

National Judges Recommendations

What recommendations would you tell the students to improve their applications?

Award Area:

- Make sure their SAE project fits the category they have applied in and that they only include information and records that are directly related to that award area.
- Make sure the area applied for is proven by the student in the application.

Example Applications Are Available:

- There are 24 example applications of past national winner applications available on the Proficiency home page. We add to these examples yearly.

Rubrics/Scorecards

- The rubrics and scorecards are available in the Proficiency handbook and on the website on the Proficiency home page. There are 2 different rubrics, one for the Entrepreneurship and one for the Placement application. Judges use rubrics and scorecards to judge applications.
- Have student/advisor score the application using the rubric. This would point out strengths and weaknesses.
- Follow rules printed on the rubrics

Goals

- Make sure goals are defined and measurable and then addressed in results.
- Be reasonable and realistic in defining goals and outcomes of these goals.
- Be specific with goals (both proficiency and national chapter)

Applications

- Read the directions. Follow the rules!
- Use entire “Our House” application (Excel template), don’t freelance. **Starting in 2006 your application is subject to disqualification if the Excel template “Our House” application is not used. DO NOT copy into a word document to alter the spacing allowed for answers.**
- Be specific, to the point and direct. Answer the question and only the question.
- Use all space provided to tell your story. Make sure you fill out the applications completely and that the pictures should be action shots related to your SAE.
- Try to make your SAE unique and different. Try to show yourself as being in charge and involved. If you have an item that is unique or unusual in your program or application, explain it to the judges within your application.
- Make sure that pages 2 and 3 tell a story. Use questions at the beginning to thoroughly explain their projects, especially if there are unusual circumstances

- Answer the question and only the question, don't mix two SAE's together. Answer questions as they relate to the award area. Many applications talked about total SAE or mixed in information about things not related to their award area.
- Specifically list how their SAE affect them and benefited their project.
- Students need to be very specific in explaining their project and the skills and activities they have learned or participated in.
- Be creative in writing narratives. "Ever since I was little..." is overused and does not set an application apart from the "stack".
- Explain everything completely. Do not assume that the judges know something.
- Proof read, proof read, proof read!!! Check spelling/grammar. Spell check applications in a word document. It would also be helpful if you had another teacher or advisor check their application before they submit it.
- Utilize English instructors and/or local news people to proof read applications.
- Look for holes in your application. Look for problems that might prevent you from having the potential to become a national finalist.
- Have someone review your application will decrease the number of mistakes that affect your overall outcome in the judging process. For example, have someone else from your state look at application if time permits.
- Make corrections noted by state staff before sending the application in.
- Have all of application completed and signed

Financial Information

- Check numbers!!! Make sure all figures are accurate and correct.
- Check, double check and tripe check for technical accuracy (i.e., finances).
- Include a beginning assets amount - - You should have some finances when the SAE was started.
- Financial records need to be explained in the written part of application since an inventory sheet is not included in the application.
- Do not include any current year income or expenses. For example, year ends December, 2005, do not include any 2006 income or expenses.
- If trading labor expenses, etc. make sure you account for them in your application.

Advisor Recommendations

- Advisors should present letters of recommendation on letterhead.
- Include both employer and instructor statements for placement applications.

Photographs

- Use good quality photographs. Effective 2006, as long as the student does not change the font size, they are allowed to use all space allowed in the box on the photo page for their caption.
- Make sure photographs demonstrate their skills and knowledge in their SAE area.
- Take good/clear pictures. Show diversification.
- Digitize pictures
- Use action photos of yourself. Pictures should be action shots relating to your SAE.

Personal Page

- Include a personal page that deals with their SAE, alternate pictures, newspaper clippings, inventory you couldn't list elsewhere, etc.

Checksheet

- Follow the rules as they are stated in the check sheet.