

Golden Rule Trust

Application Handbook
2010

Table of Contents

Introduction & Summary.....	3
Standards of Excellence.....	4
Application Form	5
General Company Information.....	5
Qualitatively Speaking.....	6
Wage Minimums and Maximums.....	8
Multiple Bottom Line.....	9
Contracting and Partner Incorporations.....	12
Required Attachments/Additional Attachments.....	13
Appendix 1: Sample Income Statement	14
Appendix 2: Contractor or Partner Business Form	15

Introduction & Summary

The Golden Rule Trust is a charitable business advocacy group that administers the Golden Rule Seal for products and businesses. This group is built specifically for businesses and organizations that are not 501-c-3 organizations. While we recognize organizations that choose to be incorporated as not-for-profit, The Golden Rule Trust allows businesses otherwise incorporated to be recognized for their socially sound business practice. In the future, consideration will be given to additional admittance guidelines for non-profit organizations with extraordinary business practice.

Golden Rule Trust companies believe that their work can make a positive impact on their employees and the communities they work in.

Because The Golden Rule Trust is a new organization, without a formal incorporation and no operating budget, we do all correspondence electronically to eliminate the costs of postage. Although we will accept applications on paper, for both the sake of the environment and our budget, we will return correspondence electronically whenever possible.

We recommend that you begin by reading through this application as a way of familiarizing yourself with our requirements before beginning to apply. If you find that you do not meet our requirements, please consider improving your business practice and contacting us again when you find that you do. If you need suggestions on how you might better comply with Golden Rule Trust's Standards of Excellence, feel free to contact us with questions at info@goldenruletrust.org.

Once an application has been submitted we will do our best to respond with approval within a two-month time frame. Applications will be reviewed by no fewer than two committee members who have been trained in the Golden Rule Trust's Standards of Excellence. If someone in your company or someone you know is interested in becoming an application reviewer in the future, please express interest by emailing info@goldenruletrust.org

Companies approved will be sent a transparent series of the Golden Rule Seal for use in products and promotion. We will also provide language that you can use in your publications and suggested ways to use the seal to publicly demonstrate your commitment to socially responsible business practice.

Companies will be required to submit an update annually, but not a complete application, to maintain membership as a Golden Rule company. You will receive a reminder when you have reached your anniversary date along with the paperwork required to renew your membership.

Standards of Excellence

Golden Rule Trust companies must be able to demonstrate all four Standards of Excellence.

Demonstrate Zero Percent Financial Return.

All net profits from your company must be reinvested in the well-being of your employees, the quality of your product, the affordability of your product, your environmental commitment, the quality of your facilities, or other directions to improve the quality of your business. 100% of any remaining profits must be donated to certified 501(c)(3) agencies or used for company led-charitable projects.

Maintain third party approved living wage minimums.

There are many third-party living wage calculators that are acceptable benchmarks. The Golden Rule Trust's preferred calculator is the Poverty in America Living Wage Calculator sponsored by the Pennsylvania State University. www.livingwage.geog.psu.edu/

Establish salary maximums at the industry average.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is the standard used by the Golden Rule Trust. It is important to categorize each of your employees using the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system to determine the appropriate listing. No employee in your company may make more than the mean industry average for that position determined by the most recent survey. Both the national and the local statistics are appropriate to use. New survey data (released in May) must be accounted for by the start of the next fiscal year (July).

<http://stats.bls.gov/oes/home.htm>, <http://www.bls.gov/SOC/>

Operate using a multiple bottom line

Your company must demonstrate that its decisions are driven by its performance towards a multiple bottom line. Bottom line measures for success can include but are not limited to product quality, consumer well being, human rights and the environment. The way companies structure multiple bottom lines are varied and many. One of the most prevalent standards is the Triple Bottom Line established by the United Nations to account for People, Planet, and Profit. For more information on establishing a structure visit the Global Reporting Initiative reporting framework.

<http://www.globalreporting.org/ReportingFramework/>.

Application Form

General Company Information

Company Name:

EIN/TIN Number:

Primary Address:

Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

Primary Mailing Address (if different from above):

Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

Your entire company must meet the Standards of Excellence as laid out by the Golden Rule Trust. If your company does business in multiple locations or has franchises, please include your other sites or branches of business below. If you have more locations than will fit on this form, please include a list of your business sites as an attachment to this application.

Secondary Addresses:

Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

Contact Information

Contact Name for this Application:

Title:

Contact's Direct Line:

Contact's Email:

Qualitatively Speaking...

Please include your company's mission statement/company purpose. If you have a company values statement, feel free to include it below or attach as a separate document.

Briefly describe the history of your company.

In one to two paragraphs, tell us why you've chosen to apply to become a Golden Rule Trust company.

In one to two paragraphs, please tell us what specific initiatives you believe make your company unique and representative of the Golden Rule Trust's goals to enlighten the business industry?

Multiple Bottom Line We encourage Golden Rule Trust companies to use The Global Reporting Initiative as the standard for developing reporting strategies to showcase your multiple bottom line but we do not require it for this application. If you do choose to do your reporting using the Global Reporting Initiative please attach it here. If not, the following questions answered thoroughly are sufficient in meeting The Golden Rule Trust's Triple Bottom Line requirements.

1. Human Capital – Golden Rule Trust companies recognize the responsibility they owe to their labor force, community and region where they conduct business. The benefits of Golden Rule Trust companies must reach many constituencies and add value to the greater community. How does your company demonstrate this? Give specific examples, and wherever possible, please try to quantify your bottom line in human capital investment. Feel free to include attachments or records that showcase your investment in Human Capital.

2. Natural Capital – Golden Rule Trust businesses understand the necessity of sustainable business practice. At a minimum companies take the motto to “do no harm” if not to benefit the environment. How does your company demonstrate this? Give us specific examples. We encourage you to complete a sustainability report.

3. Profit– Golden Rule Trust companies understand that their profit is the profit that they provide to their own economic environment. Through examples, explain how your business policy and practice demonstrate a greater sense of profit.

Contracting and Partner Incorporations

Business is no longer insular. We recognize that there are thousands of contractors out there helping companies do what they do. It is important that Golden Rule Trust companies demonstrate wise decision making in their business partnerships. The following questions help The Golden Rule Trust identify whether a business' partnerships are socially sound.

1. Our company spends _____ % of our total operating budget on contractors, contract production or external companies that provide services necessary for our primary business activity. (This should not include non-primary business activities such as contract trainers, accountants, strategic business consultants or other service providers that aren't directly related to your primary and continuous business activity.)

...if this number is greater than 40%, please see question 3...

2. _____ % of our company's primary production is completed by other incorporations.

... if this number is greater than 30%, please see question 3...

3. (only for companies that meet the requirements above) The Golden Rule Trust believes that if you spend more than 40% of your operating budget on contract relationships, and/or greater than 30% of your production is completed by external companies, a substantial piece of your business is being done by companies other than your own.

This means you must provide proof that your production contractors meet living wage minimums and multiple bottom line requirements in order for your application to meet approval requirements. Please see appendix 2 for a form for your contractors or production partners to fill out or, better yet, if they are able to meet all four of our Standards of Excellence, encourage them to apply to become Golden Rule Trust companies as well.

The information presented in this application is true to the best of my knowledge:
_____ (electronic signatures are acceptable, please include name and title)

Required Attachments

1. Please attach your Income Statement from last fiscal year. This must include a multi step analysis that shows: gross profit, operating expenses (please break down your employee expense line so that benefits, training costs and other investments in human capital are separate), other internal investments (R&D, etc.), continuous ongoing contract services, charitable donations made, and any other pertinent expenses or revenues (See Appendix 1 for sample).
2. Please attach a financial report detailing who and where donations were made to charity in your last fiscal year. The total donation amount on this report should match your Income Statement.

Additional Attachments

1. If you must include required forms as defined by “Contracting and Partnering Incorporations” please be sure these are included in your final application packet.

APPENDIX 1 – one example of an acceptable income statement.

SAMPLE INCOME STATEMENT

For the year ended DECEMBER 31 2007

	\$	\$
Revenues		
GROSS PROFIT (including rental income)		289,362

Operating Expenses:		
ADVERTISING	6,300	
BANK & CREDIT CARD FEES	144	
BOOKKEEPING	3,350	
OTHER GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE	10,000	
EMPLOYEE SALARIES	88,000	
LEGAL & PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	1,575	
LICENSES	632	
PRINTING, POSTAGE & STATIONARY	320	
RENT	13,000	
RENTAL MORTGAGES AND FEES	74,400	
UTILITIES	491	
DEPRECIATION	7,050	
TAXES	800	
Reinvestment in Business & Community:		
EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	50,000	
EMPLOYEE TRAINING	5,550	
INSURANCE	750	
RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT	8,000	
INTERNAL INVESTMENT IN WORK ENVIRONMENT	5,000	
DONATION TO RED CROSS	4,000	

TOTAL EXPENSES		(289,362)

NET INCOME		0
		=====

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3. Profit– Companies must understand that their profit is the profit that they provide to their own economic environment. Through examples, explain how your business policy and practice demonstrate a greater sense of profit.

SIGNED BY: _____
(electronic signatures are acceptable, please include title).