

2023-24 Competitive Events Guidelines

Foundations of Communication

Foundations of Communication provides members with the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge around introductory competencies in business communication. This competitive event consists of an objective test.

Event Overview

Division: Collegiate

Event Type: Individual

Event Category: Objective Test, 100-multiple choice questions (breakdown of question by competencies below)

Objective Test Time: 50 minutes

NACE Connections: Career & Self-Development

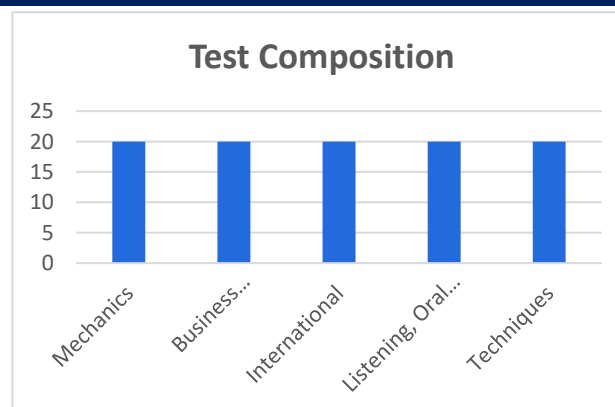
Equipment Competitor Must Provide: Pencil, Computer

Equipment FBLA Provides: One piece of scratch paper per competitor

Only for members who have had no more than six credit hours on a semester schedule, or the equivalent of quarter hours, of communication instruction at the collegiate level by May 1 of the current year.

Competencies

- Mechanics of Appropriate Business English
- Format and Appropriateness of Business Messages
- Format and Style Differences with International Communications
- Listening, Oral, and Nonverbal Concepts
- Communication Techniques



State

Check with your State Leader for state-specific competition information.

National

Policy and Procedures Manual

- Competitors should be familiar with the Competitive Events Policy & Procedures Manual, found on the Competitive Events page on www.fbla.org.

Eligibility

- FBLA membership dues are paid by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on April 15th of the current program year.
- Members must be registered for the NLC and pay the national conference registration fee in order to participate in competitive events.
- Members must stay in an official FBLA hotel to be eligible to compete.
- Each state may submit four entries per event.
- Each member can compete in up to two individual/team events and one chapter event (Community Service Project or State of Chapter Presentation).

2023-24 Competitive Events Guidelines



Foundations of Communication

- If competitors are late for an objective test, they will be allowed to compete until such time that results are finalized, or the accommodation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event. Competitive event schedules cannot be changed. Competitive events start in the morning before the Opening Session of the NLC.
- Picture identification (physical or digital driver's license, passport, state-issued identification, or school-issued identification) is required when checking in for competitive events.

Recognition

- The number of competitors will determine the number of winners. The maximum number of winners for each competitive event is 10.

Event Administration

- This event is an objective test administered online at the NLC.
- No reference or study materials may be brought to the testing site.
- No calculators may be brought into the testing site; online calculators will be provided through the testing software.

Tie Breaker

- Ties are broken by comparing the correct number of answers to 10 pre-determined questions on the test. If a tie remains, answers to 20 pre-determined questions on the test will be reviewed to determine the winner. If a tie remains, the competitor who completed the test in a shorter amount of time will place higher.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- FBLA meets the criteria specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act for all competitors with accommodations submitted through the conference registration system by the registration deadline.

Penalty Points

- Competitors may be disqualified if they violate the Competitive Event Guidelines or the Honor Code.
- Five points are deducted if competitors do not follow the Dress Code or are late to the testing site.

Electronic Devices

- All electronic devices such as cell phones and smart watches must be turned off before competition begins.

Study Guide: Competencies and Tasks

- A. Mechanics of Appropriate Business English
 1. Describe and identify the eight parts of speech in context sentences.
 2. Use a verb that correctly agrees with the subject of a sentence.
 3. Describe the types of verbs and demonstrate the six tenses.
 4. Use irregular verbs and their different forms properly and distinguish transitive and intransitive verbs.
 5. Identify subjects, predicates, verbs, adverbs, pronouns, direct and indirect objects, and prepositional and infinitive phrases in sentences.

2023-24 Competitive Events Guidelines

Foundations of Communication



6. Recognize and correct problems in grammar and usage including, but not limited to, completeness, agreement, fragments, run on sentences, dangling modifiers, reference, and form.
 7. Describe and write the four kinds of sentences – declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory.
 8. Write clear, descriptive sentences in a variety of sentence patterns (e.g., simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex).
 9. Write logical, coherent phrases, sentences, and paragraphs incorporating correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
 10. Apply techniques for adapting the message to the audience and for developing effective sentences and unified and coherent paragraphs.
 11. Determine appropriate use of all punctuation marks including periods, question marks, exclamation points, commas, colons, semi-colons, quotation marks, and apostrophes.
 12. Define the grammatical rules that govern the use of special punctuation marks such as the dash, hyphen, and parentheses.
 13. Identify how to capitalize sentences, proper nouns, abbreviations, adjectives, and titles correctly.
 14. Proofread documents and identify spelling, grammatical, and punctuation errors.
 15. Proofread and edit business documents to ensure they are clear, correct, concise, complete, consistency, and courteous including effective word choices and sentence structure.
 16. Revise and proofread a message for organization, content, style, mechanics, format, and layout.
 17. Recognize how word selection and usage affects communication including slang, jargon, and cliches.
 18. Illustrate the proper way to divide words.
 19. Illustrate the ability to use a dictionary and thesaurus as an aide to spelling, pronunciation, and meaning.
 20. Apply spelling rules such as i before e, words ending in y, and homonyms and commonly confusing words such as effect and affect.
 21. Use bias-free language (e.g., gender, race, religion, physical challenges, and sexual orientation).
 22. Discuss the importance of proper spelling and grammar in all types of written communication.
- B. Format and Appropriateness of Business Messages
1. Identify the five Cs of communication.
 2. Discuss the role of letters, memos, and reports in business.
 3. Manage telephone communications and use appropriate techniques to gather and record information.
 4. Discuss communication techniques as they apply to internal and external customers.
 5. Use an appropriate format and business writing style and apply conventions to Standard English.
 6. Describe and demonstrate the stages of the writing process to include planning, writing, editing, proofreading, and revising.
 7. Write and design a document (e.g., memo, letter, and report) using the correct style, format, and content (e.g., letter, memorandum, report, and e-mail) that is appropriate for the type of correspondence (e.g., persuasive, positive, and negative).

2023-24 Competitive Events Guidelines

Foundations of Communication



8. Construct technical information in a clear, concise, and objective manner for a specific audience, purpose, and method when communicating in writing.
 9. Develop and maintain professional writing skills that will reflect a clear understanding of the customer's status with a detailed yet concise summarization of facts, comments, and notations.
 10. Determine the type, content, and formatting of a document to write a given situation using appropriate style, tone, and grammar.
 11. Produce letters, memos, e-mails, and reports that address specific tasks.
 12. Conduct research using the five basic steps: planning the search, locating sources of information, organizing the information, evaluating the sources, and using the information to prepare a short report on a business topic.
 13. Create and maintain a level of analytical skill to allow for effective research and data gathering leading to an effective decision.
 14. Identify and utilize traditional and electronic research sources such as encyclopedias, reference manuals, periodicals, internet, etc.
 15. Document all sources (e.g., print and electronic) using current standards.
 16. Comprehend copyright laws and their applications to text, visual art, design, music, and photography.
 17. Use scanning hardware and layout, design, and graphics software to enhance documents.
 18. Compose and evaluate common types of business reports including informational reports, news releases, proposals, and policy statements.
 19. Write an effective formal report using assigned format and acceptable writing style.
 20. Prepare presentation documents to include publicity, agendas, handouts, follow-up report, etc.
 21. Demonstrate and select the appropriate use of electronic messaging technologies (e.g., voice mail, conference calls, video conferencing, social media and e-mail).
 22. Manage e-mail to include composing and sending e-mail, retrieving, reading and printing a message, and sending an attachment by e-mail.
 23. Examine proper use of e-mail and other appropriate internet/intranet communication capabilities, including business related terminology and language.
 24. Discuss how e-mail can accentuate or detract from the professional image one is trying to protect.
 25. Discuss inappropriate use of e-mail at work.
 26. Apply the etiquette rules for electronic messaging (e.g., e-mail, cell phone, voice mail).
 27. Discuss ways to keep data secure from theft and destruction.
- C. Format and Style Differences with International Communications
1. Describe and analyze problems and barriers with differences in languages and customs on business operations.
 2. Identify resources (internet, etc.) for learning about cultural taboos and practices as they relate to international communication.
 3. Describe and analyze the impact of cultural diversity on the communication process.
 4. Demonstrate understanding of the rudiments of intercultural communication.
 5. List examples of how nonverbal messages have different meanings in various cultures.
 6. Explain the role of communication in international relations.
 7. Identify international illustrations of social media trends and patterns.
- D. Listening, Oral, and Nonverbal Concepts

2023-24 Competitive Events Guidelines



Foundations of Communication

1. Demonstrate effective active listening techniques and identify major barriers to listening.
 2. Develop critical reading and listening skills to allow for rapid assimilation of facts and accurate recording of all essential details.
 3. Identify and interpret the major types of verbal and nonverbal communication.
 4. Discuss various methods of presentation delivery including oral, written, multimedia, videoconferencing and interactive.
 5. Design effective presentations to include multimedia components of presentation software packages.
 6. Identify and evaluate different types of presentations to include information, persuasive, and debate.
 7. Plan and make an oral presentation using proper techniques and basic speaking skills.
 8. Express opinions and discuss issues positively and tactfully.
 9. Describe and use effective interpersonal communication in one-on-one and small-group situations.
- E. Communication Techniques
1. Define communication (formal and informal) and discuss its implication for effective management.
 2. Describe the communication process.
 3. Examine communication barriers and ways to eliminate them.
 4. Define active listening and review the keys to effective listening.
 5. Describe the role of computer networks, videoconferences, and telecommuting as organizational communication.
 6. Discuss the communication skills and leadership styles required in a contemporary organization and analyze how they will be required within worker groups.
 7. Use correct grammar, punctuation, terminology and communication skills to produce and edit clearly written traditional and electronic documents.
 8. Prepare a meeting plan/agenda and demonstrate a productive meeting.
 9. Prepare and deliver a presentation to achieve greatest impact.
 10. Demonstrate effective communication techniques and skills in working with individuals, groups, and super visors (e.g., verbal and nonverbal).