

Nomination: 20393

Athena

<b>Page: General Information</b>
<b>Name of Organization / Company</b> Athena
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<b>Page: Entry Information</b>
<b>Entry Title</b> Athena
<b>Category</b> B01 - B12 - Award for Excellence in Corporate Innovation > B01C. Award for Excellence in Innovation in Business Product & Service Industries - 100 or More Employees
<b>Submission Format</b> An Essay of up to 625 Words

Essay

Imagine reclaiming over 2,000 hours a year. For the world's top CEOs and Founders, that's the transformative impact Athena delivers. Founded in 2020 by Jonathan Swanson and Robert Hayes, Athena has revolutionized the global delegation landscape, redefining how executives and entrepreneurs manage their time and priorities.

In just four years (2020-2024), Athena has grown from a fledgling startup to an industry leader, achieving a 22x increase in annual recurring revenue—from \$3 million to \$65 million—with minimal marketing spend. This explosive growth is a testament to Athena's innovative approach to executive assistance, combining elite talent, rigorous training, and proprietary systems to optimize productivity.

REDEFINING EXECUTIVE ASSISTANCE

Athena sets itself apart through a stringent recruitment process, hiring only the top 10% of applicants to ensure exceptional talent. This rigorous selection process identifies Executive Partners or XPs, who are not just virtual or executive assistants but strategic partners, confidants, and delegation experts trained to think and act like the CEOs they enable and empower.

Athena's innovative matching process combines human insight with advanced systems to match clients and XPs based on skills, judgment, and long-term compatibility. This ensures that each partnership is designed for success. Unlike traditional executive assistants, Athena's XPs take on complex responsibilities, often stepping into roles as confidants, project managers, and strategic partners.

STORIES OF IMPACT: WHEN XPs RISE TO THE OCCASION

Athena's XPs consistently exceed expectations, redefining the boundaries of virtual executive assistance. Equipped with cutting-edge AI tools, continuous training, and secured company-issued laptops equipped with industry-proven platforms and support networks to name a few, XPs are empowered to excel in high-stakes scenarios:

- Leadership Under Pressure: An XP from a remote province in Mindanao successfully organized and managed a high-profile fundraising event, demonstrating exceptional initiative, flexibility, and leadership.
- Seamless Business Continuity: When a CEO was stuck in traffic and unable to attend an executive call, their XP seamlessly led the meeting with the CEO, COO, CFO, and the team, ensuring critical decisions were made without delay.
- Building a Community: Chris turned her client's book club into a thriving, monetized community by managing social media, curating book lists, organizing author invitations, and planning a successful 10-day London trip—all while ensuring Tanya could focus on growth and self-care.

These examples illustrate how Athena's XPs are true extensions of their clients, turning challenges into opportunities and delivering unparalleled value.

EMPOWERING EMPLOYEES TO DRIVE SUCCESS

Athena's commitment to innovation extends to its workforce, now exceeding 3,000 employees across the United States, the Philippines, and Kenya, with plans for expansion into Guatemala. Key initiatives include:

- Equity Plan: Encourages loyalty and entrepreneurial spirit, enabling employees to invest in their futures.
- Metis College MBA Program: A globally accredited initiative offering employees a free MBA, valued at \$50,000.
- Flexible Reimbursement Program: Financial support for diverse employee needs, with \$342, 306 reimbursed in 2024.
- Force Multiplier Program: An appraisal system awarding an average of 7% merit increase, exceeding industry standards. In 2024, 137 employees received merit increases averaging 8%, exceeding industry standards and reflecting Athena's commitment to rewarding excellence.

By fostering a thriving work environment and prioritizing employee well-being, Athena empowers its team to deliver world-class service.

BUILDING A FUTURE WORKFORCE

Athena's global expansion strategy, including a growing team in Kenya and plans to enter Guatemala, positions the company to access diverse talent pools and provide comprehensive time zone coverage. This strategic growth underscores Athena's ability to combine innovation with scalability, maintaining high service quality across regions.

By redefining delegation through cutting-edge practices and cultivating a loyal, high-performing workforce, Athena has set a new standard in the business services industry. Its innovative approach to executive assistance has transformed the lives of both clients and employees, proving that time is the ultimate asset.

For this category please provide

An essay of up to 625 words describing the nominated organization's innovative achievements since July 1 2022, **OR** a video of up to five (5) minutes in length illustrating the same. Describe the organization's innovative achievements in at least three (3) of the following areas: organizational management, corporate social responsibility, financial management, corporate communications, customer service, human resources and employee development, information technology, marketing, product design & development, and research & development.

Optional (but highly recommended), a collection of supporting files and web addresses that you may upload to our server to support your entry and provide more background information to the judges.

Do You Have Supporting Files You Would Like to Upload?

No

Do You Have Website URLs you would like to link to

Yes

URL 1

[Redacted URL 1]

URL 2

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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URL 7

URL 8

URL 9

URL 10

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