



The purpose of this handbook is to offer advice to members of the Mountain Plains Region from members of the Mountain Plains Region.

Members from across the nine-state region have written articles on the topics of national programs, chapter/member recognition, and competitive events in hopes that others might use the information to strengthen their skills and better their experiences as a member of Future Business Leaders of America.

Please keep in mind that this handbook only offers advice and tips and that you will need to review your Chapter Management Handbook for more detailed and exact information about regulations and guidelines.

Please visit the Mountain Plains Region website, linked off the national website www.fbla-pbl.org, for handbook updates.

Edited and formatted by Laura Elliott.

(Mountain Plains Action Council 2004-2005, Colorado FBLA)



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STATE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES

What do you get when you combine “fun” with “FBLA”? You get the State Leadership Conference. At the SLC you get great opportunity to meet many new people, network, and gain ideas about how you can better promote FBLA. One of the best benefits of the SLC is the fact that you have the opportunity to compete against the top students in the state in your event. By meeting with these people, you gain knowledge about your event and how to become better at what you do.

There are also many forms of entertainment at State Leadership Conferences. Some states have local attractions such as malls and theme parks to visit. Your state

might also sponsor a “Blue Jeans for Babies Dance” to raise money for the March of Dimes. These events are perfect for hanging out with friends and meeting other FBLA members.

Most states hold competitions for scholarships. You might enter by showing that you are an outstanding FBLA member or just by sending in an essay about your achievements. Most of the time you will find a scholarship that will pertain to you. These scholarships range from \$500 to sometimes \$5,000, and provide you with the much-needed funds for you college career.

Collin Brooks, Texas

NATIONAL FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES

National Fall Leadership Conferences are a great way for FBLA-PBL members and advisors from across the nation to come together in four different cities in the U.S. NFLCs are much like National Leadership Conferences in that there are many motivating workshops to attend that help students improve their business and life skills. However, NFLCs are more convenient and affordable than NLCs. There are

four conferences scheduled in four different parts of the country, allowing less travel by many people. If you are looking for an exciting time of networking with fellow FBLA-PBL members and sessions with a series of motivational speakers, mark your calendar with this year’s NFLC dates!

Jacki Smith, Colorado

NATIONAL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCES

The National Leadership Conference (NLC) is unlike any other event. During the four-day conference, the finest future leaders in the world are showcased. Attending NLC makes every member feel that they are part of something larger than their chapter or state. During the conference, members have the opportunity to compete, attend Institute for Leaders, visit national campaign booths, and meet extraordinary students. There is so much to do at NLC that most students find themselves exhausted after the conference.

NLC is held in a different major city every year. Each city offers unique attractions and exciting experiences outside of the conference. The caliber of the speakers at NLC is exceptional. The quality of the competitors is truly inspiring. To qualify, you must win your individual, team, or chapter event at the state level. Before the conference even starts the reports are narrowed down to the best ten. All the speaking and written test competitors practice incessantly in preparation for the most difficult competition they will ever face.

Aside from the competitive events there are also awards for the state and local chapters. States compete for largest membership increase and largest membership among other awards. Chapters compete in

their region and nationally for recognition in these areas as well as market share. Chapters are also recognized for their work on national projects like Membership Madness, Membership Mania, Business Achievement Awards, and March of Dimes. All of these contests motivate national, state, and local members to improve FBLA in their community.

The races for national office are incredibly exciting. At the NLC, all of the candidates for national office campaign in the campaign booth area. The candidates have a spending limit and must be creative with their campaign ideas. At the opening session the candidates are introduced and allowed time to give campaign speeches. Running for national office is one of the greatest challenges that can be met by an FBLA member.

Aside from all the activities, there is plenty of time to meet new members and network with members from all over the world. The experiences and friendships you will make at the national conference are a true testament to the quality of the program offered by FBLA. NLC is definitely FBLA's biggest show and greatest moment.

Jacob Ziemann, Colorado

Tip: *It's wonderful to go to NLC and explore a new city, but don't forget the reason you're actually there! There are handfuls of excellent workshops with invaluable information right at your fingertips! Also, don't forget about all the thousands of kids from other states with whom you can network! Make as many friends as you can and don't wait to get their e-mail address until the last day!*

-Debbie Garber, WY

INSTITUTE FOR LEADERS

When you hear the word institute you may think it sounds prestigious, elite, or maybe even a little intimidating. The truth of the matter is that in order to attend the Institute for Leaders, better known as IFL, you do not have to be considered the “cream of the crop”. You do not even have to be considered a leader. You simply have to be willing. Willing to learn, and willing to let the IFL instructors shape you and mold you over the two-day course. That way when you graduate from the Institute for Leaders you will have become simply that, a leader. If you already consider yourself a leader this is the perfect opportunity to further enhance your leadership skills!

IFL starts two days before NLC and ends the same afternoon as the opening general session. To attend Institute for Leaders you must pre-register through National FBLA. You will be given the choice of several different tracks around the areas of officership, entrepreneurship, career success, and communication. There is even a special leadership track for advisers. To get the most out of the Institute for Leaders it is important to remember to take a step out of your comfort zone. For example, if you know someone else who is planning on attending IFL, don't sign up for the same

track as him or her. You can still sit with them at the general sessions and meet them for lunch, but if you sign up for the same track as them you will be allowing yourself to stay within your comfort zone and it will be hard to meet new people. Remember that everyone is trying out his or her best leadership skills so there will be a lot of high energy! Try to mix up your skills by taking charge, leading by example, and allowing others to lead as well. When you are pushing your boundaries a little bit further than usual you will find the IFL experience to be very rewarding.

Another way to enhance your experience is to attend the Early Bird and Twilight bonus sessions. These sessions combine members from all six tracks into one and surprise all in attendance with additional fun. If you attend either or both of the bonus sessions you will qualify to graduate from IFL with honors!

So if you are planning on attending the National Leadership Conference this year plan to go a couple days early. That way you can take part in the Institute for Leaders, and let IFL make a leader out of you!

Laura Elliott, Colorado

Tip: *IFL taught me a lot about leadership and etiquette. But the best part of it was meeting all the members from across the globe. It is amazing to see so many leaders in one room and to hear their ideas.*

MISSION LIFT GRANTS

Mission LIFT-Partnership between FBLA-PBL and the March of Dimes. Grant: A giving of funds for a specific purpose. Therefore, Mission LIFT Grants are funds given by the national organization to local and or state chapters to help support programs or activities for the March of Dimes. In short, awards of \$1,000 for local chapters and \$2,500 for state chapters are granted and announced at the National Leadership Conference for those chapters participating in March of Dimes related projects. The idea

is to plan an activity and submit it to the national headquarters for help with funding.

These activities would be perfect for a local Community Service Project, and how great would that look to include the grant in your report!

If you are interested you must complete the grant form by January 14. (Find grant form in the *Chapter Management Handbook* and at www.fbla-pbl.org)

Terra Farmer, Kansas

STOCK MARKET GAME

If you're in search of a great way to learn the principles and concepts of Wall Street, or just investing in general, the Stock Market Game is exactly the experience you need. Working in teams of three to five people, you receive \$100,000 to invest in the stocks of your choice, and then watch the market to see your portfolio thrive or fail. In order to stay in the black, you must research stocks to see which ones are performing well, analyze potential risks that could strike a stock down, and find the perfect time to sell your shares. Trading is done over the Internet, and although you never actually leave your desk, the economic and financial concepts learned will be used throughout the rest of your life. Prices are mimicked from the New York Stock Exchange and reflect the performance of the actual stock. The competition usually lasts several months, and the top-placing teams are recognized at the State Leadership Conference.

My advice would be to get into the game right away, and research a stock heavily before you decide to buy; see how it has performed in the past and what return for the investment you can expect. Don't let big names, such as Microsoft or AOL Time Warner, sway you towards buying their stock; they can experience drastic changes on a day-to-day basis that may devastate

your investments. Use all possible resources available. This includes the Internet, television, and even getting into contact with a local broker to see what they recommend; you must know what you're buying and how it will affect your portfolio before purchasing. Also, don't be afraid to sell a well-performing stock. Even though it could keep climbing, it can just as easily plummet, and there goes your money and the game. Sometimes buying a few stocks and holding on to them for the entire project is effective, but I recommend trading on a day-to-day basis in order to get the largest return, depending on how the market performs.

If you're looking to someday have a job that involves investing or other business-related fields, the Stock Market Game is great experience. It looks good on a résumé and is well known in the economic world. But if not, it's still a fun activity to try your luck (or skill) at. Since its introduction in 1977, over eight million students have participated in the Stock Market Game, and with its recent partnership with FBLA, SMG has been made available to even more students throughout America. I wish you luck on all your investing, and as they say on Wall Street: let the trading begin!

Craig McFadden, North Dakota

DISTINGUISHED BUSINESS LEADER SCHOLARSHIP

Many senior FBLA members often wonder how they are going to pay for college. One answer they might not think about is applying for FBLA scholarships, like the Distinguished Business Leader Scholarship. The Distinguished Business Leader Scholarship is the national scholarship offered directly by the FBLA-PBL national organization to both FBLA and PBL members. It has been implemented by the National Professional Division Officer Team and funded through fundraising efforts. Applications for the scholarship can be found in the Chapter Management Handbook on page VI-1 or on the downloadable documents on the national website. Applications are due to the national organization by April 1. Winners will be announced and awarded at the National Leadership Conference of that year. Each scholarship awarded is worth \$500. The award recipient must use this money for post-secondary education.

Anyone wishing to apply for the scholarship must be a dues-paying member in FBLA who wishes to continue his or her education and submits the application on time. Furthermore, the applicant must have

achieved either the Leader or America level of the Business Achievement Awards (BAA) system. These are the two highest levels of the BAA and require different activities to be done by the member during the school year. Requirements for the BAA are located in both the Chapter Management Handbook and on the national website. In addition to meeting the above eligibility requirements, applicants must submit a letter regarding their participation in FBLA, community service, and business activities. Applicants must also attach a resume outlining their activities and achievements in the organization. The last documents to be attached are two letters of recommendation. One of the letters must be from your adviser. The second can be from a community or business leader. Incomplete applications, of course, will be ineligible along with applications that are received after the deadline. Scholarships are awarded and judged by the Future Business Leaders of America-Phi Beta Lambda national organization.

Jeffrey Pickerd, Texas

Tip: *The hardest requirement in completing the scholarship is achieving the Leader or America level of the BAA. In order to achieve this requirement, try to take the challenge posted by our Mountain Plains Vice President on the Mountain Plains website. The requirements to achieve the first level--Future--directly correlate to the challenges that will be posted on the Web site. By completing each challenge throughout the year, you will have eventually accomplished many of the tasks required to be considered for the higher levels in the Business Achievement Awards program. Good luck!*

-Jeffrey Pickerd, TX

DATA MATCH SCHOLARSHIP

The Data Match Scholarship is available to all high school seniors in schools that participate in the Data Match fundraiser. There are eleven awards given out total and two \$1,000 scholarships are given out specifically to active FBLA members. The scholarships are awarded based on the following criteria:

- *Schools' participation in Data Match Fundraising program.*
- *Students' leadership abilities.*
- *Students' participation in clubs.*
- *Students' scholastic achievement.*
- *Students' community involvement.*

This means that you have to be INVOLVED in FBLA! Participate in your local chapter activities as much as possible. Run for a local, state, or even national office. Recruit members or volunteer to be the chair of a committee within your local chapter. Also be involved within the community. Volunteer at the local nursing home or within the school. Ask around the community to see if anyone has ideas for you. I encourage you to fill out the Data Match Scholarship Application. You may be rewarded for all your hard work and dedication to this great organization!

Cassandra Mindt, North Dakota

NLC INTERNSHIP

To have an awesome experience with FBLA on a whole new level, apply for the National Headquarters Internship. It's a wonderful way to get acquainted with FBLA while working with all the people behind the scenes at the National Leadership Conference.

When applying, be honest and enthusiastic. Present your application in an exciting format that's neat and organized. I advise applying for this to anyone and everyone! See the Chapter Management Handbook for more information on applying.

Kayla Cochran, Colorado

RUNNING FOR AN FBLA OFFICE

If you want to achieve greatness in FBLA and leave your mark, then consider running for an FBLA office. No matter if it is at the local, state, or national level, your life will change. You will be held responsible for the successes and failures of your chapter. Let's start with the first level of FBLA, the local level.

The local level is where most of your time is spent. This is where the most community service projects, fundraisers, and meetings are held. The local level is the heart of FBLA. The best part about this level is that no two schools run things exactly alike. If you want to be a local chapter officer, first talk with your local chapter adviser. First find out what your local chapters structure is. When running for a local office, be sure to let the members know why you are the best person for the job, whether that is in a speech or by just talking with them. Some chapters hold elections while others have a panel of adults chose. Either way, express confidence and simple reasons why you would do a good job.

Once you have been a local officer for a year or two, you may want to get even more involved and run for a state office. Now once again, each state chapter holds their elections of state officers differently. Colorado has a nominating committee of members, board members, adults, and past state officers decide. Nebraska holds elections where the members get to vote. If your state holds campaigns, then think of a great slogan that will make people think of you. Decide how you want your booth and brochures to look. Think about what items you might want to give away to members. With an actual election at the state level, you will want to be sure you have practiced answering some tough questions. Members will come up to you and ask you why you think you are best, what you will do, what you might change, and maybe even why you are better than your opponent is. Have your adviser practice asking you questions, and see how you do. You may also want to study up on some FBLA trivia questions. Also, remember that for most members, the

speech is the only way they will know you. Be sure to write a speech that will keep their attention and make them remember you. Most importantly, have your speech memorized. It needs to sound great, or else you will have a lot of ground to make up. You want to come off polished, excited, and knowledgeable about the organization.

For those truly exceptional members, try running for a national office. At NLC, every candidate, except for National Parliamentarian, campaigns and are voted on by the members for vice presidents and state voting delegates for treasurer, secretary, and president. The first step is to fill out all fourteen pages of the application. Once you are chosen by your state as its national officer candidate, you can start planning. Pay close attention to deadlines and regulations! You have a \$2,000 spending limit for a national campaign. Focus on quality and not quantity. Make your booth look attractive to the members, so they will stop by and get to know you. Give-a-ways are always good things. Your speech at NLC is a very big deal. You give it on stage in front of 5,500 members if you are running for an executive office and in front of your entire region if you are running to become a vice president. The speech won't win you the election, but it can lose it for you. Every national officer candidate will be asked a bunch of questions from members during candidate forums. Be sure to know your platform inside and out. The most important thing is to answer the question, but don't drag out your answer. Most importantly, provide examples with your responses.

No matter what level of FBLA you are thinking about becoming an officer for, remember to always have the members in mind. Be knowledgeable about the organization and our programs so you can answer their questions. Be impressive with your dedication, preparation, and enthusiasm for achieving the highest levels of success in FBLA!

Sean Robinson, Colorado



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BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

-INDIVIDUAL-

The Business Achievement Awards are an exciting addition to our competitive events. They have four levels of leadership success--once you complete one level, you move on to the next, until you have earned all four awards and are eligible for recognition at the National Leadership Conference. Each level contains three main areas: service, education, and progress.

The key to completing these awards is to begin right away in the year. It may be helpful to talk to your adviser as many of the components may be a part of your chapter's program of work, or your adviser may have other suggestions for you. Set goals for the items you want to complete, and then keep careful records of your progress. Then don't just wait until the end of the year to look at the packet again!

Take a look at it about once a month to remind yourself of what you need to be working on. You may also want to begin studying looking over things for the test! If you plan on shooting for all four levels: Future, Business, Leader, and America, you would ideally want to start your freshman year and complete the next level each year. But if you are starting late in the game, don't let that discourage you! More than one level can be done in each year.

The BAAs are a great way to ensure that you are a well-rounded FBLA member and are able to take advantage of the many opportunities offered through FBLA. Good luck!

Sara Meyer, Nebraska

Tips: *This award program requires the member to do many different activities throughout the year and cannot be done quickly. I would recommend using a calendar to plan when you are going to accomplish each activity. Even if you achieve one level, you can always try to go for the next.*

-Nok Ho, TX

You should definitely give the BAAs a try. They don't take a lot of your time and you'll be a better member because of the in-depth knowledge of FBLA they allow you to receive

- Amanda Luther, WY

BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

-CHAPTER-

Is your chapter looking for a way to achieve recognition while making an impact on your school and community, and enriching the experiences of its members? Why not go for one of the Chapter Recognition Awards? If you look at what your chapter already does, you may find that you are only a few activities away from one of these awards. Also, as your chapter decides on its Program of Work (PoW), or goals and activities for the year, consider using the Chapter Recognition Award guidelines to help develop your PoW. The Future Business Leaders of America Chapter Recognition program will help your chapter to achieve recognition and distinguished honor among FBLA chapters in your state. By following the guidelines to earn these special titles—Chapter Achievement, Chapter Excellence, and Outstanding Chapter—your members will have a chance to participate in local, regional/district, state, and national activities which in turn helps to increase local chapter involvement.

Any FBLA chapter may compete in this program for one of the three admirable titles.

We suggest that new chapters start with the Chapter Achievement title, which requires completion of eight (8) activities. The Chapter Excellence title requires completion of ten (10) activities and the Outstanding Chapter title requires fifteen (15) completed activities. The higher the level a chapter wishes to achieve, the more challenging the tasks are to complete.

Activities are designed around membership and chapter management projects with a special emphasis on the three areas represented on FBLA's official crest: Service, Education, and Progress. Activities range from participation in a community service project to recruiting new members.

Each chapter that wishes to compete must submit a completed entry form and documentation of chapter activities. See the *Chapter Management Handbook* for the required activities and entry forms for each level of the Chapter Recognition Program.

Whitney Goss, Texas

Tip: Have the Business Achievement Awards in mind when your chapter is planning active ties. Make sure as the year goes on that you are participating in events that go towards the BAAs. It is a great guide on activities for a chapter to accomplish throughout the year.

-Nok Ho, TX

MEMBERSHIP MADNESS & MANIA

~~MEMBERSHIP MADNESS~~

This program recognizes FBLA members who extend the benefits of membership to their friends and acquaintances. Members who recruit at least five (5) new members receive a certificate of recognition and have their efforts recognized at the State Leadership Conference.

The deadline for submitting Membership Madness forms is February 9. (This form is located in the Forms Section of the *Chapter Management Handbook*.) Once this form is submitted for recognition at the state level, it will be forwarded to the national office for recognition. Members and/or advisers do not have to send the form to the national office; the state office will do it for you.

~~MEMBERSHIP MANIA~~

This program recognizes FBLA members who extend the benefits of membership to their friends and acquaintances. Members who recruit at least ten (10) new members receive a certificate of recognition and have their efforts recognized at the State Leadership Conference.

The deadline for submitting Membership Mania Forms (located in the Forms Section) is February 9. Once this form is submitted for recognition at the state level, it will be forwarded to the national office for recognition. Members and/or advisers do not have to send the form to the national office; the state office will do it for you.

Tips: *Membership Madness was a very fun way to get some new members to join FBLA. I had a lot of fun doing it and it help bring new members to our chapter!*

-Jade Mudge, ND

Membership Madness and Membership Mania are very fun and effective ways to get new members to join your chapter. With the help of your current members you have the ability to double your chapter.

-Cassandra Lazur

RECRUITMENT IDEAS

1. Take all members who have paid dues on a field trip to a business.
2. Hold a breakfast meeting with juice and doughnuts for everyone.
3. Attend a dinner theater or a play as a chapter. Charter a bus and make it an all-day outing complete with shopping and business tours.
4. Sponsor a back to school picnic for business students to inform them about the many FBLA-PBL opportunities.
5. Have an ice cream social/banana split party for members.
6. Go on a chapter ski trip.
7. Plan activities with other student organizations in your school.
8. Go on a hay-ride.
9. Take members to a community-sponsored haunted house for Halloween.
10. Attend conferences at the regional/district, state, and national levels.
11. Plan monthly get-togethers and fun activities for members.
12. Design chapter FBLA-PBL shirts, sweatshirts, or jackets for members.
13. Plan activities with other FBLA-PBL chapters.
14. Conduct a Data Match for members and sponsor a dance where the "matches" can get together.
15. Sponsor a Halloween costume party/dance for members.
16. Sponsor a "Secret Santa" for your FBLA-PBL members.
17. Host a member volleyball tournament.
18. Have a member appreciation day.
19. Publicize all of your members' and chapter's accomplishments in the newspaper and on the school announcements.
20. During FBLA-PBL Week, place member signs with candy on the lockers of all of your members.
21. Have contests and games at member meetings.
22. Have food at your meetings.
23. Hold an end-of-the year banquet to recognize all of your members' achievements. Give away fun "gag" gifts to each of your members.
24. Host a Winter Holiday party for members. Bring in entertainment such as a magician or a comedian.
25. Participate in FBLA-PBL Week. Sponsor a special day for each day of the week for members. Example:
 - Monday FBLA Attire/Gear Day.
 - Tuesday Surprise "Gift" Day for Members (FBLA-PBL pens or pins).
 - Wednesday Business attire day.
 - Thursday Blue and Gold day.
 - Friday Cake Day.



PUBLIC RELATIONS AWARD

Does your chapter need some extra publicity? What better way to get some than make strong public relations? You'll want to promote FBLA as much as possible. To do so, contacting local newspapers or radio stations would be good. You can also pin up flyers and visual displays around your community and school. Promotional tie-ins are also good. Your chapter could volunteer to participate in community events or a charity. Your chapter could also become involved with community issues and local businesses.

When you are writing a news release, make sure to include the five Ws -

who, what, where, when, and why. You may want to include how as well. Also, make it neat and clean. Be professional in your writing and presentation. You don't want to use big words that people don't understand and remember to keep your article interesting. Nobody wants to read a boring article. If you keep your facts to the point and are on time with deadlines, your chapter will be well on its way to the public eye. See the Chapter Management Handbook for more information on this award.

Amber Stoltenow, Kansas

100% CLASS PARTICIPATION

An easy way to receive recognition for your schools participation in FBLA is through the 100% Class Participation award. This award goes to those who have 100% of the students in a business or business-related class or course who are paid members of FBLA. Application for this award consists of filling out the 100% Class Participation form found in the Chapter/Member Recognition section of the Chapter Management Handbook. A class roster and copy of the chapter's membership reporting form must be

attached and sent along with the application form to the FBLA-PBL national headquarters by April 1. This award also completes one of the criteria for the Gold Key Chapter award and can easily be filled out by a member of the class, chapter president, or other designated chapter member. Winning chapters will be mailed a certificate of recognition.

Riclyn Resco, Kansas

MARKET SHARE AWARD

The Market Share Award is an award given to chapters who have the highest percentage of members compared to students in their high school. This award is ideal for small schools that cannot compete with bigger schools for the highest overall membership due to their small student body. However, larger schools often times still compete for the Market Share.

If your chapter wants to try for this award, but you think you might need to re-

cruit more members, do whatever it takes to make sure everyone in your school knows how much fun and how rewarding FBLA is!

There is a Market Share Award for each region as well as an overall award. Look to your Chapter Management Handbook for more information. To be a strong competitor, shoot for recruiting 80% to 90% or more of your student body!

Laura Elliott, Colorado



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COMPETITIVE EVENTS

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ACCOUNTING I & II

Both the Accounting I and Accounting II tests are one-hour, written objective tests. Accounting I is for those who have completed very few accounting classes. For those who take Accounting II, any number of accounting classes is acceptable.

Other helpful study materials include those from both Glencoe and South-

Western Publishing Accounting textbooks. Bring a calculator with you! There are a few questions with calculations required to answer. Although the calculations are not difficult, a simple calculator would help.

Debbie Garber, Wyoming

Areas to Know from the FBLA Competitive Event Study Guide

1. Basic Accounting Cycle
2. Accounts Receivable & Accounts Payable
3. Journalizing and posting
4. Purchases and sales
5. Financial statements (Balance Sheet, Income Statement & Statement of Net Income)
6. Proprietorships, partnerships and corporate accounting
7. Worksheet
8. Account classification
9. Bank reconciliation
10. Income tax (Accounting II only)
11. Payroll
12. Inventory
13. Plant assets and depreciation
14. Departmentalized accounting (Accounting II only)
15. Ethics (Accounting II only)
16. Application problems such as balance sheet or income statement (Accounting II only)

Tips: *When you are taking your Accounting II test, answer all the questions you know first. Skip the questions you are unsure of then go back to them later.*

-Natasha Hussain

BANKING AND FINANCIAL SYSTEMS

This test has a wide variety of questions about money and how it is traded. There are questions about the Stock Market and types of stocks, as well as questions about bank notes and certain bank procedures. Some basic accounting procedures are hit upon. There are some questions about government programs that influence money, such as the FDIC. Insurance of any

kind is also a topic on the test. If you have a broad knowledge of the procedures of money, this would be a good test for you. There are not too many questions that actually go very far in depth in any of the areas. There is just a broad range of general money questions.

Andrew Young, Kansas

BUSINESS CALCULATIONS

Business Calculations is a test sponsored for juniors and seniors. In the test, students are tested on various business math skills such as discounts, banking, and accounting. If you are interested in any type

of business math courses, Business Calculations is a test for you.

Alison Fuhrman

BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Being a fairly popular test, members must score a very high percentage on their test. Business Communication tests everything you would expect it to, such as spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The test goes even further and tests some general knowledge of formatting (block style business letters, memos, etc.) and some more intricate grammar such as parallel structure.

Studying from your school's keyboarding class textbook would be very helpful for the formatting questions. As far as spelling, grammar, and punctuation, most of the material is covered in any high school English book.

Mandi Jo Freeman, Colorado

BUSINESS LAW

The Business Law test consists of both objective questions and case problems. The majority of the questions will most likely center around contracts, sales, business organizations, and bailment (the transfer of possession of personal property without transfer of ownership). There may also be questions concerning agency, bankruptcy, insurance, trade regulation, and product liability. Less focused-on areas might include wills, consumer protection, negotiable instruments (unconditional written promise or order to pay a sum of money, also known as commercial paper), and torts (private or civil wrongs for which the law grants a remedy).

To be fully prepared to take this test, you must plan in advance and study, but don't

just cram the night before. Find out if a Business Law class is offered at your school, and if so, you may want to consider enrolling. If you don't want to invest so much of your time and hard work, perhaps ask the instructor or your adviser if they have a Business Law textbook you might borrow to look over. The Internet might not be a bad idea for an additional source of information. Calculators can be used for this test, but you cannot use graphing or financial calculators, PDA's, or other memory storage devices.

Sarah Rogers, Nebraska

BUSINESS MATH

If you are looking for a test that is focused on solving business mathematical problems, this is obviously the right choice for you. Different from your average math test, all of the problems on this test will focus on business transactions that occur throughout the fiscal year for a business.

Working with percentages can be tricky, so I recommend you brush up on them before you take the test. Also, probability may be seen on a few questions here as well. Expect a lot of problems that contain ques-

tions with money transactions, and interest rates.

I wouldn't necessarily say that this test is difficult. I would just advise you to be careful not to make stupid mistakes in your adding and subtracting. A careful employee of a business needs to do the right adding and subtracting as well, so this really does test the right thing. Don't forget to move quickly and skip problems you initially do not know how to do.

Jordan Regan, North Dakota

BUSINESS PROCEDURES

This is a simple yet difficult competition. When taking this test it is important to study many aspects of the business world, such as human relations, technology concepts, communication skills, decision making, career development, business operations, database management, and ethics. Competency in performing daily tasks is a necessity in business. A general rule for taking this test is to maintain composure and have common sense. The majority of the questions asked are simple questions that are applied to many aspects of every day life. For example, one should know accounting is the language of business, and have knowledge in dealing with people. You should do well on this event if you have taken some of the following business courses: Introduction to Business Management, Word Processing or Database. This event is similar to that of Introduction to Business, if you have competed in this event it should be a fairly simple event.

Please study in advance for this event and review basic business skills such as what types of businesses there are, and how each is operated. Also know how money is managed within a business and etiquette when dealing in a professional environment. Again be mindful of the business world and think how a business person would think.

This event provides recognition for an FBLA member who possesses knowledge of basic skills and procedures and the ability to make intelligent business decisions.

A one hour written objective test will be administered based on the previously listed competencies. Participants must furnish their own No. 2 pencils, erasers, and non-graphing calculators. Hopefully the few tips will help you when taking this test and good luck!

Evan Eskridge, Colorado

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS

One of the most important things to remember when completing the computer applications test is make sure you save your work all the time. Other helpful tips include: a header that includes name, school, and job number; follow directions carefully they have very small changes that you need to carefully read. It is also a good idea to include a title page. The title page identifies

the competitor and his/her school and state and helps the judge when scoring the test. This test includes a variety of things from typing memorandums, typing letters, creating tables, and completing reports. Practice up on your typing before taking this test.

Brett Eakin, Kansas

COMPUTER CONCEPTS

To succeed in Computer Concepts it would be best to have taken at least one class on technology and computers and know basic computer terms. At least a basic knowledge of the OSI model and multiple operating systems will make this competition

much easier. It is also greatly helpful for one to know the concepts of binary numbers, and to be able to easily convert to both binary and hexadecimal formats.

Christopher Messick, Colorado

ECONOMICS

Do you know about our nation's economic system, the basics of supply and demand, or do you pay attention to why our country has low interest rates? If you do, the Economics test is for you! Economics is a one-hour, written objective test.

You will find questions about the goals and principles of the United States economy and how it compares to other countries' systems. It is important to know about the *traditional, market, and command economic systems*. In addition to the economic systems, it is equally important to have knowledge of the following government systems: *Capitalism (Free Enterprise)*, *Socialism*, and *Communism*, because they control the economies. To do well on this

test, it is IMPORTANT to know the *laws of supply and demand*, because it will answer over one fourth of the questions on the test. Other miscellaneous information that could be found on the test include prices, profits, taxes, *monetary and fiscal policy*, types of businesses, investments, labor relations, and environmental issues.

I recommend taking a non-graphing calculator and your own No. 2 pencils to the testing area. If your adviser has bought FBLA Competitive Event Study Guides, ask for one so you will have a general feel of what the questions may be like. Good luck!

Zach Smith, Kansas

FBLA PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES

If you are interested in the history and facts of this organization then this is the event for you. FBLA Principles and Procedures is an objective test that includes a broad range of information.

Be sure to study the FBLA Bylaws and the history of the organization. Re-

membering key names and dates are an important part of this test. Ask your adviser if he/she has any questions from events like Battle of the Chapters or FBLA trivia. These are good materials from which to study!

Megan Smith, Kansas

Tips: *Definitely read through information about FBLA-PBL at the national level and familiarize yourself with present officers, the goals, creed, and mission of FBLA before taking this test.*

-Riclyn Resco, KS

There is no better way to learn about our organization than by competing in FBLA Principles and Procedures. Studying and competing in this event will help you later on if you want to run for office, compete in Mr. or Ms. FBL, or become more involved on a different level. Principles and Procedures lays a great foundation for future success in FBLA.

FUTURE BUSINESS LEADER

In the competition to become a Future Business Leader, the contenders must prepare themselves for both a written test and an interview. The interview is the most critical part of this event. The test only comes into play if there is a tie between two contestants on the interview.

The member is judged on three areas. The first one of these three is the interview. Here the contestant is judged on qualities such as poise, attitude, communication skill, and professional appearance. The second area is the member's leadership qualities; the interviewee gets the opportunity to

tell what he or she has done in FBLA. Finally, the judge looks at the application materials. Before turning in these materials to your adviser you should always have someone look over them and proof read them.

The written test consists of basic questions that a businessperson would know if they were successful. These pieces of knowledge cover areas such as accounting, law, parliamentary procedure, and FBLA procedures.

Gregory Wellnitz, Kansas

Tip: *A great color to use for your letter and resume is blue. It is a relaxing color that appeals to the eye. Also, be prepared to ask your judge(s) a question: they always end up asking if the student has a question and it doesn't look good if you are trying to think of one on the spot. Girls it's a good idea to wear your hair back. It makes you appear more professional and well groomed.*

-Megan Abrahams, KS

IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

For the Impromptu Speaking event you will be given a topic dealing with FBLA-PBL goals, activities, current programs, current events or related business topics. You then will be given 10 minutes to prepare for your presentation, during this time you may write any ideas on a note card, that you will be able to use to assist you during your speech. Your speech should last between 3:31 and 4:29 minutes, if it is less or over this amount of time 5 points will be deducted from your final score.

Impromptu Speaking is using the public speaking skills you have, and presenting a speech that is both organized, interesting and has a purpose. It is easiest to relate your topic to something or to use projects and other experiences you have encountered. Mainly have fun and be creative, and you will do an excellent job.

Cassie Rudolph, Nebraska

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

This event provides recognition for FBLA members who develop competency and demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of management, marketing, and economics of international business. The written objective test may include questions on communication (including culture and language), ownership and management, legal issues, global business environment, treaties and trade agreements, taxes and government regulations, marketing, currency exchange, human resource management, and finance. There is a myriad of topics that you may be tested on in this event. Don't think of this event as a test you can cram for

last minute. Preparation includes tons of research and reading. Read as much as you can about all the topics ahead of time. Read out of textbooks from your business classes, but make sure to read articles from a variety of news sources. Read news magazines from different international perspectives such as Time (United States), The Economist (Britain) and news magazines written from different perspectives such as the Christian Science Monitor, etc. Get out there and research!

Patti Moon, Colorado

List of Priorities in Order to Succeed

- **RESEARCH, READ, RETAIN!** The three Rs! You must know your information to perform well on a test. Make sure you are more prepared than you need to be. You never know what questions will show up on the test exactly. A fun way to complete the three Rs is through study groups. You and some friends can get together and quiz each other and help each other. Studying in groups is many times more effective in helping you fully comprehend difficult concepts and areas of study. The group can also help you invent creative and catchy mnemonic devices to help retain information.
- **PRACTICE.** Believe it or not, you can practice. Take practice tests with questions written by your adviser or other members or questions out of a textbook. Test anxiety can be suppressed after lots of practice. Make sure to take your practice tests in a testing situation where things are quiet and you have all your materials: No. 2 pencils, erasers, and non-graphing calculators. Make sure to bring those with you to the actual test too!

Tips: *Because many schools offer this as a class, there are many different study materials. If you are not in or have not taken the class, try borrowing a textbook. Read through it, and discuss the basics of the subject with the teacher.*

-Katie Hudson, TX

INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS

The Introduction to Business test is very common among the national events. It is designed to help 9th and 10th grade FBLA members understand the American business enterprise system. Many of the same questions appear on tests from year to year. The test also includes many acronyms. A good suggestion, if you don't take this as a

class at school, **STUDY STUDY STUDY!** Studying for this test gives members good background information for other events including International Business and Entrepreneurship.

Brett Eakin, Kansas

Tips: *Studying with a textbook covering multiple areas of business can be helpful in this event. You can use the textbook to study vocabulary and look over the review sections for key concepts. The test requires a basic knowledge of many different topics in business.*

-Matthew Pickerd, TX

INTRODUCTION TO BUSINESS COMMUNICATION

Are you one of those people who are just awesome in English class? Do your friends always come to you to proofread their papers? If you are one of these people, you should consider competing in Introduction to Business Communication.

This competition is much like its senior competition, Business Communication, only it is just for freshmen and sophomore students. If you're interested, you should check out any grammar books you can find, much of the 100-question test consists of proofreading and editing. Also, study the different techniques of business writing and etiquette, such as proper business letter format or the benefits of positive speech in the business world. Do this, and you will be well on your way to national competition!

Jacki Smith, Colorado

INTRODUCTION TO PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

If you are an FBLA member in Grades 9 or 10, have an interest in parliamentary procedure, and are not part of the Parliamentary Procedure Team event, then the Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure competition is right for you! This event requires basic knowledge of parliamentary procedure principles and an understanding of FBLA's organization and procedures. Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure is an event on both the state and national levels.

Participants in this event will have fifty (50) minutes to complete an objective test on the principles of parliamentary pro-

cedure and the FBLA-PBL National Bylaws. The questions for the parliamentary procedure principles segment will be taken from the National Association of Parliamentarians' official test bank of 300 questions. The best way to prepare for the Introduction to Parliamentary Procedure test is to study the FBLA-PBL National Bylaws (found in the national Chapter Management Handbook) and the National Association of Parliamentarians membership exam (which can be found on the NAP's website).

Alice Reynolds, Nebraska

Tip: *Learn the basic 300 questions, but hit the bylaws hard.*

*-Angela Reynolds, NE
2004-2005 National Parliamentarian*

JOB INTERVIEW

Job Interview is an event where you, the student, are applying for a job at Merit Corporation. You are to have a resume and a letter.

At the district and state competitions you will have the initial interview. Some tips for those that are entered in this event: blue is a good color to wear, red makes you seem more powerful and could come across too dominant. Always have a question for your interviewer. It is good to ask how much money you will be receiving, but do not make that the first question. It would look like that is the only concern of yours. Ask about job benefits, what all is included in their retirement package, etc.

Names, phone numbers, and addresses of your references should always be on hand. There is nothing more embarrass-

ing than having an interviewer ask you for references and you not having them with you. This shows irresponsibility on your part.

Handshakes are essential when interviewing. Make sure they are firm and not sloppy. Do not try to shake too firmly because this also will make you seem as if you are trying to over power the interviewer. Shake the interviewer's hand at the beginning and end of the interview and thank him/her for their time.

The last tip would be not to sit down unless asked to. It is not your office that you are being interviewed in and it is rude to sit before being asked. Overall, be confident, friendly, and remember to smile!

Megan Abrahams, Kansas

Tips: *There are four crucial parts to Job Interview. First, you need to make a great impression with your cover letter. It should tie all relevant experiences in with how much you want the job you're applying for. DO NOT have any spelling mistakes whatsoever! Next, the resume should have all your experiences, qualifications, etc. on it, and if you're in FBLA, you should have plenty of good things to include! Make sure it is organized in an easy-to-read manner. While filling out your job application, make sure you keep all information consistent. Finally, there is the interview itself. Be confident, smile a lot, shake hands firmly, and respond honestly. Don't forget to include aspects of the present and future that you will be successful in, and feel free to ask questions!*

-Debbie Garber, WY

MARKETING

In order to do very well on the Marketing test, you should at least take or have taken a course in Entrepreneurship or Marketing, or possess knowledge on the basic principles of marketing. Prior to the test date, it is important that you study all of the basic aspects of marketing including price, product, placement, and promotion, as well as advertising media, ecommerce, channels of distribution, marketing research, legal and social aspects, international marketing, and ethics. The test will most likely

include various questions covering all of these topics.

To prepare for this event, you can go online to checkout and study information regarding the distribution of products and services to consumers that exemplify the foundation for marketing. Or you can simply talk to your local adviser about acquiring some materials and resources to study. On the test date, be sure to bring a calculator; you will need it!

Leigh Seifert, North Dakota

NETWORKING CONCEPTS

The knowledge of computer networks is in high demand, and those that show competencies in that area are almost guaranteed to find work in diverse areas.

Plus not many compete in this event either, which gives you a chance to shine greatly.

Chris McEwen, North Dakota

Tip: Utilize the people around you such as advisors and other members who have taken specific tests. These people will give you great insight and will be able to answer any questions you may have about certain events.

-Kindal Konechne, SD

PROGRAMMING

-C++ PROGRAMMING-

Article needed!

(Please contact your Mountain Plains Vice President if you are interested in writing this article.)

-JAVA PROGRAMMING-

Article needed!

(Please contact your Mountain Plains Vice President if you are interested in writing this article.)

-VISUAL BASIC-

Article needed!

(Please contact your Mountain Plains Vice President if you are interested in writing this article.)

PUBLIC SPEAKING I & II

In order to succeed in the business world, it is necessary to have supreme speaking skills. Two competitive events that Future Business Leaders of America offers in this area are Public Speaking I and Public Speaking II.

To begin, it is essential to compose an engrossing speech. To write a speech is a very subtle art. Few are able to succeed at it. This is the reason many important world leaders have their own speechwriters. In creating a speech, there are many dos and don'ts. First, know the audience. You would not speak to your friends in the same manner as you would to your teachers. In this way, it is easy to appeal to an audience. Next, write an intriguing introduction to the speech that will grab the judges' attention. Do not make it too over-the-top, but start with a clever phrase or quote. In the introduction, establish the goals and points for the speech that must be developed from one or more of the nine FBLA-PBL goals and state what you want to accomplish during the next 3-5 minutes. Then follow through, stating how you feel about the topic, and providing helpful information wherever possible, while keeping the speech composition organized and businesslike. Finally, tie your speech together in a fitting conclusion.

Keep in mind; you have a 30 second window before and after your time limit. (4 minutes Public Speaking I. 5 minutes Public Speaking II.) So, time and practice your speech repeatedly to be well prepared. Come presentation day, if you are still uncomfortable with the memorization, you may use notes or note cards. It is important to

remember that the most important aspect of delivering a commendable speech is presence. Be on time and dressed in the proper business attire. You may not listen to any other speeches prior to delivering your speech, or you will be disqualified.

Upon entering the room, introduce yourself to each judge. Step up to the podium and make sure the judges are ready, and then begin your speech. Speak in a clear, steady, loud voice (not booming) so that everyone in the room can hear and understand you. A timekeeper will stand at either 4 minutes or 5 minutes depending on if you are competing in Public Speaking I or II. If you feel your speech is about to draw to a close before the timekeeper stands, try to stretch your time out by speaking slower and adding sentences wherever possible. If the timekeeper stands, and your speech is far from finished, try to wrap it up before the timekeeper stands again 30 seconds later. At this time, you are allowed to finish your last sentence, but do not continue speaking any further, for you do not want to go overtime. When you are finished, thank the judges. It is recommended to stay and see the rest of the speeches in your round as a sign of respect, and to have an idea of your competition.

In conclusion, public speaking is a tool you will use for the rest of your life. Whether it is in everyday conversation or in business relations, improving your communication skills will enhance your future.

Leigh Seifert, North Dakota

Tips: I have found that using personal experiences and examples to explain and relate the FBLA Goals to your life helps your speech to be more 'listener friendly.'

-Riclyn Resco, KS

Time your speech to make sure you are within the time limit and make sure your speech is well rehearsed with voice inflections and gestures.

-Marissa Dew,- TX

TECHNOLOGY CONCEPTS

This is a very straightforward test; it is about the uses of technology. Many of the questions include the acronyms used in the computer world, such as WWW stands for World Wide Web. Since the Internet has had a huge impact on the world, it has also had a huge impact on this test; many of the questions are about the small things in the world of the Internet, from search engines, to HTTP, to the MODEM. This requires a

more in-depth knowledge of the computer and its workings. Some questions are about the computer hardware, such as printers and speakers, and many are also about the transmission of data. This is a much more in depth test than most, and requires knowledge of several areas.

Andrew Young, Kansas

Tip: *There is a ton of practice tests in the Chapter Management Handbook. So put them to use! These will truly give you an idea of the tests you are taking and might be able find out what your best events might be. They might even give you an edge on the other competitors. I would definitely encourage everyone to check them out!*

-Kindal Konechne, SD

WHO'S WHO IN FBLA

Who's Who is an event that truly searches for the best of the best. Its not like any other judged event where you can be ranked, you are simply on your own, and only one person gets to go on to the next level.

On your resume, divide your sections into Education, Future Business Leaders of America (and categorize further into offices, honors, conferences), Extra Curricular Activities, Awards/Accomplishments, Volunteer Experience, Work Experience, and References if you have room. Do not exceed two pages.

In your cover letter, be sincere but not personal. Explain why you deserve this award and how it reflects your FBLA accomplishments.

During the interview, judges are looking for the most information they can get in a short amount of time. Be clear and con-

cise and give specific examples. For example:

"What has been your favorite office?"

"Chapter President because I can really focus on a few small projects at a time and work closely with my members. When we had our Halloween Safe house, I was able to aid with planning and set up and it was great to try out everybody's ideas, I think it embodied what FBLA is really all about."

Most importantly, stay relaxed, judges can sense anxiety in your voice and facial expression. Honestly, just be you.

Mandi Jo Freeman, Colorado

Tip: *It's a great idea to keep track of all your FBLA activities and accomplishments in a file on your computer. Once you do something, just type a quick note with the details so you can recall it later when you need to put a resume together. Without a file like this you may forget activities you participated in earlier in your high school career.*

-TX FBLA

WORD PROCESSING I & II

The Word Processing I & II tests recognize FBLA members who demonstrate basic and advanced keyboarding and formatting skills. Participants should be well prepared for keying, formatting, and producing letters, memorandums, reports, tables, resumes, and other business documents from rough drafts and unarranged material. A school site test will be administered in which the member has a set of 'jobs' or problems to create. The problems are

weighted according to difficulty and are judged according to the FBLA Format Guide. Accurate proofreading and understanding of formatting, grammar, punctuation, spelling, basic word processing terminology and concepts, and related application knowledge are skills that are tested on the Word Processing I & II tests.

Riclyn Resco, Kansas

Tips: *Make sure to review the FBLA Format Guide thoroughly and ask your adviser any questions on formatting before you begin the test.*

-Riclyn Resco, KS

You need to study the format guide so you can be familiar with the different types of documents and how they are formatted. The day before the test is not the time to study for this, so make sure you allow a lot of time to prepare.

-Jessica Potter, TX

Know all word processing formats. Spell check afterwards and give enough time for writing on final print.

-Tom Li, TX

BUSINESS PLAN

If you are interested in starting your own business someday, this is the event for you! The business plan is every aspect of a business written on paper. Many businesses must write a business plan to obtain a loan.

This project is a maximum of thirty pages long, and consists of many sections, including a company description, marketing

plan, and financial papers. It is a very rewarding project to be involved with, especially if you are a first or second year member and haven't been involved with a major project.

Emily Bostwick, Nebraska

Tip: *The business plan was a lot of work, but it was well worth it when my partner and I got up on stage at state and accepted our third place trophy. I suggest that you start early and be consistent with your work schedule. That way you won't be struggling to get it done when it's time to mail it. Good luck!*

-Joe Wheeler, NE

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

Do you love assembling flyers, letterheads, and business cards? The Desktop Publishing event is a great way to showcase your creative computer skills! Desktop Publishing brings many skills together in a computer event that can be completed individually or in a team of two.

First, you need to prepare for the event by reviewing the FBLA Format Guide found in your *Chapter Management Handbook*. Also become familiar with the software you will use during the testing session at your school. You will be given 90 minutes

to complete as many projects as possible. The projects might include a letterhead, flyer, business card, thank you note, or a fax cover sheet. Be creative and consistent throughout your projects. Remember to take advantage of technical features such as mirror images, shading, shadows, and text special features. Finally, proofread each item very carefully for typographical, spelling, or grammatical errors.

Kelly Norrie, Nebraska

EMERGING BUSINESS ISSUES

This event provides FBLA members with an opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills in researching and presenting an emerging business issue. For example, sales taxes are a popular area of concentration for this event. In addition to learning research skills, team participants develop speaking ability and poise through oral presentations. Participants will be expected to research the topic prior to the conference and to be prepared to present either an affirmative or negative argument, based on random selection. You must be prepared to argue both sides, so do your own work! Don't depend on others to research for you or you will not truly understand the material and you will not argue effectively. Facts and working data may be secured from any source. Look at a number of news magazines such as Time, The Economist, U.S. News and World Report, etc. Stay updated on current events by reading and watching the news and make sure to cut out/save articles dealing with your Emerging Business Issue topic. During actual competition,

teams will be permitted to bring prepared materials written/printed on white 8 1/2" x 11" paper, or notes written/printed on note cards, to the preparation and presentation areas. Make sure to take advantage of this opportunity to bring evidence from various reliable sources to support your arguments. One 4" x 6" index card will be given to each participant and may be used during the preparation and performance. However, if you truly know your material, you should not have to rely on an index card. It's much more impressive if you know the material so well that you can just present through your own research and knowledge of the topic. Books, other bound materials, and props will not be allowed, so don't bring those. Information from those books can be put on the paper in the form of notes and used in competition. A lectern will be available. No microphone will be used, so make sure to work on perfecting your public speaking skills.

Patti Moon, Colorado

List of Priorities in Order to Succeed

- **RESEARCH** your Emerging Business Issue Topic! You need to know all the ins and outs of the issue. Stay updated on current news! That cannot be emphasized enough! You will be much more successful in competition if you know what you're saying. You are judged on how well you know the topic.
- **PREPARE** your affirmative and negative arguments for competition. Write out the arguments or just practice your arguments orally. Whatever method works best for you will do, but makes sure to be prepared to argue, not just regurgitate information that has not value. You will be judged on how strong you are in your position, essentially how strong your argument is.
- **PRACTICE** your presentation. You will be judged on presentation. Work on all of your public speaking skills. Even the best speakers have room for improvement.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Entrepreneurship is a great event for those who have competed in Introduction to Business and would like to be in a team event. Entrepreneurship is a step above Introduction to Business and takes an in depth approach to the mechanics of running a business. A school may enter two teams of no more than three individuals.

Preparation for Entrepreneurship requires studying textbooks which cover the mechanics of a business. If you have not taken Introduction to Business familiarize yourself with basic terms that can be found in an Introduction to Business textbook. As a team, practice taking tests together and time each test. Time counts when you are taking a test, it can insure a victory. At Dis-

tricts the Entrepreneurship team will take the test collaboratively. At State and Nationals each Entrepreneurship team will take a test collaboratively once again. The top ten teams will then take a performance test that involves a case study problem. You will use your knowledge which you have learned by studying to solve these business problems. Finally, make yourself aware of business problems in the real world. Actual real world problems will be practical test questions.

I would recommend to study on your own time, but to take practice tests with your team.

Pam Everitt, Colorado

MULTI MEDIA PRESENTATION

If you love trying new things especially with technology that is available for you, Multi Media Presentation might be the right event for you. It involves making a presentation using almost any type of media including video, powerpoint, or any other media based program that is available to you. Each year there is usually a different theme in which you base your presentation. For instance one of the themes might be.

"You have been asked by the high school principals in your area to prepare a

presentation about how FBLA benefits schools and the community by emphasizing the core values of the organization: Service, Education, and Progress"

The Presentation is 2-4 minutes long. My best advice is be creative! Do something that really encourages you to use your creativity and the judges will notice that!

Kindal Konechne, South Dakota

NETWORK DESIGN

The abilities to understand technology, apply it to a working plan, and be able to communicate your ideas well are in high demand right now. Studying for and doing

well in network design is an awesome way to demonstrate those abilities!

Chris McEwen, North Dakota

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

This event is a team event rather than an individual event. Qualifying test consists of an objective test on the principles of parliamentary procedure and the FBLA-PBL National Bylaws. Questions for the parliamentary procedure test will be drawn from the National Association of Parliamentarians' official test bank. The team score is determined by averaging the score of the four members. Qualifying teams with highest scores are scheduled for a performance test with official judges.

Teams will draw for places 30 minutes prior to the first performance. Twenty minutes before each performance, each team will receive a problem to demonstrate. They cannot write on this problem or take any materials into the performance room however; reference materials may be used during this preparation period.

The following items are allowed in the performance room: the problem, agenda, treasurer's report, minutes, and paper to record minutes. No scripts are allowed. Members must demonstrate all five classes of motions in the demonstration. Performance time may be from nine (9) to eleven (11) minutes. A timekeeper will stand at eight (8) minutes.

Following the performance, the secretary and one other member have 30 minutes to prepare and file with the judges the minutes of the performance. NO reference minutes may be used and minutes must be written on white 8.5x11 inch paper. Final rank is 20% team average on the test and 80% performance score.

Angela Reynolds, Nebraska
National Parliamentarian 2004-2005

Tips: Start studying early. There is a lot of information to know.

-Amber Xu, TX

Download from national website the FBLA bylaws. Know the article numbers and the corresponding title, Robert's Rules of Order, and various Internet sources.

-Glory Song, TX

When you compete in the Parliamentary Procedures competition, make sure to have watched some videos that demonstrate parliamentary procedure so that you know how to act it out for the performance. It helps in visualizing all the rules.

-Zabeena Merchant

When working in a group event, always try your best to help yourself and your team members.

-Kishwar Kabiruddin

Study the questions and the bylaws thoroughly, but don't let it intimidate you.

-Alice Reynolds, NE

PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE

-CONTINUED-

Have you ever sat in a meeting for what seemed like hours? Everyone has been to a meeting that just seemed unorganized; where everyone was wanting to talk at once. Well Parliamentary Procedure is an event you can participate in as an FBLA member, and this event can teach you how to spare yourself the time and pains that long meetings provide. Parliamentary Procedure is an educational group event. It is designed for those who are good at public speaking and have parliamentary knowledge. Not to mention, it is also for those who would like to learn how to run their FBLA meetings more effective and efficiently. FBLA uses resources from the National Association of Parliamentarians and Roberts Rules of Order.

In Parliamentary Procedure each team is allowed to have 4 or 5 members, which may consist of the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and other members. This event is composed of two different parts. The first part is the objective test; this test is a mix of questions about basic parliamentary procedure and FBLA knowledge. You are given one hour to complete this test, and the top ten teams then advance to the next level.

The top ten teams compete in the second part of the competition. The second part for this event is the team performance; this is where the team runs a meeting for a group of judges. They are given a problem and are expected to incorporate it into their

meeting while showing their parliamentary knowledge. An example of a meeting would be the following with included discussion time:

- *President calls the meeting to order.*
- *President goes through committee reports.*
- *President asks for old business.*
- *President asks for new business.*
- *President closes meeting.*

This meeting may last between 9-11 minutes. The secretary and a fellow member are given 30 minutes after the meeting to put together the meetings minutes. The neat part is that people who attend the conference are allowed to view your performances, unless they are other parliamentary procedure competitors.

Parliamentary Procedure requires lots of hard work. It is however, a great time to bond with your fellow FBLA members and team members. It teaches you a skill for life, how to run an effective and efficient meeting. You can use this event to go further on the business ladder, from your local FBLA chapter meeting to a corporate board meeting you will be attending a few years down the road. Good luck in this event and strive for excellence.

Katrina Litsch, Texas

VIRTUAL BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Hiring employees, setting wages, ordering products to sell, and many more activities are what you have to understand to be successful in Virtual Business Challenge. Virtual Business Challenge is a very difficult and yet a fun simulation to participate in. Begin the simulation by logging on to www.knowledgematters.com, and registering a team. Once you receive your team code use it to download a copy of the simulation. Play the game and upload your results as many times as you would like. Teams who place first in either the fall or spring challenge in your state can compete at the National Leadership Conference in Orlando, Florida.

The game throws many obstacles in your way of being the best product supplier in town. Some people think that managing a business is cake. Well, if you think that then you should play VBC.

It is really one of the hardest games that I have played in my entire life, and I am an avid gamer myself. Along with many other skills, you will learn marketing, managing, entrepreneurship, and finance. You also have to change the floor layout, manage customers, get and maintain inter-national business, manage truck fleets, buy and run your E-Commerce System, offer customers credit, and many other things. When playing this game you are controlling the salesperson, Order Processors, Pickers, Loaders, Drivers, Unloaders, and System Administrator. That is a lot of people to control and often you have more than one at a time. That is what makes this game so much fun.

Live in your world and play in Virtual Business Challenge.

Christopher Brown, Colorado

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

Are you a web surfer? Do you always find things that web designers could have done better on their sites? Website development will allow you to incorporate your creative internet viewing ideas into a web page of your very own. One year, all teams created websites for an imaginary business named *Presentations on Demand*, giving insight to potential future web designers of various business websites. Check the Chapter Management Handbook for the current theme.

This project gives students the opportunity to work with website editors such as *FrontPage* and *Dreamweaver*, and design 3D graphics in *Flash*. Experience can also be gained with different print and photo programs, as well as tweaking your website's HTML. With more and more businesses promoting sales online and worldwide, web designers are now in high demand. You will be learning the skills of today's world to help support the companies of tomorrow.

Isaac Kreider, Colorado

AMERICAN ENTERPRISE PROJECT

A successful American Enterprise Project takes a full year of planning and determination and focus by you and your committee. Before your project seems too big, keep the following points in mind, and hopefully your job will be easier and almost guaranteed a success.

The first step should be to identify a cause or single “target.” You should always have a strong and underlying reason to do it, not just to get the project done because your adviser says so. Look first to current events and news surrounding your school and community to find an idea relevant to them. A school focus may be easier to plan mainly because you’ll be working with and for your peers. Again, this focus is the reason for the project and should be kept in mind with every event and activity.

Once the “target” is identified, get them involved! Remember that the events are for their benefit, not yours, so plan activities to include anyone and everyone. This is also a great opportunity to publicize your chapter and FBLA in general. All forms of

bulletins, advertisements, news articles, or even radio and TV spots will increase interest, availability, and accessibility of your project to your “target.”

Even before involvement, education should be your highest goal. Hopefully everyone that has the opportunity to become involved can benefit from a greater understanding of the American Enterprise system and its opportunities. Be sure to do some researching on your own so you feel prepared for any presentation. This is a good way to grade the success of your project before the judge has a chance to. If nothing for your “target” has changed or benefited, you may want to reassess your goals.

With enough planning and consideration, your American Enterprise Project committee will have a confident and successful project. After all of this, your report and presentation should come easy. Good luck!

Chad O’Bryhim, Kansas

BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR

This national event is a great way to honor those who have contributed to the success of your local, state, and/or national chapter of FBLA. The award was designed to recognize those who have donated years of participation, promoted FBLA-PBL through presentations and seminars, contributed to local or state chapter projects and activities, or have provided financial assistance to and sponsorship of activities. Each state chapter is allowed to submit one nominee for the award. Most state chapters have guidelines at the state level to decide who

the state nominee will be. As the year goes on look back to see who from the business sector has made the biggest effort to help your chapter. Once you have identified that person, nominate them for this award. Honoring the valuable partnership that FBLA members and business leaders share is very important. You and your chapter should take advantage of this great opportunity.

Brett Eakin, Kansas

COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

Do you want to do something for your community? Or maybe, you just want to get involved in a project outside of school. Well, the Community Service Project event may be right up your ally.

The Community Service event is a great way to get involved in your community and a way to improve not only your community, but grow within yourself. Your

chapter may decide to organize a community service project in a number of ways.

This event allows you to improve your community by working with others to reach a common goal. This is a very worthwhile project and builds great relationships with community members and businesses in the community.

Kaylene Leaver, Nebraska

GOLD SEAL CHAPTER AWARD OF MERIT

Striving for the Gold Seal Chapter Award of Merit is just the thing to keep your local officer team on their toes and hard at work throughout the school year. Although requirements vary from region to region and state to state, the Gold Seal Chapter Award of Merit is closely related to your chapter's Local Annual Business Report. Each chapter is asked to thoroughly document their past year's goals and evaluate the methods used to reach these goals. Chapter guest speakers, business activities, professional member recruitment, and state program involvement are common categories looked

into by your state before they submit their application to the national offices. Outside of typical LAB stuff, many states ask your organization to apply for the Chapter Excellence, or the Outstanding Chapter Business Achievement Award. Around early to mid May, the national offices ask each state to submit 2 chapters or 15% of their total chapters for the award. So, if you've got an ambitious officer team or at least a solid historian, the Gold Seal is a great way to show them off.

Chad O'Bryhim, Kansas

LOCAL CHAPTER ANNUAL BUSINESS REPORT

Writing the Local Chapter Annual Business Report is like trying to condense the whole year's activities into one single report. Therefore, you must make sure to highlight the major events. For this, you need an accurate record of your chapter's activities. It is important to start early, and to constantly collect items that would help you in writing the report later on. Make sure to collect items such as agendas, newsletters, or any memorabilia that would help in jolting your memory when writing the report. The reporter/historian's photos will come in handy, so make sure that he/she takes pictures of the major events. The pictures should include a variety of poses. Pictures of people standing and posing for the camera are not very eye appealing.

Once you have written an award-winning report and figured out what format judges like and dislike, you can reuse the

same format from year to year. One thing that judges dislike is when you put each category on a separate page. In addition, make sure to fulfill all the basic requirements, such as having all the required categories of topics. Before printing, make sure to double-check everything, including that the table of contents is numbered correctly and that all grammar and spelling is correct. It is always a good idea to have a few people edit it, especially your English teacher. These may seem insignificant, but they can make all the difference. Also, make sure to have the report bound in a spiral. Not all printing places are open late, so finish ahead of the deadline enough that you have time to get it bound. I wish you good luck in competing in the Local Chapter Annual Business Report event!

Mehveen Merchant, Texas

Tips: *Get your competition team organized as soon as possible (preferably just prior to the start of SLC since that is when the timeline begins for the report). Even if just one or two members will commit to this competition, they can write up events as they happen and not have to play catch up at the beginning of the next school year.*

Make sure everyone on the team understands the report requirements and has a written copy of them for easy reference.

Take great photos of your chapter's activities as you go. You may not be able to use every one of them, but you will have lots to choose from.

Get someone on the team that has some publishing skills. This will help immensely when it comes time to put the data in a report format that is interesting.

Stay focused and be consistent. This will help you avoid a last minute rush.

Leave time for someone to proof your report for errors.

-TX FBLA

PARTNERSHIP WITH BUSINESS REPORT

The Partnership With Business project recognizes FBLA chapters that create, develop, and implement the most effective and creative partnership plan for increasing communication and interaction with the business community. The purpose of the Partnership With Business project is to educate FBLA members in areas such as career development, communication, entrepreneurship, and business management.

The Partnership with Business report consists of description of the development, implementation, and results, of the partnership. Within the report, the development section should include description and details about the initial planning and creation of goals, activities, and involvement from the chapter and business in developing the chapter. The implementation section will cover actual activities and involvement that are carried out by the partnership. The results include what was learned from, the impact of, and the overall goals reached by the Partnership With Business. In the de-

gree of involvement and evidence of publicity sections of the report, details should be included concerning the number of hours spent, contacts made, the recognition received by the partnership, and examples of publicity.

The report makes up 100 of the 200 points possible in the project. The other 100 points goes to the oral presentation. Up to three members from each local chapter that is selected for finals from the written reports will then give a ten-minute presentation describing the partnership. Five minutes are allowed for set-up and then ten minutes for the presentation with a five-point deduction for any time over ten minutes. Visual aids and samples relating to the partnership may be used in the presentation but no items may be left with the judges.

Riclyn Resco, Kansas

Tip: *It is a good idea to start early in the year on this project in order to create a successful partnership. I recommend using a local business(s) that is easy to meet with frequently. Create projects involving the entire chapter and the business and make sure to refer back to the national guidelines especially when writing your report to make sure you have covered everything on the rubric.*

-Riclyn Resco, KS

STATE CHAPTER ANNUAL BUSINESS REPORT

The State Annual Business Report should summarize all of the activities of the State Chapter. This time begins from the start of the previous State Leadership Conference and ends at the start of the current State Leadership Conference. Preparing

FBLA reports for competition requires much effort and many hours of work. In the end you feel great joy, for you have just completed a work of art.

Jennifer Wellnitz, Kansas

Tips: *Closely follow rules in the Chapter Management Handbook and current state handbook.*

Read and re-read rules many times before and during the writing of the report.

Use the brightest white paper you can find.

Use a medal spiral binding that you can have put on by an office supplies store.

Be creative in images, use of language, fonts, and colors.

The cover should be printed on white cardstock with colorful text and graphics.

Print with a good printer (laser-jet preferably).

When you are finished have it proofread by someone who is very good at English grammar (many times).

Read and re-read before you hand it in to judge.

Be sure to have page numbers on each page.

Have a table of contents.

Be sure not to make the pages in the report too busy.

Avoid contractions.

Adding quality pictures and examples that support a section of the report really helps the reader in simply understanding and enjoying the content of the report. For example, if you talk about running a meeting, put a picture of your state officers conducting the meeting. Also, start early in collecting and keeping notes or articles of different activities and events your chapter participates in. This will help you to have accurate and filling information in your report.

-Riclyn Resco, KS

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