

# EMPLOYMENT SKILLS

## **Purpose**

The Employment Skills Leadership Development Event is designed for FFA members to develop, practice, and demonstrate skills needed in seeking employment in the agricultural industry.

## **Objectives**

The Employment Skills LDE is designed to:

- I. Provide students with experience in applying for positions that will prepare them for their agricultural career goals.
- II. Provide students with practice in the following employment procedures currently used in the agricultural industry, including:
  - A. Development and utilization of a resume
  - B. Preparation of a written letter of application
  - C. Obtaining letters of recommendation
  - D. Completion of an employment application
  - E. Participation in a personal interview
- III. Stimulate instruction regarding preparation for employment.

### Crosswalk with Show-Me Standards

Objectives – Students participating in the Career Development Event should be able to:		Show-Me Standards	
		Knowledge Standards (Content Areas)	Performance Standards (Goals)
1.	Provide students with experience in applying for positions that will prepare them for their Agricultural career goals.	CA 1, 3, 4, 6 SS 4, 6, 7	1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9
2.	Provide students with practice in the following employment procedures currently use in the agricultural industry, including:  A. Development and utilization of a resume  B. Preparation of a written letter of application  C. Obtaining letters of recommendation  D. Completion of an employment application  E. Participation in a personal interview		2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7  3.1,3.2, 3.3  4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.8
3.	Stimulate instruction regarding preparation for employment.		

Corresponding Secondary Agriculture Curriculum			
<b>Course and/or Curriculum:</b>	Agribusiness Sales, Marketing, and Management	<b>Unit(s):</b>	Unit IV – Personal Development Unit V – Communication Skills
	Agricultural Communication and Leadership Course		

## Event Format

The Employment Skills LDE shall consist of the following four (4) components:

### 1. Cover Letter: (completed prior to event)

- A. A cover letter is to be provided in advance by each contestant targeted to the job they are interviewing for. Cover letters should be single-spaced, using 1-inch margins, a 12-point font (Arial, Courier, Courier New, or Times New Roman) and on 8 ½” x 11” white bond paper.
- B. The cover letter is to be one page, single-sided only.
- C. The cover letter is to be addressed to:  
*Mr. Keith Dietzschold, State FFA Advisor, PO Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102*

### 2. Resume and Letter of Recommendation: (completed prior to event)\_

#### A. Resume:

- i. Each contestant will identify an entry level agricultural position as their career objective.
- ii. A resume is to be provided in advance by each contestant. The resume is limited to one page (8 ½” x 11”); single-sided, typed, and printed in black. Font sizes and the use of colored paper is at the contestant’s discretion. References should not be included.
- iii. Only factual information about the contestant should be used in the resume.

#### B. Letter of Recommendation:

- i. Contestants should obtain one letter of recommendation that is written to describe the contestants skills and abilities as related to the position for which they are applying. Contestants should **not use an agriculture instructor/FFA advisor from their school** for the letter of recommendation.
- ii. Contestants will not be penalized for the spelling, sentence structure or content of the recommendation letter.
- iii. The letter of recommendation should be addressed to:  
*Mr. Keith Dietzschold, State FFA Advisor, PO Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102*
- iv. The letter of recommendation will be evaluated and scored as part of the resume evaluation process.

### 3. Job Application: (completed during event)

- A. Contestants will complete a standard entry-level job application **on-site** with a 30-minute maximum time allotment (\*See Appendix B for Sample Application).
- B. Contestants should be prepared with black ink pens and a clean sheet of paper.
- C. Contestants will be allowed to use a copy of their personal resume and reference contact information to assist in completion of the job application.

### 4. Personal Job Interview: (completed during event)

A. In the Preliminary Round, contestants will participate in a 15-minute, one-on-one personal interview. Contestants and interviewers will be notified at the 12-minute point of the interview. The interviewer's name will be provided to the contestant prior to the event so the interviewer may be addressed by name. A panel of three (3) judges will observe and score the interview.

B. In the Final Round, contestants will participate in a 20-minute, panel interview with three judges who will each score the contestant. Contestants and interviewers will be notified at the 17 minute point of the interview. The names of the panel interviewers will be provided to the contestant prior to the event.

### Event Scoring

Each component/event of the Employment Skills LDE will be scored using the appropriate Employment Skills Score Sheet (see Forms).

During both interview rounds, judges will score each contestant without consulting the other judges. Percentage scoring (\*See Appendix A) will be used to determine the individual contestant scores from each judge. These scores will be averaged to determine the contestants "interview score" to be used in the calculation of the final score.

All scores from the Cover Letter, Resume, and Job Application will be carried over to the final round.

Ties will be broken based on the greatest number of low ranks in the interview round. Contestants will be ranked in numerical order on the basis of each judge's score. The judges' ranking of each participant shall be added, and the winner will be that participant whose total ranking is the lowest.

<b>Event</b>	<b>Scoring</b>
Cover Letter	100
Resume	150
Application	100
Personal Interview	450
<b><i>PRELIMINARY ROUND TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</i></b>	<b>800</b>
Final Round Panel Interview	450
Subtotal of Preliminary Round Cover Letter, Resume, & Application Scores	350
<b><i>FINAL ROUND TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS</i></b>	<b>800</b>

## Event Rules and Regulations

1. The Employment Skills LDE is designed to help participants in their current job search at their present age and level of education (for SAE projects of part-time or full-time employment). Therefore, the cover letter, resume, and references submitted by the participant must reflect their current skills and abilities and by must be targeted to a job which they would like to apply for that relates to one of the following eight (8) Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources Career Pathways:

- A. Food Products and Processing Systems
- B. Plant Systems
- C. Animal Systems
- D. Power, Structural and Technical Systems
- E. Natural Resource Systems
- F. Environmental Service Systems
- G. Agribusiness Systems
- H. Agricultural Education and Communication Systems

2. The local FFA Advisor **must mail** the following materials to: Mr. Keith Dietzschold, Director, Agricultural Education Section, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, P.O. Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102. **Additionally electronic copies of the cover letter, resume and letter of recommendation must be sent to State Supervisor David Higgins.** (david.higgins@dese.mo.gov). **Both Mailed & emailed copies must be received not later than 12:00 PM the Monday the week prior to the state event(Monday April 14th, 2025).** Materials to be submitted:

- A. Eight (8) copies of Resume
- B. One (1) Cover Letter
- C. One (1) Letter of Recommendation
- D. One (1) Statement of Original Work, signed by the contestant and their FFA Advisor.

3. Only one member per chapter may participate in the Job Interview LDE.

4. A student cannot participate in state LDEs that are scheduled to compete at the same time. Only one member per chapter may participate in the event.

5. Portfolios may be used by participants.

## References

Agricultural Business Sales, Marketing, and Management (1997), Curriculum Guide, Instructor (10-9203-I), Student (10-9203-S), Instructional Materials Laboratory, University of Missouri. Available on the DESE Ag Ed website under the Agricultural Business & Management curriculum tab.

The Gregg Reference Manual, 10<sup>th</sup> Edition(2004), by William A. Sabin, McGraw Hill, <http://www.mhhe.com/business/buscom/gregg/>

Elements of Style, 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition (2008), by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, Pearson Education Company, <http://www.pearsoned.co.uk/Bookshop/>

101 Toughest Interview Questions...and Answers That Win Jobs (1999), by Daniel Porot and Frances Boyles Haynes, Ten Speed Press, P.O. Box 7123, Berkeley, CA 94707, [www.tenspeed.com](http://www.tenspeed.com) .

Microsoft Word resume templates

25 Reasons Why I Won't Hire You! What You Did Wrong Before, During & After the Interview! (1998), Zenja Glass, Omni Publishing Company, PO Box 7208, Prospect Heights, IL 60070

Best Answers to the 201 Most Frequently Asked Interview Questions (1997), Matthew J. Deluca, McGraw-Hill, <http://www.mcgrawhill.com/>

The Complete Job Interview Handbook (1994), John J. Marcus

## Forms

Employment Skills Score Sheets A, B, C, D and Appendix A & B

## Cover Letter Scorecard

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contestant #: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>COMPOSITION</b>	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
Proper Format - * see below	10	
Punctuation	10	
Grammar	10	
Spelling	10	
General Appearance	10	
<i>Composition Sub Total:</i>	50	
<b>CONTENT</b>		
Career Goal Specified	15	
Proper Qualifications	35	
<i>Content Sub Total:</i>	50	
<b>Total Score:</b>	<b>100</b>	

**\* Rules for Proper Format:**

- A. A cover letter is to be provided in advance by each contestant targeted to the job they are interviewing for. Cover letters should be single-spaced, using 1-inch margins, a 12-point font (Arial, Courier, Courier New, or Times New Roman) and on 8 ½" x 11" white bond paper.
  
- B. The cover letter is to be one page, single-sided only.
  
- C. The cover letter is to be addressed to:  

**Mr. Keith Dietzschold, State FFA Advisor, PO Box 480, Jefferson City, MO 65102**

## Resume Scorecard

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contestant #: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>GENERAL APPEARANCE</b>	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
Proper Format – *see below	15	
Pleasing to the eye: - Captures Interest - Layout - Easily Read	40	
Grammar: - Punctuation - Typing - Spelling	20	
<i>General Appearance Sub Total:</i>	75	
<b>COMPOSITION</b>		
Personal Data	5	
Career Objective	5	
Educational Background	20	
Work Experience / Skills	20	
Special Experiences: - Leadership Roles - Activities - Honors	20	
Letter of Recommendation	5	
<i>Composition Sub Total:</i>	75	
<b>Total Score:</b>	150	

**\* Rules for Proper Format:**

- A. Each contestant will identify an entry level agricultural position.
- B. The resume is limited to one page (8 ½" x 11"); single-sided, typed, and printed in black. Font sizes and the use of colored paper is at the contestant’s discretion. References should not be included and only factual information should be provided.
- C. Only factual information about the contestant should be used in the resume.



**Job Application Scorecard**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contestant #: \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter #: \_\_\_\_\_

	<b>POINTS POSSIBLE</b>	<b>SCORE</b>
Overall Impression	20	
Legible	10	
Appearance - Grammar - Punctuation	20	
Complete and Accurate	20	
Consistent with Resume	30	
<b><i>Total Score:</i></b>	<b>100</b>	

## Employment Skills Scorecard

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Contestant #: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ School #: \_\_\_\_\_

Round: Preliminary Round Final Round (Select One)

Judge: **A B C** (Circle One)

	POINTS POSSIBLE	SCORE
Appearance and Courtesy	45	
Greetings and Introduction	45	
Speech - Grammar - Vocabulary - Volume - Enunciation	45	
Attitude and Personality - Forcefulness - Poise - Temperament - Sincere	45	
Ability to Convince or Impress Interviewer - Persuasiveness - Self-Confidence	45	
Knowledge and Presentation of Abilities - Educational Experience - Occupational Experience	45	
Reliability - Frankness - Consistency - Accuracy	45	
Poise and Professionalism - Tact - Discretion - Questions asked of interviewer	45	
Career Objective - Degree to which contestant has determined and committed to career objective	45	
Conclusion of Interview	45	
<b>Total Score:</b>	<b>450</b>	

## Appendix A

### Percentage Scoring for Employment Skills

Percentage Scoring Formula:

$$\left[ \frac{\text{Points given for student by a judge}}{\text{Maximum points given by that particular judge}} \right] \times 450 = \text{Contestant score for this judge}$$

Example:

The maximum points given by each judge was:

Judge 1 = 435

Judge 2 = 415

Judge 3 = 385

	Judge 1 Actual Score	Judge 1 Percentage Score	Judge 2 Actual Score	Judge 2 Percentage Score	Judge 3 Actual Score	Judge 3 Percentage Score	Total Score	Final Contestant Score (Average)
Contestant A	435	$435/435 \times 450$ = <b>450</b>	400	$400/415 \times 450$ = <b>433.73</b>	355	$355/385 \times 450$ = <b>414.94</b>	1298.67	<b>432.89</b>
Contestant B	400	$400/435 \times 450$ = <b>413.79</b>	385	$385/415 \times 450$ = <b>414.47</b>	365	$365/385 \times 450$ = <b>426.62</b>	1254.88	<b>418.29</b>

**Appendix B**

Sample of Job Application to be completed on-site:



**Hammer  
&  
Wrench  
Construction**

**APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT**

AN EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

**NAME** \_\_\_\_\_  
LAST FIRST MIDDLE

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

**PHONE NUMBER:** DAY:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ EVENING:(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_ **ARE YOU 18 YEARS OR OLDER?** YES  NO

Are you a U.S. citizen or otherwise currently authorized to obtain lawful employment in this country? YES  NO

If the job desired requires the use of a motor vehicle, do you have a valid driver's license in the state of your residence? YES  NO

If the job desired requires the use of a commercial driver's license, do you have a valid commercial driver's license? YES  NO

Have you ever pleaded guilty to or been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony? YES  NO

If yes, provide further information as to the offense(s), date, location of court, etc. If the job you are applying for requires you to operate a motor vehicle, include traffic convictions (the company will consider your record only as it may substantially relate to the job for which you are applying). \_\_\_\_\_

**Position applying for** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date available for work** \_\_\_\_\_ **Wage Desired** \_\_\_\_\_

**Shifts Available** 1<sup>st</sup>  2<sup>nd</sup>  3<sup>rd</sup>  4<sup>th</sup> Weekend Shift

**Have you ever applied here before?**  YES  NO **When?** \_\_\_\_\_

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

(This information will be used only where relevant and to assist in determining what positions might be appropriate for consideration.)

EDUCATION	NAME & LOCATION OF SCHOOL	NO. YEARS ATTENDED	DID YOU GRADUATE?	SUBJECTS STUDIED
HIGH SCHOOL				
COLLEGE/ TECH SCHOOL				
MILITARY				

**Describe any other training you consider relevant to the position you are applying.** \_\_\_\_\_

**WORK EXPERIENCE/FORMER EMPLOYERS**

Provide complete and specific information. Start with your current or most recent job. Include self-employment and military service. For part-time work, show the average number of hours per week. Show any changes in job title for the same employer as a separate position. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

ARE YOU CURRENTLY EMPLOYED? YES  NO  IF SO, MAY WE INQUIRE OF YOUR PRESENT EMPLOYER? YES  NO

Employer	Street Address	
Your Title	City, State, Zip	
Your Duties	Phone	Name of Supervisor
	Total Time Employed	
	From (Month & Year)	To (Month & Year)
	Last Rate of Pay	
	Reason for Leaving:	

Employer	Street Address	
Your Title	City, State, Zip	
Your Duties	Phone	Name of Supervisor
	Total Time Employed	
	From (Month & Year)	To (Month & Year)
	Last Rate of Pay	
	Reason for Leaving:	

Employer	Street Address	
Your Title	City, State, Zip	
Your Duties	Phone	Name of Supervisor
	Total Time Employed	
	From (Month & Year)	To (Month & Year)
	Last Rate of Pay	
	Reason for Leaving:	

Employer	Street Address	
Your Title	City, State, Zip	
Your Duties	Phone	Name of Supervisor
	Total Time Employed	
	From (Month & Year)	To (Month & Year)
	Last Rate of Pay	
	Reason for Leaving:	

**Attendance:**

Consistent attendance and punctuality are essential requirements of every job with this Company. Is there anything which would interfere with your regular attendance if you are offered a job?  YES  NO

If yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**REFERENCES: (PERSONS NOT RELATED TO YOU)**

NAME	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE NUMBER	BUSINESS	YEARS ACQUAINTED

Your application will not be processed unless you have read and signed the Authorization, Release and Certification.

**AUTHORIZATION, RELEASE, AND CERTIFICATION**

I certify that all information on this application is true, complete, and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that any false or misleading statements by me, or material omissions of information requested of me, may result in rejection of my application or, if employed, my immediate dismissal.

I hereby give permission to the employer to seek to verify and supplement the information set forth in the application. I release from all liability or legal claims every person seeking or providing information, whether oral or written. A photocopy of this release shall be as valid as the original, and may be relied upon by all persons providing information.

I understand that I may be required to submit to a medical examination if offered a position conditioned on such examination. I also understand that I may be required to submit to testing for controlled substances or other drugs.

I understand this application will be considered inactive after ninety days.

I certify I have read (or have had read to me) and understand this authorization, release, and certification.

**Applicant's Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_