

# Secrets of a Winning Credit Union or Chapter Desjardins Entry

## What the judges look for when they select the winners in the national recognition programs

- **Appropriate.** Read the rules, and make sure you're entering the appropriate competition. The Desjardins Youth Financial Education Award focuses on teaching members and nonmembers under the age of 18 about personal finance. The judges will focus on activities since July 1 of the previous year.
- **Proved.** Provide concrete, relevant evidence of the effectiveness of your efforts. What positive results did you measure and can you document them? The Desjardins Award is not a marketing recognition program. Including advertising samples and PowerPoint promotional presentations makes it harder for the judges to find what really matters--quantitative evidence of success, otherwise known as results.
- **Relevant.** Review the entry form carefully and respond to all applicable judging criteria. There are three mandatory measures and two optional measures. The scoring is based on these elements, so the more relevant information you provide, the higher your score.
- **Organized.** Make your entry easy to read and easy to follow. Include the name of your credit union organization on the front cover. Use a table of contents. Avoid handwritten entries and misspellings. Use standard fonts, white paper, and black type. Keep your entry to a manageable size; bigger is not better.
- **Detailed.** Clearly identify who was involved in your project. Who did the work? Who were the beneficiaries? How many young people did you reach? While monetary donations are admirable, the judges will look for strong personal involvement.
- **Exemplary.** There's nothing wrong with using commercially prepared educational materials. However, by showing how you adapted turnkey programs to the needs of your particular youth audience, you'll demonstrate what makes your credit union's efforts unique and worthy of national recognition. Emphasize the quality of your program. How unique is it? How does it engage kids differently?