

Professional outlook is mutual

City mutual Wesleyan Assurance Society is sponsoring the Outstanding Professional of the Year category at the Birmingham Post Business Awards. Here, they tell us why

WE'RE delighted to sponsor the Outstanding Professional of the Year category at this year's Birmingham Post Business Awards.

We feel this is a category we know a lot about as, not only do we employ some outstanding professionals, we also work on a daily basis with inspirational professionals in the legal, medical, dental and teaching sectors.

We know the vast talent that is within our region so this is going to be a hard fought category.

However, if you think you stand out from the crowd, download your application form today and get writing.

To inspire you, here are a few reasons why we believe Wesleyan is the right company to sponsor

the Outstanding Professional of the Year category.

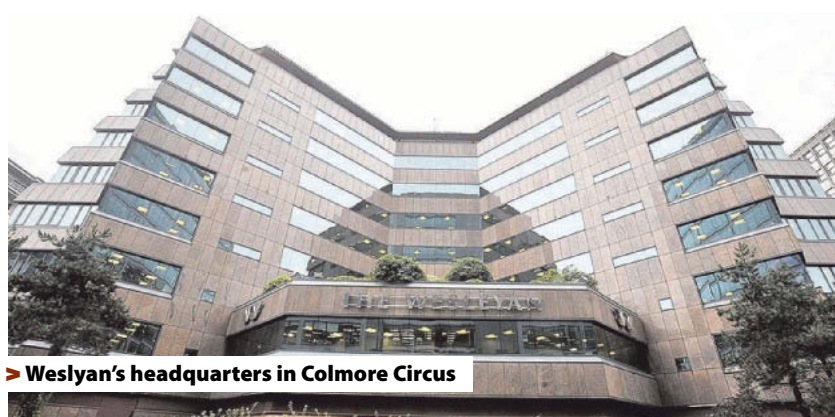
Outstanding Achievement

The judges will be looking for a significant track record of outstanding achievement.

It's not enough to have delivered one project well, or had a couple of years successful trading, you need to show you can continue to deliver.

In difficult times, this might mean adapting your strategy to ensure you succeed and this is exactly what Wesleyan did during the recent economic downturn.

We continued with our plans to grow the business but in a measured and sustainable way taking into account the



➤ Wesleyan's headquarters in Colmore Circus



➤ Chief executive Craig Errington

impact of economic uncertainty on our customers.

This led to Wesleyan being named as one of only 50 financial services providers in the Deloitte UK Futures study of 1,000 UK companies that defied the recession and demonstrated what British business can achieve.

Having a long-term perspective can deliver dividends, literally, in the world of investments.

Our investments team avoid the buy and sell ethos favoured by many; our portfolio turnover is extremely low by industry standards.

A contra-cyclical approach means we often buy stocks currently out of favour at lower prices. It's not always a popular strategy, especially in times of market turmoil.

However, experience has shown that the stock market often bounces back stronger than ever after a major fall and our policy holders have benefited from these gains. According to industry source Financial Express, the Wesleyan Pension Managed Fund was, in 2013, the top performer over 20 years out of 110 funds with a 296 per cent investment return.

Entrepreneurial innovation and flair

Every outstanding professional will have an entrepreneurial edge. An ability to adapt to changing times and stay ahead of the curve has been key to Wesleyan's long history of success.

Back in 2005 the mutual was in a bit of slump so an extensive business transformation programme was launched that impacted every area of the organisation taking it from a sleepy life assurance company to a respected organisation with a clear and defined direction of travel,

engaged staff and flourishing business sales. Now Wesleyan is ready to take that journey onto another level.

We are investing significantly in the company to ensure we can meet the challenges of the changing world; we are again putting every area of the business under scrutiny so that we can deliver an excellent customer experience supported by highly skilled staff and underpinned by leading edge technology and infrastructure.

We have no doubt that among their number will be a future Outstanding Professional of the Year award winner.

We are also active supporters of the Birmingham Professional Services Academy, set up to support young people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to find work in professional services.

Charitable support

We all have a responsibility to make the world in which we live a little better.

At Wesleyan, we actively encourage staff to get behind our chosen charity, which is Birmingham Children's Hospital.

As we grow as a company so do our ambitions for our charitable fundraising.

We have recently announced an extension of our partnership with BCH for another two years and we will have a stretching fundraising target to deliver. We are easily on track to hit our current two year target of £250,000.

Promoting the region

We are proud of our Birmingham heritage, having been founded in the city in 1841. We are now a national company with sales teams operating across the UK. Over the past five years we have seen the number of staff employed increase by almost 50 per cent and it's a source of great pride

that we are able to provide employment for so many people in the region.

We have always believed in nurturing our own talent. Chief executive Craig Errington and Samantha Porter, group sales and marketing director, started at the company in relatively junior positions.

Both have gone on to prove they are outstanding professionals in their own right with Craig being named the IoD's UK Director of the Year in 2011 while Sam was highly commended at national level the following year in the Young Director of the Year category.

In addition to our ongoing staff development programme, we became one of the first financial services companies to launch an apprenticeship scheme and 35 apprentices have now graduated through the programme with almost all now working full time for us.

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Commitment to customer service

Perhaps the strongest evidence that Wesleyan is the right sponsor for the Outstanding Professional category can be seen in our customer service results.

In 2013, 97 per cent of our customers said their Wesleyan financial consultant made them feel valued as a customer and that only includes scores of 8 or above out of 10!

We were also named Quality Service Provider at the Institute of Customer Satisfaction Awards earlier this year.

Which shows that we have some excellent staff on the ground delivering outstanding professional service for the people that matter – our customers.

So hopefully having read this you'll be inspired to think about what makes you an Outstanding Professional.

Submit your application and we look forward to meeting you on the night.

NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Go to bpbusinessawards.co.uk to enter



BIRMINGHAM POST

Business Awards 2014

IN ASSOCIATION WITH



WIDEN YOUR WORLD

Join us to celebrate the best of business in the West Midlands

ICC, Birmingham Wednesday 26 November 2014



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