



The Outstanding Building of the Year (TOBY) Frequently Asked Questions & Best Practices

What are the TOBY's?

The Outstanding Building of the Year Competition was developed in 1985 by BOMA International and recognizes quality and excellence in office building operations and management. The TOBY's are considered the most prestigious and highly celebrated award of its kind in commercial real estate. Additionally, the TOBY's are a competition among buildings using pre-set criteria from BOMA International. There are 16 categories.

What are the benefits of applying for and/or winning a TOBY Award?

- First and foremost, you can take pride in your asset. Whether you win a TOBY Award on the local, regional or international level, your building will automatically strengthen its resume, leasing power and overall competitive advantage.
- The application process itself brings together your diverse property management team in pursuit of a common goal and offers a great opportunity for team building. Because the competition touches upon every aspect of building management and operations, each member of the team becomes an important component and is an integral part to the success of the competition.
- Participating in the application and competition process strengthens current programs in place at the building, adding value for the owner.
- You will gain recognition from colleagues and other industry professionals.
- The TOBY Award is not just a beauty contest. Winning a TOBY signifies management expertise and becomes a symbol of your ability to operate a property at a peak level of financial performance for your owner. It is proof that you deliver a true value-enhanced environment for your tenants.

How do I know if my building is eligible?

Any BOMA member building is eligible to enter in the TOBY's. As long as your property falls into one of the 16 categories, you're a member of good standing and pay your registration fee, your building/property is eligible for TOBY competition.

What is the timeline?

Start now. Please visit www.bomaoeb.org or www.bomasf.org for important dates. Pre-judging is available any time prior to the official judging tours conducted in January. Award winners are announced at the Annual Awards Gala in February.

What do I need to do to prepare my building?

The asset is evaluated on specific judging criteria. Each participant is provided a detailed checklist of all the criteria as well as a judging sheet to know exactly what the judges will be scoring. A pre-judge tour is available to assist with planning and identifying areas that need attention to ensure your success. You should prepare your tour to touch on all aspects of the judging sheet/inspection form. You should also have items available for the judges (i.e., annual operating budget, disaster/emergency plan, tenant relation materials, Energy Star certification making sure it is shared with BOMA International, etc.). Be ready to show or discuss items that are specific to your building that differentiate you from the competition.

Does it cost a lot to prepare my building?

A well-managed and well-maintained building is more than likely ready, at any given time. Therefore, it should not cost much to prepare the building for the TOBY competition. Sometimes, all a property needs is a detailed cleaning and focused attention on specific judging criteria.

What if I have questions while I am preparing my building?

A member of the TOBY committee will be able to assist you. Utilize the offer of a pre-judge tour, the detailed checklist and judging sheet in advance. Please contact your local BOMA office to request a pre-judge tour.

What is involved with the TOBY tour?

A team of business professionals including property managers, engineers and service providers will visit key areas of operations including engineering, security, fire/life safety, the management office and tenant spaces. During this 90 minute tour you will field questions about your building systems and management practices.

We suggest you:

- Practice your on-site inspection with all members of your team.
- Have an agenda and stick to it.
- Create a path of travel showcasing the areas outlined on the judging sheets and inspection forms.
- Ensure all areas are clean and up to standards. Judges can, and will, ask to look behind any door.
- Highlight the best features of your building and their impact. Be succinct, there is a lot to show and time is limited.

How does the scoring work?

Judges work from specific scoring sheets, which can be found on the BOMA International website (www.bomainternational.org). Approximately eight judges, (representing ownership, property management, engineering and service providers), judge all buildings entered in a particular category. One building in each of the qualifying categories will be awarded as the winner upon attaining a minimum score of 70% or higher. Winners are honored at the Annual Awards Gala in February.

My property does not have a specific area to fulfill part of the judging criteria.

If your building does not have a specific item that is included on the scoring sheet (e.g. no management office, no fitness center, no exterior landscaping, etc.), that criterion will be excluded from your total score. Your building is not penalized for not having a specific item. The point total of the inspection form will be adjusted to reflect the omission of these items. However, if you are entering a category that requires certain requirements be met, for example, Earth, Historic, Retail, Renovated, certain requirements specific to that category must be met in order to qualify.

My building is in the middle of capital improvements, which will not be finished by the tour date.

Buildings undergo capital improvements of some kind at any given time. If the improvement in progress is not included in the judging criteria, the work will not affect judging. If the improvement in progress is part of the judging criteria, an explanation of the process should be given. If visual aids are available they should be shared. Contact the TOBY Committee and they will be glad to provide you with assistance in determining how your specific project would impact your chances of winning.

My building is old. How can I compete with newer buildings?

The TOBY competition is about “recognizing excellence in building management, operation efficiency, tenant retention, emergency planning and community impact” to name a few. Architecture is not the focus. However, the building’s public spaces as well as “back of the house” should be clean and in good repair.

Should I wait until next year?

No! We are all part of a dynamic, ever-changing industry. If you enter and do not win this year, you will still have gained invaluable experience that better prepares you to enter and win next year!

Sounds great! How do I enter?

Register and submit the non-refundable entry fee of \$395. Please visit your respective BOMA website (www.bomaoeb.org or www.bomasf.org) for key target dates.