PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE
NOMINATION PREPARATION GUIDE

This worksheet will help you identify a Pillars of Excellence-caliber achievement and how to present this achievement to the Models Selection Committee in the best way possible.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND US THIS WORKSHEET. THIS IS JUST A HELPFUL TOOL FOR YOU.

Nomination Materials (including references) should be sent by intramural mail to:

Human Resources
QOWL - Models of Excellence Program
527A 3401 Walnut/6228

WHAT IS A PILLARS OF EXCELLENCE-CALIBER ACHIEVEMENT?

Pillars-caliber achievements are accomplished by weekly paid, non-exempt staff members of the University, and meet the "Excellence" criteria below:

- Provides superior sustained service or a special one-time contribution to the mission of the unit or the university
- Delivers exemplary service to customers:
  - Displays exceptional responsiveness to key constituencies/customers
  - Uses superior efficiency in responding to customers' needs
  - Exhibits extraordinary professional behavior when responding to customers' needs/requests
  - Responds to customer requests in a timely manner
- Exhibits exceptional resourcefulness, innovation, or creativity to help customers with their problems/issues
- Improves processes to save time or money through over-and-above service to key constituencies
- Contributes to a positive, collaborative work environment

NOMINATION CHECKLIST

The following outlines what you need for a complete nomination. Be sure to review this checklist before sending in your nomination.

Your typewritten nomination must include:

☐ A name to use for the nomination, if nominating a team.
☐ A one-sentence description of the achievement and how it reflects one or more of the Standards above for the Pillars of Excellence Award.
☐ The name, current title, current work address, current phone number and email address of each individual being nominated.
☐ A brief description of the job responsibilities of each nominee (or team's area of responsibility, if the same for the whole group and clearly outside the range of the nominated achievement).
☐ Confirmation that all individuals being nominated are non-exempt, weekly paid staff eligible for this award.
☐ A description of the achievement that includes:
- how the nominee(s) went above and beyond job responsibilities and expectations,
- how the achievement made a significant contribution to the University,
- how the nominee(s) was responsive to key constituencies/customers in a way that was "over-and-above" expectations,
- what prompted this endeavor, and
- what were the significant outcomes of this achievement.

☐ The name, current title, current work address, current phone number and email address of the nominator.
☐ The name, current title, current work address, current phone number and email address of each individual's supervisor.
☐ The name, title, current work address, current phone number and email address of each of the two (2) references.

You also must enclose:

☐ A note from each individual's supervisor (or a team's supervisor if several or all report to one manager) that states the following:
- The individual did participate in the achievement,
- the nomination is correctly described, and
- the nominee meets all the qualifications of a Pillar of Excellence and is appropriate for this award.

☐ Two (2) University reference letters that:
- confirm and expound on the nominated achievement,
- explain how the achievement surpasses job assignment and performance expectations, and
- demonstrate how the achievement meets the Pillars of Excellence criteria.

HOW TO PUT ALL THIS TOGETHER

Below are steps that will help you make sure you are nominating a Pillars-caliber achievement and that your nomination represents to the best advantage the accomplishment you are nominating.

1. **Confirm Eligibility**
   a. **Is the nominee a full or part-time, non-exempt, weekly-paid staff member of the University?**
      - **If NO**, the individual is **not eligible** for this honor (this includes students, post-docs and faculty).
      - **If YES**, make sure this is stated in the nomination.
   b. **Has this staff member contributed substantially to the achievement being nominated?**
      - **If NO**, the individual is **not eligible** for inclusion in this nomination. The prestige of the Models of Excellence Program is best supported when everyone who is honored is a key contributor to the achievement.
      - **If YES**, be sure to document this staff member's role in the achievement.

2. **Define Nomination**
   a. **Give the nomination a name.** If you are nominating an individual, his/her name is the nomination name. If you are nominating a team, the achievement drives the name, such as the Penn Public Safety Team.

      _____

   b. **Create a one-sentence description of the achievement.** (NOTE: You may want to leave this blank until you go through the exercise below. Then come back and fill it in.)

      _____

      _____

3. **Evaluate Job and Performance Expectations**
   Make it clear that this achievement is "above and beyond" job and performance expectations.

   a. **Describe, briefly, the nominee's or group's basic job functions:**

      _____

      _____

   b. **Explain how the work that led to this achievement went "above and beyond" the job assignment and expected performance.**

      _____

      _____

4. **Describe Contribution**
   a. **Describe how the nominee meets or exceeds the standards of excellence outlined above by doing their jobs so well on a daily basis that their impact is felt keenly by those working with them or in the environment they oversee. They model outstanding services and support to their constituents every day, during special situations, and/or under unique circumstances.**

      _____

      _____

5. **Apply Standards of Excellence**

   a. **Describe which Pillars of Excellence "Standards" were utilized for this achievement.** Some accomplishments embody several of the criteria. It is important that you describe all that apply and clarify which you feel were the most influential in the success of the endeavor.
      - Provides superior sustained service or a special one-time contribution to the mission of the unit or the university
      - Delivers exemplary service to customers:
        - Displays exceptional responsiveness to key constituencies/customers
        - Uses superior efficiency in responding to customers' needs
        - Exhibits extraordinary professional behavior when responding to customers' needs/requests
        - Responds to customer requests in a timely manner
      - Exhibits exceptional resourcefulness, innovation, or creativity to help customers with their problems/issues
      - Improves processes to save time or money through over-and-above service to key constituencies
      - Contributes to a positive, collaborative work environment

      _____

      _____

6. **Enclose References**
   Enclose two (2) University reference letters from individuals—other than the nominator—familiar with the work cited.

   a. **Ask yourself who are the two individuals that are the most familiar with the work that the individual or team has accomplished.** Remind your references to:
      - confirm and expound on the nominated achievement,
      - explain how the achievement surpasses job and performance expectations,
      - describe the Pillars of Excellence "Standards" that apply, and
      - confirm that every person contributed to the outcome.

   b. **If this is a team nomination, is the reference familiar with each team member's contribution?**
      - If **NO**, then you need to find someone who is familiar with all of the team member's accomplishments.
      - If **YES**, this person is a good reference to use for this nomination.

   c. **If you have a problem finding appropriate references for your nomination**, please contact Patricia Zebley in the Quality of Worklife Office for assistance (215-898-1012 or zebley@upenn.edu).

      (1)_____

      (2)_____

7. **Provide Supervisor Note of Confirmation**

   a. **Provide a Supervisor Note of Confirmation for each nominee verifying that the staff member did the work that is being nominated and that he/she is appropriate for this honor.** Often supervisors of several members of a team are not completely aware of the contribution of all members. We need confirmation and clarification because individuals have been nominated who were not appropriate for recognition. You can find the Supervisor Note of Confirmation on the Pillars of Excellence Award webpage.