



# INDEPENDENT BUSINESS PLAN

## INDEPENDENT BUSINESS PLAN EIB

The **Independent Business Plan** involves the development of a comprehensive proposal to start a new business. Any type of business may be used.

Participants in the Independent Business Plan will:

- prepare a written proposal for a new business
- request financing for the proposal in a role-playing interview with a bank or venture capital official

## ENTREPRENEURSHIP

### EVENT OVERVIEW

- This event consists of two major parts: the **written document** and the **oral presentation**. The written document will account for 60 points, and the oral presentation will account for the remaining 40 of the total 100 points.
- Each event entry will be composed of **one to three members** of a DECA chapter. All participants must present the project to the judge. All participants present must respond to questions.
- The body of the written entry must be limited to **20 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 oral presentation may be a maximum **15 minutes** in length, including time for the judge's questions.
- 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 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.

Participants will also develop many 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, in the following categories, desired by today's employers:

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

Many Common Core Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts & Literacy are supported by participation in DECA's competitive events.

Crosswalks that show which 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills are developed and which common core standards are supported by participating in each competitive event are available at [deca.org](http://deca.org).

## WRITTEN ENTRY GUIDELINES

The written entry must follow these specifications. Refer also to the Penalty Point 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:

**INDEPENDENT BUSINESS PLAN**

- 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. PROBLEM**

List the top three problems your product/service is addressing.

**III. CUSTOMER SEGMENTS**

Who are the target customers?

**IV. UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION**

What is the single, clear, compelling message that states why your product/service is different and worth buying?

**V. SOLUTION**

What are the top three features of your product/service?

**VI. CHANNELS**

What are the pathways to customers?

**VII. REVENUE STREAMS**

What is the revenue model and what are the lifetime values?

**VIII. COST STRUCTURE**

What are the customer acquisition costs, distribution costs, human resources costs and other additional costs?

**IX. DETAILED FINANCIALS**

- A. Projected income and expenses (The following items are recommended for inclusion. You may select the appropriate items for your business.)
  - 1. Projected income statements by month for the first year’s operation (sales, expenses, profit loss)
  - 2. Projected cash flow by month for the first year’s operation
  - 3. Projected balance sheet, end of first year
  - 4. Projected three-year plan
  - 5. A brief narrative description of the planned growth of the proposed business, including financial resources and needs
- B. Proposed plan to meet capital needs (The following are recommended for inclusion. You may select the appropriate items for your business.)
  - 1. Personal and internal sources
  - 2. Earnings, short-term and long-term borrowing, long-term equity
  - 3. External sources
  - 4. Repayment plans
  - 5. Plan to repay borrowed funds or provide return on investment to equity funds



1 to 3  
PARTICIPANTS



20  
PAGES  
ALLOWED



15  
PRESENTATION  
TIME

**X. KEY METRICS**

What are the key activities that must be measured?

**XI. COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE**

What about your product/service means that it cannot be easily copied or bought?

**XII. CONCLUSION**

Specific request for financing, summary of key points supporting the financial request

**XIII. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

A bibliography is required. Include a list of the sources of information used in the written document.

**XIV. 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.

## **PENALTY POINT CHECKLIST**

In addition to the Written Entry Guidelines, participants must observe all of the standards on the Penalty Point 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, assuming the role of entrepreneurs, will have prepared a detailed comprehensive proposal to start a new business. The role of the judge is that of a potential source of capital for the business who evaluates as if actually going to approve (or disapprove) the request for financing.
- The participants will present the business plan proposal 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 and use as reference during the presentation.
- If time remains, the judge may ask questions pertaining to the proposal.
- Only visual aids that can be easily hand carried to the presentation by the actual participant(s) will be permitted. The participants themselves must set up the visuals. Wheeled carts, moving straps or similar items may not be used to bring visuals into the area. Set up time is included in the total presentation time. Participants must furnish their own materials and equipment. No electrical power or internet connection will be supplied. Alternate power sources such as small generators are not allowed. Sound may be used, as long as the volume is kept at a conversational level.
- 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. You are role-playing a loan officer or venture capitalist. You may refer to the written entry, or to notes, during the presentation.

At the beginning of the presentation (after introduction), the participants will describe the proposal and make the request for financing. 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 participants. Then complete the Presentation Evaluation Form, making sure to record a score for all categories. The maximum score for the presentation is 40 points.



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## WRITTEN ENTRY EVALUATION FORM

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

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
1. One- to three-page description of the business model	0-1-2-3	4-5-6	7-8	9-10	
<b>PROBLEM</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
2. List of the top three problems the product/service is addressing	0-1	2-3	4	5	
<b>CUSTOMER SEGMENTS</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
3. Description of target customers	0-1	2	3	4	
<b>UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
4. Description of the single, clear, compelling message that states why the product/service is different and worth buying	0-1	2	3	4	
<b>SOLUTION</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
5. Description of the top three features of the product/service	0-1	2-3	4	5	
<b>CHANNELS</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
6. Descriptions of the pathways to customers	0-1	2-3	4	5	
<b>REVENUE STREAM</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
7. Description of the revenue model and life time values	0-1	2-3	4	5	
<b>COST STRUCTURE</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
8. Explanation of the customer acquisition costs, distribution costs, human resources costs and any additional costs	0-1	2-3	4	5	
<b>DETAILED FINANCIALS</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
9. Projected income and expenses and proposed plan to meet capital needs	0-1	2-3	4	5	
<b>KEY METRICS</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
10. Explanation of the key activities that must be measured	0-1	2	3	4	
<b>COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
11. Explanation of why the product/service cannot be easily copied or bought	0-1	2	3	4	
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>LITTLE/ NO VALUE</b>	<b>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</b>	<b>JUDGED SCORE</b>
12. Specific request for financing, summary of key points supporting the financial request	0-1	2	3	4	

**WRITTEN ENTRY TOTAL POINTS (60)** \_\_\_\_\_

JUDGE \_\_\_\_\_



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## PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

PRESENTATION	LITTLE/ NO VALUE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	JUDGED SCORE
1. Opening presentation and request: description of the project; organization, clarity and effectiveness of the presentation	0-1	2-3	4	5	

TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE PARTICIPANTS:	LITTLE/ NO VALUE	BELOW EXPECTATIONS	MEETS EXPECTATIONS	EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS	JUDGED SCORE
2. Assess opportunities for venture creation	0-1	2-3	4	5	
3. Determine feasibility of venture ideas	0-1	2-3	4	5	
4. Assess start-up requirements	0-1	2-3	4	5	
5. Evaluate risk-taking opportunities	0-1	2-3	4	5	
6. Explain the complexity of business operations	0-1	2-3	4	5	
7. Determine relationships among total revenue, marginal revenue, output and profit	0-1	2-3	4	5	
8. Describe marketing functions and related activities	0-1	2-3	4	5	

<b>PRESENTATION TOTAL POINTS (40)</b>	
WRITTEN ENTRY (60)	
PRESENTATION (40)	
SUBTOTAL (100)	
LESS PENALTY POINTS	
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	

JUDGE \_\_\_\_\_