

OVERVIEW

AN INTRODUCTION TO ROLE-PLAYS AND CASE STUDIES

With its connection to National Curriculum Standards, DECA's Competitive Events Program is designed to be integrated into classroom instruction to help members apply learning and connect to business. As teaching tools, DECA's role-plays and case studies provide relevant, meaningful problems for students to solve, provide a standards-based evaluation, increase rigor of the instruction, result in evidence of student learning and expose students to DECA – all as part of classroom instruction.

Role-plays and case studies provide a student-centered engagement activity to help DECA members apply learning through problem-based activities that require creative solutions and practical outcomes. DECA's role-plays and case studies challenge DECA members to demonstrate industry relevant knowledge and skills through national curriculum standards in the career clusters of marketing, business management and administration, finance, and hospitality and tourism, as well as entrepreneurship and personal financial literacy. DECA's competitive events also foster the development of important 21st century skills including: critical thinking and problem solving, communication skills, collaboration and teamwork, and creativity.

Each role-play and case study supports a specific career cluster and primary instructional area that is identified at the top of the first page of the event. DECA's role-plays and case studies are developed through industry research to reflect current issues and trends in business and industry. The role-play and case study scenarios are connected to performance indicators. DECA members are challenged to develop a solution that incorporates the performance indicators relevant to the specific role-play or case study, while demonstrating 21st Century Skills. Individual Series Events are also connected to a specific career pathway.

UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

DECA uses seven lists of performance indicators: business administration core, business management and administration, entrepreneurship, finance, hospitality and tourism, marketing, and personal financial literacy. Performance indicators are specific knowledge and skills students should know and be able to perform as it relates to a career. One of DECA's strong points is that the performance indicators used in its competitive events program are industry-validated. A variety of industry-based primary and secondary sources are used to collect information, including: c-level business

interviews, industry certifications, job websites for job descriptions, labor statistics, professional organizations, white papers, journals, articles, webinars and LinkedIn industry groups. Validation panels are also used to verify the research in developing the performance indicator lists.

Each performance indicator list is organized by instructional areas to assist advisors with planning units of instruction. Instructional areas are broad areas of content knowledge (such as promotion, pricing, emotional intelligence or business law) that are comprised of many performance indicators. As you teach different instructional areas during the year, you can use corresponding role-plays and case studies as learning tools.

 **TIP** | You may wish to add to your bank of sample role-plays, case studies and exams by purchasing additional resources through Shop DECA. DECA posts district-level resources, while items used at the association-level conferences and International Career Development Conference are available exclusively through Shop DECA.

For each role-play and case study, over half of the performance indicators come from the instructional area indicated on the front page of the role-play or case study. One strategy is to organize sample role-plays and case studies by career cluster and instructional area. For example, if you are teaching promotion in your marketing course, you can then decide if you want to use an apparel and accessories marketing series role-play or a sports and entertainment marketing team decision making case study, depending on the student's interests, time of the year or special area of focus.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

While the traditional competitive event setting requires interaction with judges and specific timing, many advisors have used role-plays and case studies in a variety of instructional methods. These include:

Warm-up activities and classroom discussions

Begin the class by asking students to read the role-play or case study and develop a solution. Engage the class in a meaningful discussion around various solutions. Ensure that each performance indicator is discussed.

Think-Pair-Share

Provide the role-play or case study to your students to review and develop ideas individually. Then group students in pairs and have each student play the role of the participant and play the role of a judge. After one round, you can encourage the students to find a different partner to serve in the other role. Then expand the sharing into a classroom discussion, discussing a variety of solutions and approaches.

Writing exercises

Provide the scenario to your students and ask them to write their ideas for solving the problem presented in the role-play or case study. You may also ask that they develop their solution in a slide deck and provide more information in the notes section of each slide.

Public speaking exercises

Provide the scenario to your students and ask them to deliver an oral presentation or recorded video that presents their ideas for solving the problem presented in the role-play or case study. You can ask your students to use the evaluation from when they are watching the oral presentation or recorded video. This not only requires students to deliver a solution, but also encourages students to evaluate their peers – a powerful activity when sitting on the “other side” as the judge.

Assessment tools in lieu of a multiple-choice quiz/test

Use a role-play or case study as a written or oral assessment.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

The performance indicators on the first page of the role-play are the exact performance indicators on the evaluation form the judge uses. Since the evaluation form for each role-play and case study includes the performance indicators, by using DECA’s role-plays and case studies, you are assessing students’ performance according to national curriculum standards, which are industry validated and aligned to career clusters. The evaluation form also assesses the students’ ability to demonstrate 21st Century Skills.