

Advisor

November 2007
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In this chapter packet

Several great wall posters to decorate your classroom and promote DECA are contained in this chapter packet. They come from two of DECA's committed corporate supporters.

> South-Western/Cengage is one of the leading textbook companies in marketing and related areas. South-Western sponsors the Hospitality and Recreation Marketing Research Event. **Your members who are interested in hospitality and recreation marketing can send them a note of thanks.**

*Eve Lewis, Executive Editor
South-Western/Cengage
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> The poster from Finish Line adds a dynamic, active image to your classroom walls. Finish Line has developed an equally active program of support for both DECA and ΔEX chapters. Their National Advisory Board representative also serves as the chair of the NAB. The company offers members scholarships and also supports Delta Epsilon Chi's Collegiate Leadership Academies. Finish Line is truly a positive force for DECA. **Please express your appreciation for their efforts by sending a message to:**

*Michael Marchetti
Executive V.P., Store Operations
Finish Line
mmarchetti@finishline.com*

Student scholarship booklets are in the mail

DECA's scholarship program for student members is one of its most exciting efforts. Please lead your members through the information in the booklet and encourage them to apply.

The McKelvey Foundation brings more entrepreneurship opportunities to the NAB

The McKelvey Foundation, a new addition to the National Advisory Board, awards \$40,000 in scholarships to high school seniors from across the country who own and operate their own business while in high school. They provide both (1) money for scholars to attend college and also (2) networking resources for them to grow their entrepreneurial spirit.

Scholars qualify by owning their business for at least one year, having at least one employee and earning sales revenue (unless they are a non-profit organization). The Foundation hosts a summer program called e-Venture that brings the scholars together to network, form business partnerships and make friends.

The Foundation currently has 61 entrepreneurial scholars and will be accepting 100 more in 2008. For more information, contact Christine McKelvey at christine@mckelveyfoundation.org.

**Encourage your computer buffs to submit a viral advertising campaign for the *Sunkist Challenge*.
Fall Round entry request due
Dec. 3, 2007**

**Submission deadline
Dec. 5, 2007**

**See
www.deca.org/pdf/SKC2008.pdf
and
www.deca.org/sunkistopen.html.**

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New DECA advisor? We can help

If you have not been receiving our new advisor email information, but wish to be included, please send your email address and any questions you have to dawn_jones@deca.org.

Teaching Guide

For DECA dimensions

Join the Hunt: A new activity for teaching through *Dimensions*.

This month we are taking a clue from the newspaper business for getting our readership involved with our publication.

On the Web site, you will find a scavenger hunt for the magazine. You can award points to your members for finding the facts that the hunt leads them toward. Give small prizes or use this activity to add points to your already established DECA point system.

Go to the Advisor page on the Web site to download a pdf of directions that you can reproduce and hand out.
www.deca.org/advweb.html

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The November/December issue of *DECA Dimensions* targets many aspects of finance plus food for thought about workplace skills.

The article “**The World of Work: Productivity in the Workplace**” can raise interesting questions for your students. The article talks about workplace productivity in the context of the different generations. Spend some time with your students discussing the way our society views their generation, Gen Y. This is important because when they enter the workplace they will be interacting with the other age groups and may find resistance to their accustomed style.

Ask your students to do some Internet research to find out what the different generational descriptions mean. [Gen Y was born between 1978 and 1994, Gen X between 1965 and 1977, Baby Boomers between 1946 and 1964, and the Matures or Veterans were born before 1946.] Students will enjoy this research because it is about them. Use the chart in the article to inform a discussion. A school counselor might enjoy coming to your class to help students wrestle with these concepts. At its worst, Gen Y is perceived as wanting rewards without work. In a positive vein, they are regarded as family oriented, team oriented, tolerant and flexible.

Next introduce the concept of **productivity** in the workplace. The article portrays the high level of productivity in the American economy as the result of people working longer hours. This conflicts with the general description of Gen Y. Does this mean productivity will drop as the Matures and Baby Boomers retire?

Activity: Have students conduct a mini-debate on whether they think their generation is portrayed fairly and whether they think they will be productive workers. How should they relate to their Gen X and Baby Boomer fellow workers?

Another article on workplace preparedness is “**Many Young People Lack Critical Work Force Skills.**” (This article complements the articles on soft skills on pages 4 and 7 of this newsletter.) As a DECA advisor, you are developing both academic knowledge about marketing/business and the bridging abilities that will help your members succeed in their careers. These capacities range from the cognitive skills of analysis and problem solving to communica-

tion and social skills. Have your students read the article to create a list of workplace skills and then discuss how they can acquire those abilities. How do their DECA activities prepare them for work? The article states that foreign language skills are increasingly important for a career in business. How do your members feel about that?

Activity: Ask some of your business partners to talk with your students about what traits they look for in employees.

The article “**Your Career, Your Future**” describes a career exploration event staged by a DECA chapter. Not only does the article suggest a valuable project for chapters, it also provides the anatomy of running such an event. The article contains a detailed list of the most important activities the chapter undertook to run the occasion smoothly. The story of Lewiston H.S.’s planning provides a great example of effective, thorough event management. Your chapter officers, especially, will benefit from seeing how such a worthwhile session can be organized.

Your members will learn a little about financial literacy as they follow the approach of three Ontario students who helped a bank market a credit card to college students. “**Bank On It**” shows how these members used primary (focus group) and secondary (in this case company sources) research to develop a promotional plan for the bank. They then put together a plan to determine customers who were at risk of losing their credit. The goal was to turn these situations around and teach card holders how to handle their cards responsibly.

Activity: Use the example of the failure of the sub-prime mortgage market to discuss the importance of consumers understanding the terms of a loan. Have them discuss whether the lenders or the borrowers were at fault. You can impress upon your members the need to pay attention and investigate before they use any kind of credit. Invite a responsible loan officer to speak to your members.

Everyone wants examples of successful DECA members, so this issue contains reports on four DECA alumni who have succeeded in finance. See “Careers in Finance.” These cameos can be informative and inspirational for your members.

As your graduating members start applying for scholarships, the article called “**Cashing in for College**” presents a full and realistic picture of avenues for obtaining financial aid. Make sure your members read this for sources and tips.



DECA advisor named CCSO Teacher of the Year

Eleven-year veteran marketing teacher and DECA advisor **Isabel Rodriguez Santos** from **Lorenzo Coballes Gandia H.S. in Puerto Rico** was named one of the nation's top teachers by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). She joins a cohort of 56 teachers chosen as the best in their state or territory for 2007. She is pictured above with President and Mrs. George Bush.

Ms. Rodriguez Santos joined 49 of the other designees in a project called "Teachers at the Table," a move to have teachers involved in educational issues before the U.S. Congress.

Special entrepreneurship celebrations for 2008



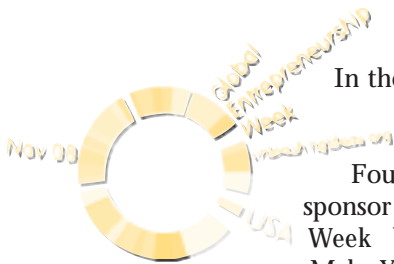
National Entrepreneurship Week is scheduled for Feb. 23–March 1, 2008. This week dedicated to entrepreneurship is coordinated by the Consortium for

Entrepreneurship Education. For information you can visit the Consortium's Web site: www.entre-ed.org/E-week08.htm.

In the fall of 2008, the Ewing Marion Kauffman

Foundation will again sponsor Entrepreneurship Week by joining with Make Your Mark to orga-

nize the Global Entrepreneurship Week. The date is November 17–22, 2008. The new Web site for this national and international celebration is www.unleashingideas.org.



Book reviews for competitive events resources

DECA Images has gathered together a selection of publications to help with competitive event prep. The list here does not include the standard event samples and handbooks for each specific event. It offers supplementary materials to help you teach all aspects of event participation.

Participating in Competitive Events

Thinking on Your Feet, by Marlene Caroselli, is one of the Crisp Fifty-Minute books.

Both its breadth of content and its format commend this little manual/workbook. It covers the most important settings that require quick spoken responses: interviews, speaking with customers and colleagues, speaking before an audience, handling difficult questions, and developing confidence. Its format requires responses from the reader, adding the element of practice.

DCTYF \$13.95 US

Working in Teams, by Sandy Pokras

Much of what happens in DECA depends on team structures, and a book like this one can point out many principles to undergird your team activities. Chapter officers, event chairpersons, or competition teams can all benefit from becoming aware of the strengths and challenges of team efforts. As you lead teams, this book can help you guide and maximize group efforts. The book is also broad enough to demonstrate how teams operate in workplace situations, an excellent topic for discussions of business management.

DCWIT \$13.95 US

Graphics for Presenters, by Lynn Kearny **NEW ITEM!!**

Having several copies of a book like this in the classroom will truly help DECA members plan and execute graphic presentations. The suggestions are clear and well-illustrated so that your presenters can quickly catch on to principles from organization to final graphic product.

DCGP \$13.95 US

Topics for Competitive Events

Accounting Essentials, by Jay Jacquet

DECA instituted the **Accounting Applications Series Event** because all effective businesspeople need a basic understanding of accounting. *Accounting Essentials: Managing by the Numbers* is just that workbook to help you and your members learn enough principles of accounting to understand the financial basis of businesses.

DCAE \$13.95 US

Understanding Financial Statements, by James O. Gill and Moira Chatton

This workbook hits just the right level for dealing with DECA's **Financial Analysis Management Team Decision Making Event**. As the book's introduction states, "It is not highly technical and is not a complete text on financial analysis. You'll learn how to interpret a balance sheet, an income statement and a cash flow statement and use financial ratios to evaluate business performance."

DCUFS \$13.95 US

Soft Skills: Essentials for workplace success

These days we in CTE (Career and Technical Education) are working hard to explain our role in teaching students to use and develop academic abilities.

As we do this, however, it's easy to lose track of our commitment to teaching the essential soft skills as part of workplace readiness. Are our efforts at nurturing these more personal skills just fluff? Do these skills have a legitimate place in the classroom? If so, why? Do they enhance or interfere with the basics of our curriculum? Do they waste classroom time?

The article at the right describes the soft skills as a crossover between academics and personal skills. The companion article on page 7 shows how one teacher develops these personal skills in the classroom and, along the way, achieves competitive event success.

Businesses want soft skills for success

A recent article in *Techniques* magazine (May, 2007) demonstrated that businesses want to hire employees who can contribute more than technical knowledge to the workplace. These businesses cite the lack of soft skills as the chief cause of project failure. ("Soft Skills: the New Curriculum for Hard-Core Technical Professionals, by Randy Bancino and Claire Zevalkink) They are not just talking about frills, they're talking about the polished habits and social and teamwork skills that make the companies successful. Yes, they are the soft skills.

What do we mean by soft skills?

Bancino and Zevalkink quote Wikipedia in defining the soft skills as "the cluster of personality traits, social graces, facility with language, personal habits, friendliness and optimism that mark people to varying degrees. Soft skills complement hard skills, which are the technical requirements of a job."

Communication and teamwork

Two main areas link the technical competencies with these soft skills—communication and teamwork. These two core sets of skills for marketing and management extend your curriculum into the world of work, and they both combine a range of skills that include academic competencies and personal abilities.

Communication has its base in language competency, a core academic skill. Reading and writing are its foundations. Yet when we put language to work in interpersonal situations, another skill set evolves: the ability to speak concisely and clearly, to listen actively, to send and receive nonverbal clues, to "think on your feet," to hit the right tone (appropriate enthusiasm), even just to be confident enough to engage others in conversation or debate. Is there any question that these are vital career skills in marketing and management? Look at the basic marketing skill of selling or the ability to manage employees. Teaching students to extend their communication abilities into the real work of the marketplace involves all of this and more.

Teamwork to accomplish a task or reach a goal is an essential business skill as well as a life skill.

Rarely does a person get to work alone. While the underlying concept of a project or a piece of research is organization, to the extent that people need to work together, team members need many soft skills. They need to set goals together and assume roles that will work best for the team—reaching consensus and working through disagreements. They need to respect one another's talents and time. They need to behave responsibly. All of the skills we mentioned under communication apply to any kind of joint effort as well.

Which aspects of DECA develop these soft skills? Almost all. Your chapter officers need soft skills to lead the chapter and to work together. Teamwork and commitment are required by any team project. Social intelligence isn't just for making friends—it develops social abilities and increases emotional intelligence. People need to understand others and take that perspective into account in their personal interactions and their work. Are these the "extra" aspects of a "club"? No, they are building blocks for a productive and fulfilling career and life, and are an asset in any business.

Soft skills for competitive events

As DECA's competitive events put classroom knowledge to work, they require these extended personal abilities. Management Team Decision Making events and many written events are undertaken by teams. This isn't an accident. The team approach is designed to teach cooperative techniques in pursuit of a goal.

Presentations and role-plays require skill at speaking and listening. The role-plays particularly demand clarity, confidence, active listening skills and quick-wittedness.

As you teach your curriculum through the real-world interactions of the competitive events structure, don't neglect the soft skills. Tricks and gimmicks may sometimes seem to be a shortcut to role-play success, but teaching and practicing the real personality enhancement of confidence and communication skills are essential not only to role-play success, but to career and life satisfaction. (See more on page 7)

Soft skills in the classroom

This year **Suzan Newberry**, advisor at **Campbell County High School in Wyoming**, extended her students' string of ICDC event wins to include three more first place finishes in the Series Events. You can see some of Suzan's advice in your Roadmap Planner at pages 41 and 76.

Suzan is committed to the competitive events as a teaching tool, with the competitive aspect second and the teaching aspect first. In previous articles Suzan has shared her dedication to teaching performance indicators and making sure her students perform well on the comprehensive test part of the role-plays. For this article, I asked her about her approach to teaching the soft skills.

Interactivity in her classroom and **modeling effective behavior** are the two benchmarks of Suzan's teaching style. The first step is to get students to write something in class or to speak in class. She poses questions to all members and says, "No one gets to be a lazy bump today." These can be simple questions or ones that ask for preliminary opinions on a new topic. "I teach for 90 minutes," notes Suzan. "We change gears a lot."

To make these interactions dynamic, she introduces timed tasks: "In three minutes, write down as many franchise operations as you can." The students are not aware of franchising, so this can be a hard assignment. But it gets them started. Once they have taken a step into the topic, even a tentative or ill-informed one, they are motivated to learn about the subject. So the first day on the subject is opinion: A company may be introducing a new product. After it's been tested, the company sees that it may be harming a small number of people. What should they do? Pull the product? Give a warning? (Many of these questions may involve ethical issues.)

Suzan introduces competencies through scenarios, which she describes as starting with mini-case studies. So if she asks the students what they think a company should do about toys from China that don't meet safety standards, at first they are largely unaware that there is an issue. Says Suzan, "This gets them out there talking. The next day they will have to have facts and figures. I'll tell them that opinions were yesterday. If you aren't prepared, you don't get to have an opinion today."

Suzan characterizes these exercises as simple things. "You don't have to plan big activities to teach. In fact you can't plan big activities all of the time." You can, like Suzan, hold a 15- to 20-minute debate on a real issue related to one of your competencies. A "competency of the day" can be illustrated by asking for just two or three sentences on an issue that involves that competency. "By test time, they'll know these competencies."

Classroom exercises that challenge, like these, start to develop skills that are valuable in role-play events. "It's important to think fast, not just be nice, in the presentation. This can be

taught in classroom activities." When Suzan challenges the students, they sometimes say, "We're not so smart." To this she replies, "Well, we don't know that. So let's pretend you are." There's a good dose of higher order skills in these dynamic challenges—organizing ideas and suggesting solutions. Problem-solving activities also produce self-confidence and willingness to risk having and expressing an opinion.

By teaching through the soft skills, Suzan believes teachers raise the level of academic ability in their students. She cites a recent winner who did not come to her as an "academic" student. After researching her passion—the real world of clothing design—and using that knowledge in her successful role-play performance, she is now enrolled in some AP classes.

Another of Suzan's techniques is making up games "to keep them going." For example, she'll place a student monitor in front of the classroom and then ask questions. The first hand up has a chance to either win points or lose points. The monitor keeps track.

As for listening skills, "They'd better listen," she declares. "We don't talk while someone is talking. I say things like 'What did you hear?' 'Repeat back—summarize back to me.' Most of the time I tell them to pay attention, I won't repeat what I'm going to say. Soon, if someone didn't pay attention, the other students say, 'But she told us.' They model and reinforce the behavior."

"We cover empathy. You can teach empathy. People in business can't just come across as thinking about themselves. In competition, those who find empathy hard probably don't do well. If I ask them what the judge said, they may not know. They have to acknowledge that the judge is there and has a part in it." Susan thinks some kids are more naturally good communicators. Others may think those kids are just playing up to the judge, but really some of the kids have figured out the importance of this empathy.

Suzan finds that being enthusiastic in class exercises is difficult for kids. "Kids tend to present in a monotone. I have to model the behavior of saying the same thing with enthusiasm. We always have an enthusiastic person in the class. They can model that student's behavior." Eventually they learn to be excited in their presentation. An exercise that helps is to have students introduce a classmate, but to challenge them to do it with energy. "I'll say, 'Be proud of the person you're introducing. There's something great about this person.'"

For Suzan, dealing with the extended soft skills in class is a matter of time management. It can be integrated into making the curriculum come alive. She finds that there are too many other things to deal with during role-play practice held outside of class. "I have to do it in class or it doesn't get done." Suzan feels that there is a lot of class time, and a teacher is wasting time if he/she doesn't model the soft skills in the classroom. "It's not easy to begin teaching this way every morning at 7:15, but is it easy to leave every day thinking you shorted the kids?"

Interactivity

Scenarios

Debates

Games

Listening

Empathy

Enthusiasm