

- Business Services Operations Research Event
- Buying and Merchandising Operations Research Event
- Finance Operations Research Event
- Hospitality and Tourism Operations Research Event
- Sports and Entertainment Marketing Operations Research Event



The **Business Operations Research Events** provide opportunities for participants to demonstrate knowledge and skills needed by management personnel.

The guidelines for each of the Business Operations Research Events are consolidated to facilitate coordination of participant activities in each of the career categories. This means the guidelines will be exactly the same for each career category. However, each career category will be treated separately as a competitive event.

DEFINITIONS

The following definitions are used to determine the activities or careers that are included in each of the Business Operations Research Events. These career categories are connected to career clusters.

- **Business Services** includes human resources, information technology and personal and contracted services businesses.
- **Buying and Merchandising** includes retail and wholesale businesses that provide consumer goods.
- **Finance** includes banks, credit unions, accounting, investments and other financial businesses.
- **Hospitality and Tourism** includes hotels, restaurants and tourism-related businesses.
- **Sports and Entertainment Marketing** includes businesses that conduct sporting and/or entertainment events.

EVENT OVERVIEW



- The Business Operations Research Events consist of two major parts: the **written document** and the **oral presentation** by the participants. The written document will account for 60 points and the oral presentation will account for the remaining 40 of the total 100 points.
- Each Business Operations Research entry will be composed of **one to three members** of the DECA chapter. All participants must present the project to the judges. All participants present must respond to questions.
- The body of the written entry must be limited to **30 numbered pages**, including the appendix (if an appendix is attached), but excluding the title page and the table of contents.
- The **Written Event Statement of Assurances** must be signed and submitted with the entry. Do not include it in the page numbering.
- The participants may bring all visual aids to the event briefing. Only approved visual aids may be used during the presentation.
- The oral presentation may be a maximum **15 minutes** in length. The first 10 minutes will include an explanation and description of the project followed by 5 minutes for the judge's questions.
- For the presentation, the participants are to assume the role of hired consultants in a single-unit or independent operation. The judge will assume the role of the owner/ manager of the business/organization and will evaluate the presentation, focusing on the effectiveness of public speaking and presentation skills and how well the participants respond to questions that the judge may ask during the 5 minutes following the presentation.

KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DEVELOPED

Participants will demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to address the components of the project as described in the content outline and evaluation forms.

(Continued on next page)

Participants will also develop many 21st century skills, in the following categories, desired by today's employers:

- Communication and Collaboration
- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Information Literacy
- Leadership and Responsibility
- Productivity and Accountability
- Creativity and Innovation
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Initiative and Self-direction
- Media Literacy
- Social and Cross-cultural Skills

A crosswalk is available at www.deca.org that shows which 21st century skills are developed by participating in each competitive event.

Many Common Core Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts & Literacy are supported by participation in DECA's competitive events. Crosswalks are available at www.deca.org that show which common core standards are supported by participating in each competitive event.



2015 TOPIC

The 2015 topic for each career category is the development of a plan to better serve a generational group. Working with an existing business/organization of their choice, participants will research the business and its current relations with various generational demographic groups. Students will then develop a plan to better reach one underserved generational group through a revised marketing mix or human resources strategy. Plans may include, but are not limited to, marketing mix revisions, customer service plans, employee training programs, workplace initiatives, or any combination of these elements. The goal of the strategies should be to better serve customers and/or strengthen the workplace environment for members of a specific generation.

Dates are approximate and vary slightly from one demographer to the next, but people born during the dates below can be categorized as:

- 2001-Present | New Silent Generation or Generation Z
- 1980-2000 | Millennials or Generation Y
- 1965-1979 | Generation X
- 1946-1964 | Baby Boomers
- 1925-1945 | Silent Generation
- 1900-1924 | G.I. Generation



OBJECTIVES

The business operations research events involve the preparation of a detailed plan based on the results of the research study. The participants must

- select an actual local business operation
- design a research study
- conduct a research study
- analyze the results of the research study
- prepare a detailed plan to better serve customers and/or strengthen the workplace environment for a generational group
- prepare a proposed budget
- present in a role-play situation
 - the design of the research study
 - the findings and conclusions of the research study
 - strategies to better serve customers and/or strengthen the workplace environment for a generational group
 - a proposed budget to enact the suggested strategies



FORMAT GUIDELINES FOR THE WRITTEN ENTRY

Your written entry must follow these specifications. Refer also to the Written Entry Checklist and the Written Entry Evaluation Form. A Written Event Statement of Assurances must be signed and submitted with the entry. Do not include it in the page numbering.

Title page. The first page of the written entry is the title page. It must include in any order, but is not limited to, the following:

NAME OF THE EVENT (one of the following):

- BUSINESS SERVICES OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENT
- BUYING AND MERCHANDISING OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENT
- FINANCE OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENT
- HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENT
- SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT MARKETING OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENT

Name of DECA chapter

Name of high school

School address

City, State/Province, ZIP/Postal Code

Names of participants

Date

Title page will *not* be numbered.

Table of contents. The table of contents should follow the title page. All activities or original research described in this entry must take place between the immediate past International Career Development Conference and the upcoming Chartered Association Career Development Conference. The table of contents may be single-spaced and may be one or more pages long. The table of contents page(s) will not be numbered.

Body of the written entry. The body of the written entry begins with Section I, Executive Summary, and continues in the sequence outlined here. The first page of the body is numbered 1 and all following pages are numbered in sequence. Page numbers continue through the bibliography (required) and the appendix (optional).

Follow this outline when you write your entry. Points for each section are included on the Written Entry Evaluation Form. Each section must be titled, including the bibliography and the appendix.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

One-page description of the project

II. INTRODUCTION

- A. Description of the business or organization
- B. Description of the community (economic, geographic, demographic and socioeconomic factors)
- C. Overview of the business or organization's current target market

III. RESEARCH METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

- A. Description and rationale of research methodologies selected to conduct the research study
- B. Process used to conduct the selected research methods

IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

- A. Findings of the research study
- B. Conclusions based on the findings

V. PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN

- A. Objectives and rationale of the proposed plan
- B. Proposed activities and timelines
- C. Proposed metrics or key performance indicators to measure plan effectiveness

VI. PROPOSED BUDGET

Costs associated with proposed strategies

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

VIII. APPENDIX

An appendix is optional. If additional material is appended, all pages must be numbered as noted previously. Include in an appendix any exhibits appropriate to the written entry, but not important enough to include in the body. These might include sample questionnaires used, letters sent and received, general background data, minutes of meetings, etc.



CHECKLIST STANDARDS

In addition to following the outline provided, when preparing your written entry you must observe all of the following rules. The purpose of these rules is to make competition as fair as possible among the participant teams. Refer to the Written Entry Checklist on page 54 for a complete list of standards.

(Continued on next page)



PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

- Prior to the presentation, the judge will evaluate the written portion of the entry. The major emphasis of the written entry is on the content. Drawings, illustrations and graphic presentations (where allowed) will be judged for clarity, not artistic value.
- The participants have assumed the roles of management trainees in a single-unit or independent operation. The judge is to assume the role of the business's/organization's owner/manager.
- The participants will present the plan to the judge in a 15-minute presentation worth 40 points. (See Presentation Judging.)
- The presentation begins immediately after the introduction of the participants to the judge by the adult assistant. Each participant must take part in the presentation.
- The participants will spend not more than 10 minutes, at the beginning of the presentation, describing the strategies and the plan. Each participant may bring a copy of the written entry or note cards pertaining to the written entry and use as reference during the presentation.
- The judge will spend the remaining 5 minutes questioning the participants. (See the Presentation Evaluation Form.) Each participant must respond to at least one question posed by the judge.
- The participants may use the following items during the oral presentation:
 - not more than three (3) standard-sized posters not to exceed 22¹/₂ inches by 30¹/₂ inches each. Participants may use both sides of the posters, but all attachments must fit within the poster dimensions.
 - one (1) standard-sized presentation display board not to exceed 36¹/₂ inches by 48¹/₂ inches.
 - one (1) desktop flip chart presentation easel 12 inches by 10 inches (dimensions of the page).
 - one (1) personal laptop computer.
 - cell phones/smartphones, iPods/MP3 players, iPads/tablets or any type of a hand-held, information sharing device will be allowed in written events *if* applicable to the presentation.
 - sound, as long as the volume is kept at a conversational level.
- Only visual aids that can be easily carried to the presentation by the actual participants will be permitted, and the participants themselves must set up the visuals. No set-up time will be allowed. Participants must furnish their own materials and equipment. No electrical power or Internet connection will be supplied.
- Materials appropriate to the situation may be handed to or left with judges in all competitive events. Items of monetary value may be handed to but may not be left with judges. Items such as flyers, brochures, pamphlets and business cards may be handed to or left with the judge. No food or drinks allowed.
- If any of these rules are violated, the adult assistant must be notified by the judge.



PRESENTATION JUDGING

Participants will make a 15-minute presentation to you. Remember, you are taking on the role of the owner/ manager of the business/organization. You may refer to the written entry, or to notes, during the presentation.

During the first 10 minutes of the presentation (after introductions), the participants will explain the plan. Allow the participants to complete this portion without interruption, unless you are asked to respond. Each participant must take part in the presentation.

During the final 5 minutes, you may question the participants. The first four questions must be based on the Presentation Evaluation Form. At least one question must be addressed to each participant. To ensure fairness, you must ask each participant or group of participants the same four questions:

1. one question on the participants' research methods
2. one question on the details of the participants' findings and conclusions
3. one question on the participants' proposed plan
4. one question on the proposed budget

These questions should be prepared following the written entry evaluation, but before the presentation begins.

After asking the four required questions, you may ask additional questions that seem appropriate, based on your notes or on the written entry itself (to which you may refer during the presentation).

At the conclusion of the presentation, thank the participant(s). Then complete the Presentation Evaluation Form, making sure to record a score for all categories. Maximum score for the presentation is 40 points.

**BUSINESS SERVICES
OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
**BUYING AND MERCHANDISING
OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
FINANCE OPERATIONS RESEARCH
**HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM
OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
**SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT
MARKETING OPERATIONS RESEARCH**

Participant: _____

Participant: _____

Participant: _____

I.D. Number: _____

WRITTEN ENTRY EVALUATION FORM

Please refer to *Format Guidelines for the Written Entry* for a more detailed explanation of these items.

		Little/No Value	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Judged Score
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY						
1.	One-page description of the project	0-1	2	3-4	5	
INTRODUCTION						
2.	Description of the business or organization	0	1	2	3	
3.	Description of the community (economic, geographic, demographic and socioeconomic factors)	0	1	2	3	
4.	Overview of the business or organization's current target market	0	1	2	3	
RESEARCH METHODS USED IN THE STUDY						
5.	Description and rationale of research methodologies selected to conduct the research study	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
6.	Process used to conduct the selected research methods	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY						
7.	Findings of the research study	0-1	2	3	4	
8.	Conclusions based on the findings	0-1	2	3	4	
PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN						
9.	Objectives and rationale of the proposed strategic plan	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
10.	Proposed activities and timelines	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
11.	Proposed metrics or key performance indicators to measure plan effectiveness	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
PROPOSED BUDGET						
12.	Costs associated with proposed strategies	0-1	2	3	4	
APPEARANCE AND WORD USAGE						
13.	Professional layout, neatness, proper grammar, spelling and word usage	0-1	2	3	4	
Written Entry Total Points (maximum 60 points):						

Judge: A B C D E F G H I J (circle one)

BUSINESS OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENTS



- BUSINESS SERVICES
OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
- BUYING AND MERCHANDISING
OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
- FINANCE OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
- HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM
OPERATIONS RESEARCH**
- SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT
MARKETING OPERATIONS RESEARCH**

Participant: _____

Participant: _____

Participant: _____

I.D. Number: _____

ORAL PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

		Little/No Value	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Judged Score
1.	Opening presentation; description of the plan; organization, clarity and effectiveness of the presentation	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8	9-10	
2.	Question on the research methods	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
3.	Question on the details of the findings and conclusions	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
4.	Question on the proposed plan	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
5.	Question on the proposed budget	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
6.	Professional standards (appearance, poise, confidence), presentation technique, effective use of visuals and participation of all	0-1	2-3	4-5	6	
Presentation Total Points (maximum 40 points):						
RECAP: WRITTEN ENTRY (60):						
PRESENTATION (40):						
SUBTOTAL (100):						
LESS PENALTY POINTS:						
TOTAL SCORE:						

Judge: A B C D E F G H I J (circle one)



WRITTEN EVENT STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, 2015

Research and report writing are important elements of modern business activities. Great care must be taken to assure that the highest ethical standards are maintained by those engaging in research and report writing. To reinforce the importance of these standards, all written entries in DECA's Competitive Events Program **must** submit this statement as part of the entry. The statement **must** be signed by the DECA member(s) and the chapter advisor.

I understand the following requirements are set forth by DECA Inc. for all Competitive Event entries containing a written component. These requirements are additional to the general rules and regulations published by DECA Inc. By signing this statement, I certify that all are true and accurate as they relate to this entry.

1. The contents of this entry are the results of my work or, in the case of a team project, the work of current members of this DECA chapter.
2. No part of this entry has previously been entered in competition.
3. This entry has not been submitted in another DECA competitive event.
4. Credit for all secondary research has been given to the original author through the project's bibliography, footnotes or endnotes.
5. All activities or original research procedures described in this entry are accurate depictions of my efforts or, in the case of team projects, the efforts of my team.
6. All activities or original research described in this entry took place during this school year or the timeline specified in the Event Guidelines.
7. I understand that DECA has the right to publish all or part of this entry. Should DECA elect to publish the entire entry, I will receive an honorarium from DECA. Chapters or individuals with extenuating circumstances may appeal the right to publish the entry to the executive committee of the board of directors prior to submission of the project for competition.

This statement of assurances must be signed by all participants and the chapter advisor, and submitted with the entry, or the entry will be given 15 penalty points.

Participant's Signature *Participant's Signature*

Participant's Signature

Print/Type Participant Name(s)

<i>Competitive Event Name</i>	<i>School</i>	<i>Chartered Association (State/Province)</i>
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To the best of my knowledge, I verify that the above statements are true and that the student's (students') work does not constitute plagiarism.

Chapter Advisor's Name

Chapter Advisor's Signature

Chapter Advisor's Email

Hole punch and place in front of the written entry. Do not count as a page.

PROJECT ORIGINALITY

In many written events, chapters have settled on a strategy that uses the same well-developed projects year after year. Succeeding chapter teams often take the previous year's successful project and seek to improve it. If that strategy works in achieving a chapter's goals and the experience teaches the principles of DECA, the strategy serves the chapter, the community and DECA well.

Chapters submitting entries for chapter team events, however, should be challenged to do more than update the previous year's written project. Project committees should avoid even reviewing the previous year's entry. Judges (whose assignment is to evaluate a project according to established guidelines) will be impressed by the originality of a chapter's project.

Plagiarism of projects judged previously will automatically disqualify a chapter from competition and eligibility for awards.



WRITTEN ENTRY CHECKLIST, 2015

Event: _____ Participant: _____

Participant: _____

Participant: _____

I.D. Number: _____

Please refer to *Format Guidelines for the Written Entry* for a more detailed explanation of these items.

	Checked	Penalty Points Assessed	Page No.
1. The Written Event Statement of Assurances must be signed and submitted with the entry.	_____	15	_____
2. Entries submitted in an official DECA written event folio. Folios are available from DECA Images (FOLIO). No markings, tape or other material should be attached to the folio. One photocopy or the original typed document must be submitted. Participants may keep a copy for use in the presentation.	_____	5	_____
3. Sheet protectors may not be used.	_____	5	_____
4. Limited to the number of pages specified in the guidelines (plus the title page and the table of contents).	_____	5 (per page)	_____
5. All pages are numbered in sequence starting with the executive summary and ending with the final page of the appendix. Do not use separate sheets between sections or as title pages for sections.	_____	5	_____
6. Major content must be at least double-spaced (not space-and-a-half). Title page, table of contents, executive summary, bibliography, appendix, footnotes, long quotes (more than three typed lines), material in tables, figures, exhibits, lists, headings, sample letters, forms, etc., may be single-spaced.	_____	5	_____
7. Entry must be typed/word processed. Handwritten corrections will be penalized. Charts and graphs may be handwritten.	_____	5	_____
8. Paper is 8 ¹ / ₂ inches x 11 inches. No fold-outs, attachments or tabs used.	_____	5	_____
9. The written entry follows the format guidelines. Additional subsections are permitted in the body of the written entry.	_____	5	_____

Total Penalty Points Assessed _____

*A check indicates that the item has been examined.
 A circled number indicates that an infraction has been noted.
 A page number indicates the location of the infraction.*