The Business Operations Research Events provide an opportunity for participants to demonstrate knowledge and skills needed by management personnel through the preparation of a detailed written strategic plan and presentation based on the results of a research study.

Participants in the Business Operations Research Events will:

- select an actual local business operation
- design a research study
- conduct a research study
- analyze the results of the research study
- prepare a strategic plan
- prepare a proposed budget
- present in a role-play situation
  - the design of the research study
  - the findings and conclusions of the research study
  - the proposed strategic plan
  - the proposed budget to enact the suggested strategies

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.

**CAREER CLUSTERS + 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.

**Finance** includes banks, credit unions, accounting, investments and other financial businesses.

**Hospitality and Tourism** includes hotels, restaurants and tourism-related businesses.

**Buying and Merchandising** includes retail and wholesale businesses that provide consumer goods.

**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.
• 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 and Academic Integrity 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, including time for the judge’s questions.
• For the presentation, the participants are to assume the role of hired consultants. 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 presentation.

2018 TOPIC
The 2018 topic for each career category is the development or enhancement of a customer experience management strategy. Participants will collaborate with a local business or organization to analyze current customer experience management strategies and then present a plan to improve the customer experience within the business or organization.

RATIONALE
Studies show that the customer experience can define an organization’s success. Businesses and organizations are investing time and money into strategies that will target the customer experience and increase revenue.
WRITTEN ENTRY GUIDELINES
The written entry must follow these specifications. Refer also to the Written Entry Checklist and the Written Entry Evaluation Form.

WRITTEN EVENT STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. This 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 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. 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).

This outline must be followed. 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- to three-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 customer experience

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 strategic 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.
WRITTEN ENTRY CHECKLIST

In addition to Written Entry Guidelines, participants must observe all of the standards on the Written Entry Checklist on page 52. These standards are designed to make competition as fair as possible.

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 hired consultants. 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.

• Each participant may bring a copy of the written entry or note cards pertaining to the written entry to use as reference during the presentation.

• The participants may use the following items during the oral presentation:
  – not more than three (3) standard-sized posters not to exceed 22 1/2 inches by 30 1/2 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 36 1/2 inches by 48 1/2 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.

At the beginning of the presentation (after introductions), the participants will explain the proposed strategic plan. Allow the participants to complete this portion without interruption, unless you are asked to respond. Each participant must take part in the presentation.

If time remains, you may ask 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. The maximum score for the presentation is 40 points.
# DECA

## BUSINESS OPERATIONS RESEARCH EVENTS

**BUSINESS SERVICES OPERATIONS RESEARCH BOR**
**BUYING AND MERCHANDISING OPERATIONS RESEARCH BMOR**
**FINANCE OPERATIONS RESEARCH FOR**
**HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM OPERATIONS RESEARCH HTOR**
**SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT MARKETING OPERATIONS RESEARCH SEOR**

## WRITTEN ENTRY EVALUATION FORM

Please refer to the [Written Entry Guidelines](#) for a more detailed explanation of these items.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<table>
<thead>
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<th>LITTLE/NO VALUE</th>
<th>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</th>
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<th>JUDGED SCORE</th>
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1. One- to three-page description of the project

### INTRODUCTION

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2. Description of the business or organization

3. Description of the community (economic, geographic, demographic and socioeconomic factors)

4. Overview of the business or organization’s current customer experience

### RESEARCH METHODS USED IN THE STUDY

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5. Description and rationale of research methodologies selected to conduct the research study

6. Process used to conduct the selected research methods

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

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7. Findings of the research study

8. Conclusions based on the findings

### PROPOSED STRATEGIC PLAN

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9. Objectives and rationale of the proposed strategic plan

10. Proposed activities and timelines

11. Proposed metrics or key performance indicators to measure plan effectiveness

### PROPOSED BUDGET

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12. Costs associated with proposed strategies

### APPEARANCE AND WORD USAGE

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13. Professional layout, neatness, proper grammar, spelling and word usage

## WRITTEN ENTRY TOTAL POINTS (60)

JUDGE ________
## PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

### PRESENTATION

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opening presentation; description of the plan; organization, clarity and effectiveness of the presentation</td>
<td>0-1-2-3</td>
<td>4-5-6</td>
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### TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE PARTICIPANTS:

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<td>2. Describe methods used to the design research study?</td>
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<td>3. Interpret the research data into information for decision-making?</td>
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<td>4. Describe strategies and approaches for leading change?</td>
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<td>5. Describe the nature of budgets?</td>
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### GENERAL

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<tr>
<td>6. Professional standards (appearance, poise, confidence), presentation technique, effective use of visuals and participation of all</td>
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### PRESENTATION TOTAL POINTS (40)

#### WRITTEN ENTRY (60)

#### PRESENTATION (40)

#### SUBTOTAL (100)

#### LESS PENALTY POINTS

#### TOTAL SCORE

JUDGE ________