

Objective:

To provide FFA members the opportunity to demonstrate their ability in completing a job application form, writing a letter of application, preparing a resume, interviewing, and completing a follow-up letter.

A. Rules and Regulations

1. The event is open to all FFA members in good standing who are regularly enrolled in an agricultural education course at or above the ninth grade level during one or both semesters of the current school year and who have not placed first in a state Employment Skills Leadership Development Event previously.
2. Each district will determine the number of individuals per school allowed to compete at the district level. Each district may send the top two individuals, with up to two additional teams identified as alternates, to the state level competition regardless of ribbon color awarded at the district level.
3. In addition to the Employment Skills LDE, an Employment Skills participant may compete in only one of the following events in a given year: Conduct of Chapter Meetings (applicable to ninth grade participants), Senior Parliamentary Procedure or Agricultural Demonstration. They are not eligible to compete in any other individual (not team-based) Leadership Development Event in the same year in which they participate in Employment Skills.
4. The state-level Employment Skills event will consist of the following components:
 - a. Submission and scoring of participant application, cover letter, resume, and list of references
 - b. A preliminary face-to-face interview (conducted at the state convention)
 - c. Submission and scoring of a follow-up letter
 - d. Final face-to-face interview and a phone interview (for state finalists only)

Note: Districts may decide which of the above listed components they wish to include in the district-level event.

5. At the state-level event, two finalists from each preliminary interview room shall be identified to advance to the final round. The two students with the highest cumulative scores (from application, resume, list of references, cover letter, and preliminary face-to-face interview scores) shall advance from each preliminary interview round to the final round.
6. Finalist placings shall be determined using only the score of the final face-to-face interview.
7. Students are allowed to bring the following items in a pad-folio or folder to the event:

Writing utensils	Blank paper
Resume	Cover letter
List of references	Business Cards
8. The event is developed to help participants in their current job search (for SAE program employment, part-time, and full-time employment). Therefore, the cover letter, resume, and references submitted by the participant must reflect their **current** skills and abilities and must be targeted to a job for which they would like to apply and for which they are qualified. In other words, participants cannot develop a fictitious resume for a fictitious job. Instead, they are expected to target the resume toward a real job for which they are currently qualified.
9. Each participant will fill out, electronically, a job application form that will be provided through a link on the Nebraska FFA Association website for the state level event. The electronic application may be

used at the district level at the discretion of each district. The job application shall be completed by participants by the date designated on the Nebraska FFA Association website. Within the online application members will be required to upload the following items in pdf format to be evaluated in advance of the convention segment of the Employment Skills event:

- a. **Resume** that shall be a maximum of two pages
- b. **Cover letter** that shall be a maximum of one page and shall be addressed to the Nebraska FFA Advisor

Address for Cover Letter:

Nebraska FFA Association
Attn: Krystl Knabe, Nebraska FFA Advisor
P.O. Box 95067
Lincoln, NE 68509

- c. **Reference page** should be a separate page with no more than five references listed.

10. Each participant may bring with them to the event a pad-folio or folder containing a resume, cover letter, list of references, personal business cards and writing utensils. Interview judges may refer to a copy of the resume, cover letter, and references page which the state office will provide to them. These documents, however, will be scored prior to the interview round, and the scores shall be provided to the interview judges and used in determining finalists.
11. Each participant will be interviewed by the evaluators who will be designated as the employers.
12. Each participant will be allowed a maximum of 15 minutes for the interview; there is no minimum time for the interview.
13. The only materials that may be brought into the event preparation room include a pad-folio or folder containing a copy of the participant's personal resume, cover letter, list of references, personal business cards and writing utensils. No cell phones or electronic devices with communication capabilities will be allowed in the holding room or competition room. Members found to have these items in their possession will be disqualified from the competition.
14. Due to the individual and personal nature of this event, no one will be allowed in the interview room except for the participant, timekeeper, and evaluators.
15. At the conclusion of the preliminary face-to-face interview, each participant will complete a follow-up letter to the interviewers. It must be handwritten, and each participant will have 12 minutes to complete the letter. Paper and pen will be provided.

B. Suggested Guide for Conducting District FFA Employment Skills Leadership Development Event

Suggestion: Districts may follow the state-level guidelines and have a separate set of judges evaluate application letters and resumes prior to the interview event. These scores can be added to interview totals. Because this event consistently takes more time than planned at district events, the state office strongly encourages districts to consider this option.

Prior to the Event

1. Districts shall determine how their students' applications, resumes, and cover letters shall be collected (prior to the event, on-site, electronically, in print, etc.) and scored (by separate evaluators, by the interviewers, on-site, prior to the event).

2. The order of appearance to be used shall be determined in advance of the event.
3. Provide the following to each evaluator:
 - a. Employment Skills Rules (this document)
 - b. Scoring Rubric – one per participant
 - b. Official Score Card/Results Sheets
 - c. Order of Appearance Roster
 - d. Application, resume, and cover letter of each participant (if not collected and scored prior to the event)

Start Event

1. Each participant must be allowed the full 30-minute period to complete their job application form if not completed in advance of the interview. Participants should begin interviewing in 15 minute intervals.
2. Each participant shall be introduced to the evaluators by the individual coordinating the event. Introductions will include the participant's name and chapter.
Example: The next participant is Alex Degree of the Blue and Gold FFA Chapter.
3. A maximum of 15 minutes will be allowed for the interview.
4. No one is to enter or leave the interview room once the event has started.

After the Event

1. Participants will submit a follow-up letter after the interview. Students will be provided paper for the letter and will have 12 minutes to complete it. The letter should be addressed to the evaluators and should be a response to the interview.
2. Each evaluator should total each contestant's score and arrive at the placing. Discussion between evaluators is allowed and encouraged. Participants **shall not** be present during evaluator discussion.
3. Ribbons may be awarded according to guidelines on the results sheets. The top four participants shall be ranked, regardless of their ribbon assignment, and up to two individuals regardless of their ribbon rating at the district level may advance to the state round of competition. Advancing speakers are to be of high quality.
4. A critique sheet shall be completed for each participant for each segment of the Employment Skills event.
5. Two copies of the results should be completed on the form provided to the judges. List the name and chapter of each participant.
6. District FFA board representatives must verify the membership of all state-qualifying participants within one week of the district event.

Event Attire

1. Each participant shall wear the official FFA dress as defined in the FFA Manual: A white collared shirt or blouse, official FFA tie or scarf, black trousers or skirt, black shoes, and FFA jacket.
2. Points may be deducted for variance from official dress.

C. Official Score Card – Preliminary Round

Cover Letter	100
Appearance and Neatness	
Introduction	
Offer proof of abilities	
Spelling and grammar	
Resume and Reference Page	200
Format	
Originality	
Neatness & Grammar	
Content, Effectiveness	
Application Form	100
Appearance and Neatness	
Content	
Spelling and Grammar	
Preliminary Face-to-Face Interview	500
Follow-up Letter.....	50
Total	950

D. Official Score Card – Final Round

Final Face-to-Face Interview	500
Total	500

E. Awards Recognition

1. District Awards: Participants meriting awards shall be rated as purple, blue, red, or white and the top four participants shall be ranked by number (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th). Each district may send the top two contestants, with up to two additional contestants identified as alternates, to the state round of competition.

2. State Awards: Participants in the state event will be designated as gold, silver, or bronze medal recipients. The state winner will represent Nebraska in the national-level Employment Skills event.

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS COVER LETTER RUBRIC

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Strong evidence of skill is not present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Format and General Appearance	Does not exceed one page without overcrowding; margins are acceptable; font size and style is readable (10-12 pt); uses appropriate business format, date and address at top; addressed to appropriate person; appropriate signature block.	Does not exceed one page without overcrowding; margins are acceptable; font size and style is readable (10-12 pt); uses appropriate business format, date and address at top; not addressed to appropriate person; inappropriate signature block.	Exceeds one page; margins are inappropriate; font style is unreadable; font size is too small or too large; no signature; no date or address; no inside address; not in appropriate business format		X 4	
Comments:						
Introductory Paragraph	Identifies position they are applying for; states how they heard about the position; states why they are interested in the position; uses wording to attract reader's attention.	Identifies position they are applying for; does not state how they found the job; vaguely describes why they are interested in the job; introduction is bland and not attention catching.	Does not clearly identify position they are seeking; no description of how you heard about the position; does not grab the reader's attention.		X 4	
Comments:						
Skills and Experiences	Identifies two to three strongest qualifications for the job; indicates how education has prepared them for this job; states why they are interested in the position; skills and experiences are consistent with resume; makes reference to resume.	Identifies one to two qualifications for the job; indicates how education has prepared them for this job; provides a vague explanation of why interested in the job; skills and experiences are somewhat consistent with resume; makes reference to resume.	Does not identify relevant qualifications for the job; does not indicate how education has prepared them for this job; does not state why they are interested in the job; skills and experiences are not consistent with resume; does not mention resume.		X 4	
Comments:						

Closing Paragraph	Thanks reader for taking time to read; provides appropriate contact information; makes appropriate provisions for follow up.	Thanks reader for taking time to read; provides contact information, but makes reader to assume a follow up.	Does not thank reader; does not mention a plan for follow up; does not provide any contact information.		X 3	
Comments:						
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are extremely high quality with two or less errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are adequate with three to five errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are less than adequate with six or more errors in the document.		X 5	
Comments:						
(100 points maximum) Total Points						

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS RESUME & REFERENCE PAGE RUBRIC

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Strong evidence of skill is not present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Contact Information	Includes name, address, email, and phone number; name stands out on resume; provides professional email.	Name does not stand out; email is too casual.	Missing name, address, email, or phone number; email used is inappropriate or unprofessional.		X 2	
Comments:						
Employment Objective	Focused objective that states how employee will help company achieve its goals.	Focused objective that states what applicant wants from the company.	No objective identified.		X 2	
Comments:						
Education or Relevant Coursework	Contains complete information (listed in reverse chronological order) with relevant courses listed, dates formatted correctly, GPA listed in correct format (if appropriate), includes appropriate honors and awards.	Contains information (listed in reverse chronological order) with relevant courses listed, dates formatted correctly, may show gaps in work history; inappropriate GPA listed, includes appropriate honors and awards.	Information not listed in reverse chronological order, important information missing, information not listed in correct format.		X 7	
Comments:						
Relevant Experience and Skills	Entries are listed in reverse chronological order; company name, title, location, and dates are included; strong action verbs used with correct verb tense; personal pronouns and extraneous words are omitted; bullets are concise, direct and indicate one's impact or accomplishments; results are quantified; bullets	Entries are listed in reverse chronological order; entries have a pattern of one type of error; action verbs are weak; verb tenses are inconsistent; bullets are not concise or direct and do not indicate impact; bullets are written in complete sentences.	Entries are not in reverse chronological order; most entries do not include company name, dates, location, or position title; bullets are written in complete sentences; verb tenses are inconsistent; bullets are wordy, vague, or do not indicate one's impact; bullets are not listed in order of importance to the reader; results		X 9	

	are listed in order of importance.		are not quantified when appropriate; irrelevant or outdated information is listed.			
Comments:						
Achievements and Honors	Appropriate and relevant achievements listed; achievements and honors related to career goal; provides specific details related to achievements and honors; listed in reverse chronological order.	Appropriate and relevant achievements listed; achievements and honors related to career goal; lacks specific details related to achievements and honors; listed in reverse chronological order.	Achievements and honors not listed in reverse chronological order; inappropriate or irrelevant achievements listed; no achievements or honors are listed.		X 5	
Comments:						
References	Listed appropriate references and provide complete contact information for references.	References are listed but not all may be appropriate or not all contact information for references is included.	Inappropriate references are listed; no contact information listed.		X 2	
Comments:						
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are extremely high quality with two or less errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are adequate with three to five errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are less than adequate with six or more errors in the document.		X 5	
Comments:						
Format and General Appearance	Does not exceed two pages without overcrowding; margins are acceptable; font size and style is readable (10-12 pt); headings reflect content and content substantiates headings; resume is targeted to job.	Does not exceed two pages; appears overcrowded; margins are acceptable; font size and style is readable (10-12 pt); headings don't reflect content and content substantiates headings; resume is targeted to job.	Exceeds two pages; margins are inappropriate; font style is unreadable; font size is too small or too large.		X 8	
Comments:						
(200 points maximum) Total Points						

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS ELECTRONIC APPLICATION RUBRIC

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Strong evidence of skill is not present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Consistent with Resume	Name, education, experience and other personal information matches information provided on resume.	Name, education, experience, and other personal information generally matches information provided on resume.	Name, education, experience, and other personal information do not match information provided on resume.		X 4	
Comments:						
Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are extremely high quality with two or less errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are adequate with three to five errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are less than adequate with six or more errors in the document.		X 6	
Comments:						
Form Completed	Entire application was completed with "N/A" indicated where appropriate.	Majority of the application was completed with few blank fields.	Several blank spaces are present, and there is information that is missing.		X 4	
Comments:						
Overall Impression	Application was consistent and appropriately highlighted candidate's qualifications for the position.	Application was consistent and generally highlighted candidate's qualifications for the position.	The application was not consistent and did not highlight candidate's qualifications for the position.		X 6	
Comments:						
(100 points maximum) Total Points						

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS PRELIMINARY AND FINAL FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW RUBRIC

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Strong evidence of skill is not present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Appearance	Professional dress/groomed: Follows standard dress code, polished shoes, clothes pressed, conservative accessories.	Not as professional and "put together", shoes clean, but not polished.	Dirty shoes; not wearing black shoes; very disheveled.		X 10	
Comments:						
First Impression	Greeting: Appropriate salutation and firm handshake. Introduction: States name and chapter. Body Language: Smiling and pleasant; does not sit until invited; confident in manner.	Confident, but uneasy; soft handshake; states name only when asked; rarely smiles; cologne or perfume is distracting.	Does not use salutation; very informal; fails to introduce self; fails to shake hands with interviewer; obnoxious cologne or perfume, chewing gum.		X 15	
Comments:						
Responses to Questions	Used appropriate language for career; cited relevant examples; strong knowledge of career field; knows education and experience required; discussed skills gained through school or past jobs and relevance; abilities described match the resume; concise and logical responses; response do not sound "canned"; in-depth description of skills; in-depth response to questions; responses provide a "theme"	Knew terms associated with the position; some holes in knowledge were present; cited several relevant examples; knew about career but conveyed incomplete picture; unsure of education or experiences required for position; incomplete list of skills gained through school and past jobs; abilities mostly matched resume; responses seemed rehearsed and somewhat unorganized;	Knew some language of the position, but used incorrectly; unable to cite or shared few relevant examples; education and requirements unknown or do not match applicant's skill set; unable to related previously learned skills; abilities hardly match resume; responses were rehearsed; unable to see an overall theme of person's abilities.		X 30	

	that overall describes their abilities.	provided some depth of skill descriptions.				
Comments:						
Communication Skills	<p>Persuasive: Led the interview in a direction that enabled them to expand so their skills were expressed; took initiative to add information beyond questions asked.</p> <p>Confident: Exhibited confidence in self with body language and verbally.</p> <p>Appropriate volume: Spoke with proper volume for room to be heard clearly; not too loud, not too soft.</p> <p>Enunciation and grammar: Avoided words like "git", "agin", "'cause", or other slang; used proper words when speaking.</p> <p>Concise: Avoided run-on sentences and answered with logical and organized thoughts.</p> <p>Sincere: Expressed true interest in the position being sought.</p> <p>Poise: Avoided distracting mannerisms such as drumming fingers or overuse of filler words.</p> <p>Discretion and tact: Shared appropriate information and did</p>	<p>Was able to expand somewhat on skills that are a fit for the position; volunteered some additional information to questions asked.</p> <p>Exhibited some nervousness; voice and body language showed some uncertainty.</p> <p>Did not modulate volume to express answers; difficult to hear.</p> <p>Some language not appropriate; used some slang.</p> <p>Some rambling, but point was made; thoughts were logical but somewhat unorganized.</p> <p>Uncertain of authenticity.</p> <p>Seemed comfortable; some nervousness; aware of mannerisms; rare use of filler words</p> <p>Mostly professional in tone; shared</p>	<p>Minimal responses offered; did not expand on skill set.</p> <p>Did not appear comfortable; clearly nervous; slouched</p> <p>Hard to hear answer or volume too loud for room.</p> <p>Used overly complex or simplistic language; slang overused.</p> <p>Rambled and used run-on sentences; answers poorly organized; thought process unclear.</p> <p>Uninterested in the position and distracted.</p> <p>Demonstrated distracted mannerisms; Excessive use of filler words.</p> <p>Shared information that may be seen as</p>		X 30	

	not create an awkward situation through responses.	information that did not create awkwardness.	personal about someone else; unprofessional.			
Comments:						
Conclusion	Posed appropriate questions of interviewer; clarified next steps; asked for business card; thanked interviewer; stood and shook hands prior to exiting the room.	Posed somewhat appropriate questions of interviewer; incomplete inquiry into next steps; asked for business card and shook hands, but seemed uncertain as to how to end and exit the interview.	Limited or no questions asked, or questions were not appropriate; ended interview abruptly or awkwardly; exits without thanks for shaking hands.		X 15	
Comments:						
						(500 points maximum) Total Points

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS FOLLOW-UP LETTER RUBRIC

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Strong evidence of skill is not present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Format	Document was directed to the appropriate person with an appropriate address and salutation; level of formality was appropriate for the type of correspondence.	Document was directed to the appropriate person with an appropriate address and salutation with minor errors; level of formality was generally appropriate for the type of correspondence.	Document was not directed to the appropriate person; no address or salutation was included; level of formality was not appropriate.		X 2	
Comments:						
Content	Effectively expressed appreciation and appropriately reiterated their qualities; expressed interest and appropriately stated provisions for follow-up.	Attempted to express appreciation and generally reiterated their qualities; generally expressed interest and attempted to state provisions for follow-up.	Did not attempt to express appreciation; did not attempt to reiterate their qualities; did not attempt to express interest or state provisions for follow-up.		X 3	
Comments:						
Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are extremely high quality with two or less errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are adequate with three to five errors in the document.	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are less than adequate with six or more errors in the document.		X 2	
Comments:						
Overall Impression	Writing was legible and length was appropriate.	Writing was difficult to read and length was generally appropriate.	Writing was illegible; length was inappropriate.		X 3	
Comments:						
(50 points maximum) Total Points						

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS COVER LETTER SCORE SHEET

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Total Points
Format and General Appearance <i>(20 points maximum)</i>				
Introductory Paragraph <i>(20 points maximum)</i>				
Skills and Experiences <i>(20 points maximum)</i>				
Closing Paragraph <i>(15 points maximum)</i>				
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation <i>(25 points maximum)</i>				
(100 points possible) Total Points				

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS RESUME & REFERENCE PAGE SCORE SHEET

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Total Points
Contact Information <i>(10 points maximum)</i>				
Employment Objective <i>(10 points maximum)</i>				
Education or Relevant Coursework <i>(35 points maximum)</i>				
Relevant Experience and Skills <i>(45 points maximum)</i>				
Achievements and Honors <i>(25 points maximum)</i>				
References <i>(10 points maximum)</i>				
Spelling, Grammar, and Punctuation <i>(25 points maximum)</i>				
Format and General Appearance <i>(40 points maximum)</i>				
(200 points possible) Total Points				

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS ELECTRONIC APPLICATION SCORE SHEET

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Total Points
Consistent with Resume <i>(20 points maximum)</i>				
Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling <i>(30 points maximum)</i>				
Form Completed <i>(20 points maximum)</i>				
Overall Impression <i>(30 points maximum)</i>				
(100 points possible) Total Points				

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS PRELIMINARY FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW SCORE SHEET

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Total Points
Appearance <i>(50 points maximum)</i>				
First Impression <i>(75 points maximum)</i>				
Responses to Questions <i>(150 points maximum)</i>				
Communication Skills <i>(150 points maximum)</i>				
Conclusion <i>(75 points maximum)</i>				
(500 points possible) Total Points				

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS FOLLOW-UP LETTER SCORE SHEET

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Total Points
Format <i>(10 points maximum)</i>				
Content <i>(15 points maximum)</i>				
Grammar, Punctuation, and Spelling <i>(10 points maximum)</i>				
Overall Impression <i>(15 points maximum)</i>				
(50 points possible) Total Points				

GENERAL COMMENTS:

EMPLOYMENT SKILLS FINALS FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW SCORE SHEET

Participant: _____

FFA Chapter: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present	Moderate evidence of skill is present	Strong evidence of skill is not present	Total Points
Appearance <i>(50 points maximum)</i>				
First Impression <i>(75 points maximum)</i>				
Responses to Questions <i>(150 points maximum)</i>				
Communication Skills <i>(150 points maximum)</i>				
Conclusion <i>(75 points maximum)</i>				
(500 points possible) Total Points				

GENERAL COMMENTS: