

Sample Essays—Emerging Leader Candidate

Note: Individual and company names have been changed or anonymized.

Describe a significant accomplishment or contribution the nominee has made within their organization.

In her relatively short tenure (five years), ASHLEY has made significant contributions to COMPANY. She led the implementation of a new product in AREA OF BUSINESS within a three-month timeframe, across three locations without any issues in manufacturing. This product is now being produced at 9 million pounds per year for an important customer.

ASHLEY also led a quality improvement effort at COMPANY's STATE plant, applying her Six Sigma Green Belt skills to lead a multifunctional team that improved usable product output from 60% to 100% prime material—resolving a challenge that had required ongoing development for 10 years. In a prior role, she led a reactor recommissioning project that increased annual capacity by 10%, including design improvements that enhanced safety and operability.

How has the nominee demonstrated leadership by shaping a strong workplace culture and supporting the growth of others?

ASHLEY invests in identifying, mentoring and growing the next generation of talent. She routinely mentors engineers in COMPANY's Developing Engineers program—her own entry point to the company—currently supporting four engineers across different manufacturing locations. She helps them navigate early-career challenges, brainstorms project ideas and connects them with colleagues. She also provides technical mentoring on manufacturing troubleshooting and quality improvement.

As site champion for an employee resource group, ASHLEY organizes engagement and growth initiatives, including a career panel discussion that drew strong attendance and positive feedback. She also engages the next generation at her alma mater, where she established a connection between COMPANY and the university's Women in Engineering group, supports an annual scholarship program and serves as a co-lead recruiter.

How does your nominee engage with the broader community?

ASHLEY has demonstrated ongoing commitment to her local community. She has supported Habitat for Humanity's annual Women's Build over the past year and a half, contributing to the construction of affordable housing. She has also volunteered at a local nonprofit providing community resources regardless of means.

In her role as local chapter leader of an employee resource group, ASHLEY organized a supply drive for a local women's shelter—collecting food, feminine products, cleaning supplies and seasonal clothing. She also volunteers with COMPANY's Science Teacher program, providing resources and mentorship to local elementary school teachers.

Why should this individual be selected as an Emerging Leader?

ASHLEY is a proven leader and mentor who exemplifies what the Emerging Leader award recognizes. In a short tenure, she has delivered significant, measurable impact across multiple manufacturing locations. She has demonstrated the ability to lead diverse teams with a maturity well beyond her years of service.

Beyond her professional achievements, ASHLEY shows deep commitment to developing others—recruiting, mentoring and building community in the industry she has chosen. She is an outstanding role model who will inspire future generations to consider a career in manufacturing.