other resources were used effectively. 	<input type="checkbox"/>



IABC Heritage Region Silver Quill Entrant Checklist for Division 1 Communication Management

Section	Elements to Include	Check When Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss challenges faced during the project and describe how these were effectively managed. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show how stakeholders (audience members) or subject matter experts were consulted during the project. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Measurement and Evaluation (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> List the SMART objectives again from the Goals and Objectives section, including the results you achieved. Check your math for accuracy when using numbers and percentages. Ideally, you met or exceeded some or all of the objectives. <i>TIP: Demonstrating the outcomes you achieved is key to showing the success of your project.</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe how you measured the objectives showing a thorough evaluation that supports the results. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include an executive summary of formal evaluation supporting results in the work sample, and explain how the project helped the business. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show results presented to stakeholders and provide recommendations for improvement. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work plan total points	Points in each work plan section are added together, divided by six and then multiplied by .50.	

The Work Sample

Section	Elements to Include	Check When Complete
Stakeholder Alignment and Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample includes selections that demonstrate good choice of messages (your key messages), mediums, media and communication channels that align with the audience analysis as discussed in the work plan (language, font size, vehicle choice). 	<input type="checkbox"/>

IABC Heritage Region Silver Quill Entrant Checklist for Division 1 Communication Management

Section	Elements to Include	Check When Complete
(This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample has messages that engage the intellect or emotions of the audience and influence their thoughts and behaviors. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample includes a thorough evaluation that supports the results. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alignment with Objectives and Strategy (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample includes selections that show the project is on strategy and consistent with business needs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample elements are clear, consistent and clever, communicating key messages in a powerful, emotional way. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample reflects the objectives, strategic thinking, key messages and audience analysis. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample provides clear evidence that it has the desired effect on the audience and business needs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Professional Execution (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample elements are well designed (strong images convey key messages). 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample elements demonstrate high-quality writing and production within available budget and resources. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample elements demonstrate consistency between what is presented in the work plan and what is delivered. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample elements demonstrate creative or innovative work considering the category, geography or industry. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall Quality (This section is worth up to 7 points)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample meets professional standards with a well-written and produced entry that's easy to understand. 	<input type="checkbox"/>



IABC Heritage Region Silver Quill Entrant Checklist for Division 1 Communication Management

Section	Elements to Include	Check When Complete
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample provides a comprehensive and representative sample of all the elements described in the work plan. <i>TIP: Do not include EVERYTHING in your work sample. Select the most representative items.</i> 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample demonstrates strategic and creative thinking that reflects the audience and business needs. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work sample demonstrates the ability of communication to influence valid business results. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work sample total points	Points in each work sample section are added together, divided by four and then multiplied by .50.	

Final Checklist

Check Before Submission	Check When Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work plan is four pages or less, has a font size of 10 points or larger and has at least 0.5 inch margins. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The work entered was completed within the allowed time frame. 	<input type="checkbox"/>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you're a consultant and your work was done for a client, you have included a client permission letter for your entry. 	<input type="checkbox"/>

Entry score = work plan points + work sample points.

- A score between 5.12 and 5.24 receives a Silver Quill Award of Merit**
- A score of 5.25 or higher receives a Silver Quill Award of Excellence**



IABC Heritage Region Silver Quill Entrant Checklist for Division 1 Communication Management

Evaluators follow IABC's Seven-point Scale of Excellence.

7	Outstanding: An extraordinary or insightful approach or result
6	Significantly better than average: Demonstrates an innovative, strategic approach, takes all elements into account and delivers significant results
5	Better than average: Demonstrates a strategic approach and aligns the communication solution with the business need to deliver meaningful results
4	Average: Competent approach or results, professionally sound and appropriate
3	Somewhat less than satisfactory: Several key elements that are critical to the strategy or execution are missing, incorrect or underrepresented
2	An inadequate approach or result: A significant number of critical elements are missing
1	Poor: Work that is wrong or inappropriate

In scoring each section, evaluators begin with a score of 4 and score up or down based on criteria listed on a rubric. Scores of 7 or 1 are rare.

For more information:

- View [Evaluating Excellence: A Guide for IABC Evaluators, Divisions 1, 2 and 3](#)*
- Review [Gold Quill Resources for Entrants](#)*

*Note: Silver Quill follows the same scoring rules as Gold Quill.