

HOW TO WIN AN ARF DAVID OGILVY AWARD

BEST PRACTICES & TIPS

On April 27, 2022, the ARF hosted a best practices and tips session about how to win an ARF David Ogilvy Award. The ARF held this event to invite and encourage a wider pool of applicants and improve the quality of the entries. Two veteran Grand Jurors, **Ann Green**, SVP, Client Partner at Kantar and **Abby Hollister**, Principal at Formative Insights, demystified what constitutes an excellent written explanation and its winning ingredients. Here are the key takeaways:

1. Focus on the **insight**. Be consumer led.

Understanding how to define an insight is key.

- An insight is **not just** a data point, a statistic, a widely known belief about consumers, nor output from a team planning session.
- An insight is the act of seeing into a situation, a human truth.
- It is so much more than a single data point. Once you see it, you can't unsee it. It is the "aha" moment is like an illusion picture—they are hard to discern at first and then once you see the picture, it's obvious.
- Case example cited: [Pure Leaf, "No Is Beautiful."](#)

2. Understand the **business impact**. Show proven results.

Make it meaningful, but measurable.

- Business metrics can be diverse, including anything from share, ROI, awareness of a new product, purchase intent, retail distribution, and more.
- Just because this is a research based award doesn't mean you have to "data-load" your entry. Always tie back to the business objective.

3. Have a clear and **concise narrative**.

Less is more. As Mark Twain said, "If I had more time, I would have written a shorter letter."

- The whole narrative, not solely a deep dive into numbers and methodology, is the most important to a successful application.
- Stick to the word/character requirements on the written explanation, these requirements help to keep your entry concise.

4. Create a connective thread that ties **insights to creative execution to impact.**

- This is key to making an average entry an outstanding entry. This is what Grand Winners do best—**connect the thread.**
- Case example cited: [bubly Sparkling Water, “Buble vs bubly”](#)

5. **Show your passion! Don’t hide your excitement for your work.**

Regardless of the campaign—from everyday products to social justice—passion must shine through.

- If excitement and passion come through on a written explanation, it gives an applicant the upper hand.
- Diversity of thought, an amalgamation of team members’ input can also lead to better entries. (Make sure the “voice” remains the same—it’s very clear if different people write different parts of the application!)

Extra Tips:

- The best insights-driven campaigns are a result of true collaboration between the agency, marketing, and research/insights team with an aligned purpose. These folks should be “in the room where it happens” from the start.
- Include detailed **relevant** data in your methodology. Extraneous details without ties to insight or impact need not be included. Focus on the clarity of storytelling.

Visit the ARF David Ogilvy Awards [sample cases page](#) as a guide for a successfully written entry.

More information about the 2022 entry period and awards criteria can be found in the [entry kit](#).

For further questions, reach out to the team at davidogilvyawards@thearf.org.