

Business Operations Research Events, 2012

Business Services Operations Research Event

Sponsored by PostNet

Buying and Merchandising Operations Research Event

Sponsored by The TJX Companies, Inc.

Finance Operations Research Event

Hospitality and Tourism Operations Research Event

Sports and Entertainment Marketing Operations Research Event

Purpose

The Business Operations Research Events provide an opportunity for participants to demonstrate skills needed by management personnel.

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

Definitions

The following definitions are used to determine the activities or occupations that are included in each of the Business Operations Research Events. These occupational areas 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.

Procedure

- 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 management trainees in a single-unit or independent operation. The judge 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.

Skills Assessed

The participants will demonstrate skills needed to address the components of the project as described in the content outline and evaluation forms as well as learn/understand the importance of

- communications skills—the ability to exchange information and ideas with others through writing, speaking, reading or listening
- analytical skills—the ability to derive facts from data, findings from facts, conclusions from findings and recommendations from conclusions
- critical thinking/problem-solving skills
- production skills—the ability to take a concept from an idea and make it real
- teamwork—the ability to be an effective member of a productive group
- priorities/time management—the ability to determine priorities and manage time commitments and deadlines
- identification of competitive conditions within market areas

2012 Topic

The 2012 topic for each occupational category is the development of a plan to enhance or introduce a customer loyalty program to an existing business or organization. Using an existing business of their choice, participants will research the current and potential use of customer loyalty programs and their effectiveness. Participants will develop a strategic plan to enhance or introduce customer loyalty programs and services into the current operations with the goals of building customer profiles, tracking sales, tracking visits, retaining current customers, improving customer service and expanding the current customer base.

Objectives

The business operations research events provide an opportunity for the participants to

- identify the business’s current usage of customer loyalty programs (if applicable)
- design a research study to determine the appropriate uses of customer loyalty programs
- conduct the research (in depth interviews, focus groups, customer surveys, etc.)
- based on the results of the research, develop a strategic plan to enhance or introduce a customer loyalty program and/or additional customer services
- present the research findings and proposed strategic plan in a role-play situation to the business’s owner/manager

The business operations research events involve the preparation of a strategic plan to enhance or introduce a customer loyalty program to an existing business. The participants must

- select an actual local business operation or organization
- design a research study
- conduct a research study
- analyze the results of the research study
- prepare a strategic plan to enhance an existing customer loyalty program or introduce a new customer loyalty program into current operations
- prepare a proposed budget
- develop metrics to measure return on investment (ROI), sales, customer retention, customer satisfaction, etc.
- present in a role-playing situation
 - the design of the research study
 - the findings and conclusions of the research study

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- the strategic plan for enhancing or introducing a customer loyalty program and/or additional customer services into current operations

Format Guidelines for the Written Entry

The written entry must follow these specifications. Refer also to the Competitive Event 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 State 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 plan
- II. INTRODUCTION
 - A. Description of the business or organization
 - B. Description of the community (economic, geographic, demographic and socioeconomic factors)
 - C. Description of the business's target market
- III. RESEARCH METHODS USED IN THE STUDY
 - A. Description and rationale of research methodologies selected to conduct the research study
 - B. Process of conducting the selected research method(s)
- IV. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY
 - A. Findings of the research study
 - B. Conclusions based on the findings

- V. PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN (Including application of marketing concepts and technology usage)
- Goals/objectives and rationale (short- and long-term benefits to the business of enhancing or introducing a customer loyalty program into current operations)
 - Proposed activities and timelines
 - Proposed budget (identify costs associated with potential strategies)
 - Proposed metrics to measure return on investment (ROI), sales, customer retention, customer satisfaction, etc.
- VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY
- VII. APPENDIX
- An appendix is optional. 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 above, 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 participants. Refer to the Written Entry Checklist.

- The Written Event Statement of Assurances must be signed and submitted with the entry or the entry will receive 15 penalty points.
- The entry must be 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.
- Sheet protectors may not be used.
- 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 page.
- The pages must be 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.
- Major content of the written entry must be at least double-spaced (not space-and-a-half). The 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.
- Entry must be typed/word processed. Handwritten corrections will be penalized. Charts and graphs may be handwritten. (Judges will be instructed to ignore attempts to achieve a competitive advantage due to the quality of word processing equipment available.)
- All material must be shown on 8¹/₂-inch x 11-inch paper. Pages may not fold out to a larger size. No extraneous information may be attached to the pages and tabs may not be used.
- The body of the written entry must follow the sequence outlined. Additional subsections are permitted.

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 owner/manager.
- The participants will present the plan to the judge in a 15-minute presentation worth 40 points. (See Presentation Judging.)

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- 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.
 - one (1) hand-held digital organizer.
 - 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 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. 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 three 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 three 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

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

After asking the three 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**
Written Entry 2012
Written Entry Evaluation Form

Participant(s): _____

I.D. Number: _____

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

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Little/No Value	Judged Score
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY					
1. One-page description of the project	4	3	2	1-0	_____
INTRODUCTION					
2. Description of the business or organization	4	3	2	1-0	_____
3. Description of the community (economic, geographic, demographic and socioeconomic factors)	4	3	2	1-0	_____
4. Description of business’s target market	4	3	2	1-0	_____
RESEARCH METHODS USED IN THE STUDY					
5. Description and rationale of research methodologies selected to conduct the research study	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
6. Process of conducting the selected research method(s)	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
FINDINGS AND AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY					
7. Findings of the research study.....	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
8. Conclusions based on the findings	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN					
9. Goals/objectives and rationale (short- and long-term benefits to the business of enhancing or introducing a customer loyalty program into current operations	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
10. Proposed activities and timelines	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
11. Proposed budget (identify costs associated with potential strategies)	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
12. Proposed metrics to measure return on investment (ROI), sales, customer retention, customer satisfaction, etc.....	5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
APPEARANCE AND WORD USAGE					
13. Professional layout, neatness, proper grammar, spelling and word usage	4	3	2	1-0	_____

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(s): _____

I.D. Number: _____

Oral Presentation Evaluation Form

	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Below Expectations	Little/No Value	Judged Score
1. Opening presentation: description of the plan; organization, clarity and effectiveness of the presentation	12-11	10-8	7-4	3-0	_____
2. Question on the research methods	6-5	4	3-2	1-0	_____
3. Question on the rationale for the details of the findings and conclusions of the study	8-7	6-5	4-2	1-0	_____
4. Question on the proposed plan	8-7	6-5	4-2	1-0	_____
5. Professional standards (appearance, poise, confidence), presentation technique, effective use of visuals and participation of all.....	6-5	4	3-2	1-0	_____

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*)