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This document was created to help entrants submit an effective entry. Since 2017 is the first year to introduce Effie Awards in Serbia, this document represents an overview of past North American Effies and Global Effie judges.

The insight presented comes directly from the North American and Global Effie Juries from 2012-2016. These statements do not represent the opinions of The Effie® Awards organization, board of directors, steering committee, or staff – all comments and data presented – except for the Effie advice – are straight from the industry executives who dedicated their time to serve on an Effie Jury.

We hope you find the information useful as you prepare your cases for the 2017 Effie Serbia competition.

In addition to this document, please take note of the following Effie resources:

- **Global Effie Website**  
[https://www.effie.org/award\\_program/partner/25](https://www.effie.org/award_program/partner/25)
- **Effie Serbia Website**  
<http://www.effie.rs/>
- **Effie Serbia - Eligibility, Deadlines & Fees**  
<http://www.effie.rs/kako-se-prijaviti/>
- **Effie Serbia - Entry Kit & Materials**  
<http://www.effie.rs/kako-se-prijaviti/>
- **Case Study Database (read past winning Effie submissions from all over the world)**  
[https://www.effie.org/case\\_studies/cases](https://www.effie.org/case_studies/cases)
- **Global Effie Case Study Samples**  
[https://effie.org/25/entry\\_details/2](https://effie.org/25/entry_details/2)
- **North America Effie Case Study Samples**  
[http://current.effie.org/downloads/2015\\_NA\\_Case\\_Study\\_Samples.pdf](http://current.effie.org/downloads/2015_NA_Case_Study_Samples.pdf)
- **Effie Effectiveness Index**  
[www.effieindex.com](http://www.effieindex.com)

## Judging Process

Your entry will be judged by some of the brightest and most experienced business leaders from Serbia. Entries are judged in two phases. Scoring is done anonymously and confidentially.

- Serbian Effie Round One judging will be organized in 3-6 session.
- The highest scoring cases from Round One will go to the Final Round.
- In Final Round judging, all Serbian Effie finalists are judged during the same session.
- In both rounds, all elements of an entry – written case and creative elements – are judged.
- Judges also have the opportunity to discuss the cases in both rounds before finalizing their scores.

The judges' scores determine which entries will be finalists and which finalists are awarded a gold, silver, or bronze Effie trophy. The finalist level and each winning level – gold, silver, bronze – have minimum scores required in order to be eligible for finalist status or for an award. Effie trophies are awarded at the discretion of the judges. It is possible that a category may produce one or multiple winners of any level or perhaps no winners at all – no matter the number of finalists. **Not all finalists become winners.**

Judges read your written case first and then immediately watch your video or evaluate your showcase in PDF format. Make sure your team reviews both to insure they work seamlessly together before submitting your entry. It is important to remember that judges are reviewing 7-10 cases in a session. Brevity, clarity, and strong storytelling are key to make your case stand out.

### Scoring System

Judges are asked to evaluate specific criteria in scoring a marketing case's overall effectiveness and provide four separate scores analyzing specific attributes of the work. The breakdown is as follows:

|                                   |              |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Strategic Communications</b>   | <b>23.3%</b> |
| <b>Challenge &amp; Objectives</b> |              |
| <b>Idea</b>                       | <b>23.3%</b> |
| <b>Bringing the Idea to Life</b>  | <b>23.3%</b> |
| <b>Results</b>                    | <b>30%</b>   |

Judges also have the opportunity to discuss the cases in both rounds before finalizing their scores.

## **Effie Finalist & Winner Case Studies**

We encourage entrants to visit the Case Study Database, hosted on [www.effie.org](http://www.effie.org), to read past-winning cases from other countries and to view the accompanying creative assets. To view all past Global Finalists and Winners, visit the Case Study Database and use the Advanced Search box on the right to navigate.

# crafting an effective entry

introduction / judging & scoring / **judge advice** / final tips / contact

## General Advice

**“Be clear. Be concise. Be honest.”**

“Make sure your story is tight. It’s easy for good stories to get lost in overwriting.”

“Clear, concise and personable entries tend to stand out over long, overwritten entries filled with jargon.”

“Be clear and straightforward about what impact you had and what results your work truly delivered. And we like reading cases that are interesting, so don’t be afraid to inject a little personality!”

“Concise written entries stand out. They are not only refreshing -- they encourage high marks. Remember that the Effies are about effective communication. Entries that are long on words and light on substance or impact will leave a juror with the impression that the campaign was, too.”

“Storytelling is important. The person with the most heart for the campaign needs to be involved in the writing of the case study. Too dry case studies kill great results.”

“Every part of the story should logically tie back to the points being made. Simpler is better. Nix as much marketing jargon from the narrative as you can. Trying to sound like a marketing textbook causes my BS meter to go off. MAKE your case. Don’t just answer the questions.”

### effie insight:

**You can’t write your way to an Effie, but you can certainly write your way out of an Effie.**

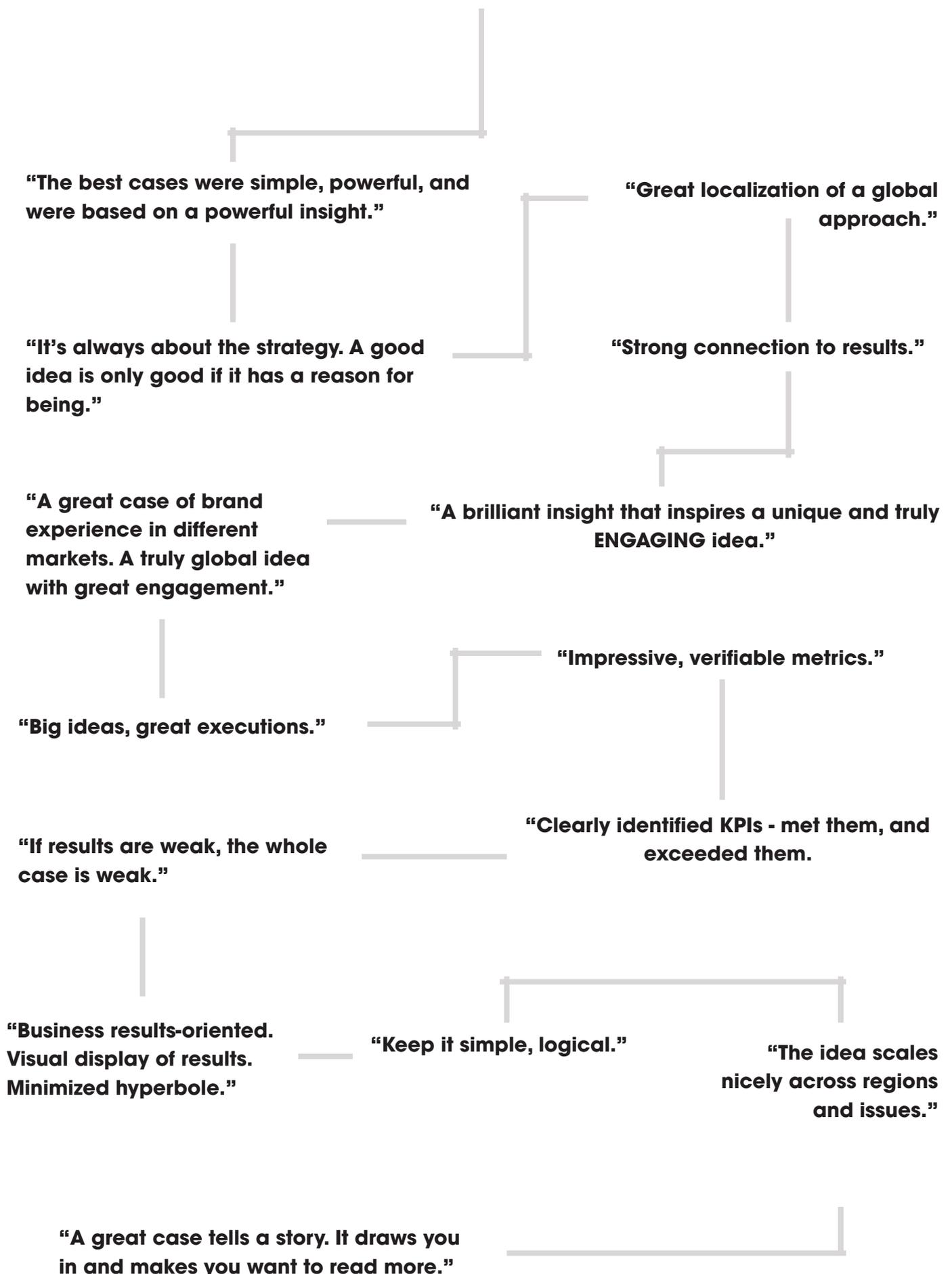
“A strong case should read like a story, each section should connect with the one that follows, and it should be compelling to read. There should be a business foundation to the case that is set up in the beginning and addressed in the last section in terms of impact of the idea on the brand.”

Be a storyteller. Entertain me with the submission. I want to hear your voice.”

“Consider the fact that the person reading it may be a creative mind, a media mind, or an analytical mind. Try to appeal to all by making it a very easy, enjoyable, and entertaining read. Don’t focus too much on creative strategy and leave media strategy out. Really give a full picture of what all the different departments contributed.”

“I’m more likely to believe your campaign was effective if you **acknowledge what other factors might have driven results** and give me some reasons to believe they weren’t responsible in this case.”

## How Judges Described Entries They Liked



## How to Improve an Entry

"The entrants should ensure that the results tie to the objectives, that they include performance against benchmarks, and that they seem real and not manufactured to make the case seem better."

"Include more measurable objectives, behavioral and business."

"Nail the insight. Keep market overviews brief. Make sure the insight is a connective thread throughout the response."

"Don't create objectives to fit the results - it's obvious."

"Be clear and concise. Edit, edit, edit. Remember that judges are people, they like a friendly tone of voice. They like short sentences. They like charts and graphs that are easy to understand."

## Context is Key

"Do not underestimate the importance of benchmarks - and providing reason for those benchmarks. For instance, a 4 week period out of a year is not helpful unless you explain why you used that 4 week period - it just looks like you are manipulating results."

"Demonstrate clearly how your idea was relevant in your country's market rather than making it templated"

"More context around the challenge; more specific, quantifiable results. Without these two components, it was incredibly difficult to judge the case's effectiveness."

"Lots of what, not enough why. Why do you want to increase awareness X%? What would that mean to your company/client in real-world terms? Context was missing on many of the results."

"Where possible, show how your results compare to the relative success of your competition. Just competing against yourself and past results doesn't seem as compelling."

"Industry context is so important and often missing (with the exception of share of sales and comparative sales growth, which only tells a small part of the story)."

"Take the time for more customization in the entry...for the category entered."

## Review Internally Before Submitting

"Write your entry not for a member of your team but for someone who knows absolutely nothing about your category, client, or client's business problems. Take special care to answer all questions (and sub-bullets therein) as they were designed to be answered in that manner for a reason."

"Have someone outside the team read your case. Too often category specific knowledge was assumed and broad context not given."

"Make the context clear enough for someone who doesn't sit in your office every day and may just be reading their 10th case. Have more than one writer look at it; preferably someone from outside your group. Same for results. With the creative reel, be clear about what elements are actual marketing pieces vs. context."

## Strategic Communications Challenge & Objectives

“The best cases clearly articulated the challenge for the brand, the category and competitive landscape, and what the overall goals were. They also had KPIs that aligned well to that challenge that were clearly not retro-fitted to the resulting outcome.”

“A large number of entrants seemed to omit critical information around the challenge. Why is it important? Why is it an issue for their consumers / brand / business? Who is the strategic target and why?”

“Provide ample context on the competitive set to help judges understand the challenges being faced during by your brand. Clearly identify your KPIs and then prove how your program met or exceeded those KPIs.”

“Be careful your KPIs don’t look like they were retrofitted. Help me understand why they were important and why they were set at that level.”

“More context on the marketplace challenges, the brand challenges, the opportunity, the audience and the key drivers that lead to the solution/idea.”

“Make it clearer if these are challenging or typical objectives. Every marketing goal is to grow share/sales but what makes it particularly challenging? Also, be clearer on expectations and how you set those benchmarks so it doesn’t look like you sandbagged results.”

“Telling me what your objectives were, and more importantly telling me why those objectives matter is the difference between passing through Round One and not.”

**effie insight: When writing your entry form, carefully read and answer the detailed instructions under each question. Often judges complain they felt the entrant did not provide full information.**

## Insight

The best cases were simple, powerful and were based on a powerful insight.”

“Clearly explain how you arrived at your insight and why it’s relevant to your marketing challenge.”

“The stronger the business and consumer insight, the better the communication plan.”

“Always make sure the idea/insight has some discussion of the target audience. What makes it particularly relevant to this audience segment?”

“Did the entrant know the audience? Was the insight consistent with the audience’s beliefs and did it actually drive an insightful notion that a strategy could be developed from? And did the work reflect the audience, insight and strategy consistently?”

## Idea

“Dig deeper into their consumers and draw links to their brand. A great idea is meaningless if it doesn’t reflect on the brand.”

“The idea is the pivot which turns the smart analysis of the problem into a **unique solution** that none of our competitors could emulate. Too many idea statements were generic and displayed no deep consumer understanding.”

“Make the idea crystal clear. **Simplify, simplify, simplify.**”

“The idea needs to tie directly back to the consumer insight and not be the tactical execution that was deployed. The idea needs to be crisp, but also tell the judge enough detail so that it is easy to understand how the team arrived at this idea and why it is meaningful to the brand and campaign.”

“The idea is not a recitation of the tagline!”

“Many of the idea articulations were not ideas. They were descriptions of the goal of the program or they were an articulation of what the program was, not the idea behind it.”

## Bringing the Idea to Life

“Tie the communication strategy directly back to objectives and insights. Without that it’s just a media plan, not a communications strategy.”

“More focus on **media strategy**. Entrants mentioned TV and print ads, but didn’t always mention where they ran and how they appealed to the target.”

Clearly depict how the campaign was executed in market. Was there a “path” you wanted consumers to go on and what was it?”

“Show the connection between communication strategy and media.”

“Regarding bringing idea to life, more needs to be said about brand media strategies and executions. Very little demo data, lifestyle data, medium strengths and weaknesses.”

“While the campaigns are delivering on the insight, it’s not clear how the media plan pays off or

translates that insight into a communications plan. Often there is a disconnect.”

“With so many channels available to marketers now, part of the challenge is conveying how you achieved reach across them. How did you place importance of some over others, etc.”

“Integrate the media strategy and show how it links to the full execution as well as, potentially, how it evolved with the campaign. Show how you were able to “test and learn” if digital was a key component. Ensure that the creative reel is not redundant.”

## **Creative Reel**

“In many cases the creative failed to live up to the story. In others, the video totally obscured the ability to view creative. It became a rehash of the story/case and a lot of salesmanship vs. a true showcase of the work.”

“Be sure the written case and creative complement each other and do not repeat each other. It isn’t about the quality of the creative elements but more about the content.”

“Creative reels often do not reflect all the tactics cited. Too TV-centric.”

“Don’t completely repeat the case in video form. Use the video to bring to life the key elements of the campaign. We’ve read the written case.”

“Most of the reels did a good job to demonstrating the work. The best cases told a cohesive story, but did not spend a lot of time on the set up given we had already reviewed the written material.”

“Don’t turn the reel into a pitch -- it reduces credibility.”

“My biggest issue was that the videos seemed to gloss over the creative rather than showcasing it. Don’t give me a video version of an over dramatized case. Showcase the creative and tell a rich compelling story via your writing.

**“Anticipate objections/ questions and address them. Exhaustively eliminate variables. Prove your work led to your results.”**

**“Make sure your creative reel complements your case by demonstrating something discussed in your case. It should not be an exact replica of your case wording OR something completely additive to yours.”**

## **Results**

“There was a significant amount of obvious hyperbole and loose connection to strategic goals. Entrants should focus on using the results to tie up their story in a neat bow.”

“Some of the cases used very soft measurement for results like CTR, or visits to sites. These measures are a start but should not be the ultimate goal. There needs to be concrete business results.”

“Add historical perspective to the results - we need to see the effect of greater media investment and consistent copy vs. past performance.”

“There should be clear proof that the communication campaign played a role in driving success.”

“Describe what the results mean in each of your markets.”

“Some results were just sloppy and did not align with the objectives established upfront. If you set a sales goal, give some context as to why that goal is relevant; don't just report a metric without some context.”

**effie insight: Entries that provide an explanation of why the results are significant to the business of the brand tend to perform better in the Effie competition.**

“Saying things like ‘exceeded by 520%’ just makes me think that the objectives were stupid rather than results being good.”

“Talk about the scale of couponing, price cuts, marketplace activity, etc. - no information or context on these means a downscore.”

“It's all about the results, right? I felt that many cases could show that the work was somehow linked to a movement in sales, but they were weak in being clear about specifically how the work was effective in driving sales and/or what specifically the work affected in order to drive sales.”

## **Presenting Results Effectively**

“Charts, comparisons from a year ago, sales versus years.”

“The strongest cases immediately and overtly tied back to objectives.”

“While they all cite results, sometimes the results are not adequately tied to the stated objectives, or the KPIs aren't appropriate for the goals.”

“Make sure results are clearly sourced.”

“Clearly tie results back to your initial objectives. When the results presented felt vague or disconnected from the case objectives, I found myself assuming that this was due to an absence of truly convincing positive metrics to be shared.”

“Relate the results back to the objectives and do so in a storytelling matter, instead of a data dump.”

Show results against each of the four main markets or explain why they are not available.

## **The following will result in disqualification and entry fees will be forfeited:**

**Data not referenced.** All data, claims, facts, etc. presented anywhere in the entry form must reference a specific, verifiable source. Sources must be as specific as possible in documenting all evidence; provide source of data, type of research, and the time period covered. Do not include any agency names in your sources – this includes agency names other than your own. The source of data should be referenced as “Agency Research,” “PR Agency Research,” “Media Agency Research,” etc. All other relevant sourcing information (time period covered, type of research, etc.) must also be included. Source data using footnotes.

**Agency names/logos** published in the entry form or in the creative materials. Effie is an agency-blind competition; no agency names should be included in the materials that judges will review (entry form, media addendum, creative reel, creative images).

**Including results or competitive work/logos on the creative reel.** Refer to the Creative Reel instructions in Effie Serbia Entry Kit for full details. The reel is simply meant to showcase the work as it ran in the marketplace.

**Failing to adhere to the Effie Eligibility rules.** The Effie Serbia eligibility period is 7/1/15 - 12/31/16. It is fine for the work to have started running before or continue running after this period, but the work the judges are reviewing must have run at some point between 7/1/15 and 12/31/16. The results the judges are evaluating must be within this period, but data prior to the eligibility period may be included for context. No results after 12/31/16 may be included.

**Failing to follow the Formatting Requirements** as outlined in the entry kit and on the entry form. Review the Formatting Requirements in Effie Serbia Entry Kit for rules on font, color, pictorial elements, leaving questions unanswered, and removing parts of the entry form.

**Missing Translation / Creative Viewing Guide.** All entries with non-English and non-Serbian creative materials must include a translation page at the end of your entry form (subtitles within the creative materials are also acceptable).

Review the category definitions on Effie Serbia website (<http://www.effie.rs/kategorije/>) or Entry Kit to ensure your case is truly eligible. If you are unsure, reach out to Effie Serbia ([office@effie.rs](mailto:office@effie.rs)) with your question.

Do not assume judges are experts in the marketplace. They may not know what equals strong success in your particular market.

**Brevity** is essential. Judges are reviewing 7-10 cases in a judging session, so the easier it is for them to understand your case, the better. Judges often say they wish the entry form page limit was lower.

Answer all questions. Carefully read the **detailed instructions** below each question.

Review in detail the Reasons for Disqualification and Formatting Requirements in the Effie Serbia Entry Kit.

Make sure **all data** throughout the entry includes a **specific, verifiable source**.

Do not cite **any** agency names anywhere in the entry form or creative materials – Effie is an agency-blind competition.

Do not include results, including any sort of social media metrics, in your creative reel.

## **Before Submitting Your Entry...**

Ask a strong writer or editor to review your case for spelling, grammar, logic flow errors, mathematical miscalculations, etc.

Have senior team members on both the client and agency side review the case to ensure the case is well-rounded with context and personality.

Hold a **mock judging session** with other individuals/teams at your company. Find out how they would score your case and request feedback on length and jargon. Ask them what questions they have after reading the case, what the weakest areas are, what holes they can poke in the argument, and what parts of the case were confusing.

## effie serbia

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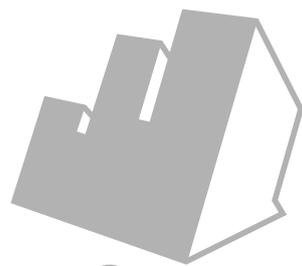
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## global effie

### **Entering the Global Effies**

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