

2026-2027 Competitive Events Guidelines

Business Ethics (High School)



Educational
Alignments

Business Ethics recognizes members who can analyze and present solutions to ethical dilemmas commonly faced in the business world. This event includes an individual objective test, a written report, and a presentation, allowing members to explore ethical decision-making, integrity, and corporate responsibility.

Event Overview	
Division	High School
Event Type	Team of 1, 2, or 3 members
Event Category	Presentation
Event Elements	Objective Test, Pre-judged Asset, Presentation with a Topic

Event Information:	
<u>National Leadership Conference:</u> Timing Structure: Test Duration: 50 Minutes Presentation: Equipment Set-Up: 3 minutes - No interaction allowed with judges during this time. Presentation: 7 minutes - a one-minute warning will be provided Question & Answer (Q&A): 3 minutes Important: Time allocations are exclusive. The presentation must begin immediately after the 3-minute set-up time concludes. Time may not be shifted between segments. Competitors will not interact with judges during the set-up period. Important Notes: Internet Access ONLY Provided for Testing - Pre-Submission Asset Due by State declared due date Event Schedule Notes: - Some events may begin before the Opening Session. - All schedules are posted in local time for the NLC host city. - Schedule changes are not permitted.	<u>State/Region:</u> Review Region and State Sections further on in this document.

*** Event specifics are continued below. Review the document in its entirety.

2026-2027 Topic Synopsis for Report & Presentation

Business Ethics: Maintaining Stakeholder Trust During a Food Safety Crisis.

Food safety incidents can have significant consequences for customers, employees, suppliers, investors, regulators, and the communities organizations serve. Competitors will examine how business leaders should respond when public health, operational decisions, financial stability, and stakeholder trust are all at risk. They should analyze the ethical responsibilities involved, consider the impact on key stakeholders, and develop recommendations that demonstrate transparency, accountability, and sound decision-making during a food safety crisis.

Refer to pages 14-15 for the full Background Information and Topic.

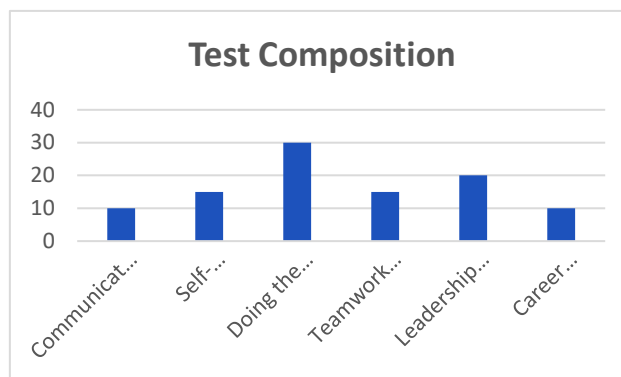
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Knowledge Areas

- Communication Skills
- Self-Awareness
- Doing the Right Thing
- Teamwork Skills
- Leadership Skills
- Career Readiness

Test questions are based on the knowledge areas and objectives outlined for this event. Detailed objectives can be found in the study guide included in these guidelines.



Region

Region Eligibility

Each chapter may enter two (2) teams of 1, 2, or 3 members of active local chapters in FBLA Connect, the FBLA membership system. An active chapter is defined as having members “pending or paid” at the time of the RLC registration deadline submitted by the region adviser to the Executive Director and published on the PA FBLA website.

In order to be registered for this event, student data is imported into Blue Panda, the event registration and competitive events management system, from FBLA Connect. Students are imported and able to be registered only if identified as having “pending or paid” membership. “Paid” membership is defined as a dues payment for the student received by National FBLA; “pending” membership is defined as membership for which payment is due to National FBLA 60 days from the date the student appears on the membership invoice.

Members may compete in an event more than once if they have not previously placed in the top ten of that event at NLC. If a member places in the top ten of an event at NLC, they are no longer eligible to compete in that event at RLC, SLC, or NLC.

This event has three parts: objective test, written report, and a live presentation. Competitors must complete all three parts to be eligible to receive an award.

It is the responsibility of the local chapter adviser

- to pay membership dues for all competitors by the published region deadline and to register students through Blue Panda by the published deadline.

Region Procedure

Objective Test

1. A 50-minute objective test will be administered individually based on the previously listed competencies. All participants in this event must complete the test in the assigned timeframe. Individual scores will be averaged to obtain the team score.

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2. The participant must comply with the PA FBLA Dress Code which can be found at <https://www.pafbla.org/about-pafbla/dress-code/>. Points will be deducted for not complying with the dress code UNLESS it is an egregious violation.
3. Participants must furnish their own writing utensil if desired.
4. At the Region Leadership Conference, the participant will be provided with a non-graphing calculator in the online testing program. Participants may not use their own calculators. No scientific calculators, graphing calculators, PDAs (Palm Pilots, etc.), phones, or other memory storage devices are allowed to be used in this event.

Pre-judged Report

1. The report will be no more than three (3) pages.
2. Competitors must research the topic and prepare a one-page summary (called a report) prior to the conference.
3. Competitors must interview three local businesspeople as part of their research and explain how the interview findings factored into their recommendations. This information must be addressed in the report and the presentation.
4. The first page of the report must include only the title (Business Ethics Summary) on the first line, names of all competitors on the second line, the name of the school on the third line, the state on the fourth line and the current year (20xx-xx) on the fifth line.
5. The second page of the report is a one-page summary of the topic and findings, with the following headings: Why the Ethical Issue Happened, How the Ethical Issue Should be Resolved, What Could Have Prevented the Ethical Issue. The one-page summary can be single spaced.
6. The third page is a works cited page.
7. Links and QR codes are restricted items in pre-judge reports; links and QR codes during presentations are for display purposes only.
8. Competitors must prepare reports. Advisers and others are not permitted to write reports. Reports must be original, current, and not submitted for a previous NLC.
9. The Region Adviser will determine the method and deadlines for the submission for the Region Competition.

Oral Presentation

1. The participant must comply with the PA FBLA Dress Code which can be found at <https://www.pafbla.org/about-pafbla/dress-code/>. Points will be deducted for not complying with the dress code UNLESS it is an egregious violation.
2. There will only be one round of competition at the region level.
3. Participants should introduce themselves to the judges.
4. Competitors must research the topic and be prepared to present their findings and solutions. The presentation must address why the ethical issues happened, how it should be resolved, and what could have prevented it.
5. Facts and data must be cited and secured from quality sources.
6. A maximum time limit of five (5) minutes will be allowed to set up and remove equipment or presentation items.
7. The chapter must provide all technology for this event at the Region Competition. Internet access will not be provided.

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8. The individual or team members must perform all aspects of the presentation (e.g., speaking, set-up, operating audiovisual equipment). Other representatives of the chapter may not provide assistance.
9. The presentation should follow the rating sheet and given topic.
10. All individuals or team members are expected to actively participate in the live performance.
11. Seven (7) minutes will be given to deliver the presentation.
12. Visual aids and samples related to the project may be used; however, no items may be left with the judges or audience.
13. At the end of six (6) minutes, a timekeeper will stand until noticed and hold up a colored timecard indicating one minute is left, and at seven (7) minutes the timekeeper will stand and hold up a colored timecard indicating time is up. When time is called, the presenter must end the presentation.
14. Following each presentation, the judges will conduct a three-minute (3) question-and-answer period.
15. The performance is open to all conference attendees, except performing participants of this event. If participants of the event view other presentations before or after their scheduled presentation time, they (or their team if they are part of one) will be disqualified.

Region Judging

Final ranking is based on up to 100 points for the objective test, plus up to 50 points for the report, plus up to 100 points for the oral presentation. Total points cannot exceed 200 points.

All objective tests will be graded through the online test service. If there is a tie between competitors, the last ten (10) test questions will be compared and the individual/team with the highest number of correct answers will be ranked higher. The process will continue in groups of ten (10) questions until the tie is broken. If, after reviewing the entire test, the tie cannot be broken, the individual/team submitting the test in the least amount of time will be ranked higher.

The report will be evaluated by a panel of judges using the rating sheet found in these guidelines. All decisions of the judges are final.

For the oral presentation, the team will be evaluated by a panel of judges using the rating sheet found in these guidelines. All decisions of the judges are final. If there is a tie, ties will be broken based on the following:

Judges must make a definitive decision on ranking. Ties are not permitted. The decision of the judges is final.

Region Awards

Each region at a **minimum** must distribute a certificate to the top five place finishers in each event.

State

State Eligibility

The minimum number of competitors each region may enter is the first- and second-place winners who are members of active local chapters on record in FBLA Connect as having dues listed as "pending or paid." Since a participant's "pending or paid" membership was required at the time of region

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conference registration, only students who are “pending or paid” appear in Blue Panda to be registered for and assigned competitive events at the State Leadership Conference.

If any of the eligible winners cannot attend the SLC, it is the responsibility of the:

local chapter adviser

- to contact the region adviser about the student who will not be attending.

region adviser

- to contact the adviser of the next eligible competitor about participating at the State Leadership Conference.
 - to notify the PA FBLA Executive Director/State Chairman of the change before the deadline date published at <https://www.pafbla.org/about-pafbla/important-dates/>, which is posted on the PA FBLA web site.

State Procedure

The following procedures must be used:

Objective Test

1. A 50-minute objective test will be administered individually based on the previously listed competencies. All participants in this event must complete the test in the assigned timeframe. Individual scores will be averaged to obtain the team score.
2. **The participant must comply with the PA FBLA Dress Code which can be found at <https://www.pafbla.org/about-pafbla/dress-code/>. Points will be deducted for not complying with the dress code UNLESS it is an egregious violation.**
3. Participants must furnish their own writing utensil if desired.
4. At the State Leadership Conference, the participant will be provided with a non-graphing calculator in the online testing program. Participants may not use their own calculators. No scientific calculators, graphing calculators, PDAs (Palm Pilots, etc.), phones, or other memory storage devices are allowed to be used in this event.

Pre-judged Report

1. The report will be no more than three (3) pages.
2. Competitors must research the topic and prepare a one-page summary (called a report) prior to the conference.
3. Competitors must interview three local businesspeople as part of their research and explain how the interview findings factored into their recommendations. This information must be addressed in the report and the presentation.
4. The first page of the report must include only the title (Business Ethics Summary) on the first line, names of all competitors on the second line, the name of the school on the third line, the state on the fourth line and the current year (20xx-xx) on the fifth line.
5. The second page of the report is a one-page summary of the topic and findings, with the following headings: Why the Ethical Issue Happened, How the Ethical Issue Should be Resolved, What Could Have Prevented the Ethical Issue. The one-page summary can be single spaced.
6. The third page is a works cited page.

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7. Competitors must prepare reports. Advisers and others are not permitted to write reports. Reports must be original, current, and not submitted for a previous NLC.
8. The report must be uploaded as a PDF in Blue Panda by the published deadline.

Oral Presentation

1. A **preliminary round** will be held to determine the top teams in the final round. All participants will be divided randomly into groups by a member of the state committee, with an equal number of the top participants from each group advancing to the final round.
 - The order of performance will be drawn at random by a member of the state committee.
 - Finalists for this event will be an equal number advancing from the preliminary round groups to a maximum of 15 in events in which there are no preliminary rounds.
2. The following procedures will be followed during the **final round**:
 - The order of performance will be drawn at random by a member of the state committee.
3. Both the rounds will be open to an audience. The performance is open to all conference attendees, except performing participants of this event. If participants of the event view other presentations before or after their scheduled presentation time, they (or their team if they are part of one) will be disqualified.
4. **The participant must comply with the PA FBLA Dress Code which can be found at <https://www.pafbla.org/about-pafbla/dress-code/>. Points will be deducted for not complying with the dress code UNLESS it is an egregious violation.**
5. Participants should introduce themselves to the judges.
6. Competitors must research the topic and be prepared to present their findings and solutions. The presentation must address why the ethical issues happened, how it should be resolved, and what could have prevented it.
7. Facts and data must be cited and secured from quality sources.
8. A maximum time limit of five (5) minutes will be allowed to set up and remove equipment or presentation items.
9. The chapter must provide the computer for the event. An LCD projector, screen, table, and electrical power will be provided on-site. Participants that will be utilizing Apple products or other devices that do not have an HDMI port will need to provide their own adapters.
10. Internet is not provided for this event. Competitors should download all presentation materials to their laptop prior to the conference.
11. The individual or team members must perform all aspects of the presentation (e.g., speaking, set-up, operating audiovisual equipment). Other representatives of the chapter may not provide assistance.
12. The presentation should follow the rating sheet and given topic.
13. All individuals or team members are expected to actively participate in the live performance.
14. Seven (7) minutes will be given to deliver the presentation.
15. Visual aids and samples related to the project may be used; however, no items may be left with the judges or audience.
16. At the end of six (6) minutes, a timekeeper will stand until noticed and hold up a colored timecard indicating one minute is left, and at seven (7) minutes the timekeeper will stand and hold up a colored timecard indicating time is up. When time is called, the presenter must end the presentation.
17. Following each presentation, the judges will conduct a three-minute (3) question-and-answer period.

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18. The performance is open to all conference attendees, except performing participants of this event. If participants of the event view other presentations before or after their scheduled presentation time, they (or their team if they are part of one) will be disqualified.

State Judging

Preliminary round ranking is based on up to 100 points for the objective test, plus up to 70 points for the report, plus up to 110 points for the oral presentation. Total points cannot exceed 280 points.

All objective tests will be graded through the online test service. If there is a tie between competitors, the last ten (10) test questions will be compared and the individual/team with the highest number of correct answers will be ranked higher. The process will continue in groups of ten (10) questions until the tie is broken. If, after reviewing the entire test, the tie cannot be broken, the individual/team submitting the test in the least amount of time will be ranked higher.

The report will be evaluated by a panel of judges using the rating sheet found in these guidelines. All decisions of the judges are final.

For the oral presentation, the team will be evaluated by a panel of judges using the rating sheet found in these guidelines. All decisions of the judges are final. If there is a tie, ties will be broken based on the following:

Judges must make a definitive decision on ranking. Ties are not permitted. The decision of the judges is final.

Final round ranking will be solely based on the final round oral presentation as evaluated by a panel of judges using the rating sheet found in these guidelines. All decisions of the judges are final. Ties are not permitted.

State Awards

The state chapter will present a maximum of ten (10) awards at the State Leadership Conference.

National Conference Eligibility

The first-, second-, third-, and fourth-place award winners at the State Leadership Conference are eligible to attend the National Leadership Conference.

If the first-, second-, third-, or fourth-place winner cannot attend, it is the responsibility of the:

local chapter adviser

- to contact the PA FBLA Executive Director/State Chairman about the student who will not be attending.

PA FBLA Executive Director/State Chairman

- to contact the next eligible award winner about participating at the National Leadership Conference.

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National

Required Competition Items

	Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides
Objective Test	- Sharpened pencil - Fully powered device for online testing - Conference-provided nametag Photo identification - Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	- One piece of scratch paper per competitor - Internet access - Test login information (link & password provided at test check-in)
Preliminary Presentation	- Conference-provided nametag Photo identification - Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code - Technology and presentation items	Table
Final Presentation	- Conference-provided nametag Photo identification - Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code - Technology and presentation items, including any adapter or cord needed beyond an HDMI connection	- Table - Power - Projector with HDMI cord - Projector screen

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in FBLA competitive events at the National Leadership Conference (NLC), the following criteria must be met:

- **Membership Deadline:** FBLA national membership dues must be paid to the specific division by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1 of the current school year.
- **Repeat Competitors:** Members may only compete in an event at the NLC more than once if they have not previously placed in the top 10 of that event at the NLC. If a member places in the top 10 of an event at the NLC, they are no longer eligible to compete in that event at future NLCs, unless the event has been modified beyond a name change. Chapter events are exempt from this procedure.
- **Conference Registration:** Members must be officially registered for the NLC and must pay the national conference registration fee to participate.
- **Official Hotel Requirement:** To be eligible to compete, competitors must stay within the official FBLA housing block.
- **State Entry Limits:** Each state may submit up to four entries per event.
- **Event Participation Limits:** Each member may participate in:
 - o One individual or team event, and
 - o One chapter event (e.g., *Community Service Project* or *Local Chapter Annual Business Report*).
- **Competitor Responsibility:** Only registered competitors are permitted to plan, research, prepare, and set up their presentations. Advisers and others may not assist.

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- **Participation Requirement:** To be eligible for an award, each competitor must complete all components of the event at the National Leadership Conference.
- **Team Composition:** All members of a team must be from the same local chapter.
- **Identification at Check-in:** Competitors must present valid photo identification (physical or digital) that matches the name on their conference name badge. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, passport, state-issued ID, or school ID.
- **Late Arrivals:** Competitors will be allowed to compete until such time that the results are finalized, or participation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event, as determined by Competitive Events staff. If judges have left the competitive event area, it is no longer possible to compete. Five penalty points will be assessed for late arrivals in any competitive event.

Event Administration

This event consists of four phases: a pre-judged asset, an objective test, preliminary presentation, and a final presentation.

Pre-judged Asset Details: Executive Summary

Submission Deadline

- A PDF of the executive summary must be uploaded through the conference registration system by the state-specified deadline.

Asset Requirements

- Number of Pages: The report will be no more than three (3) pages
- Assets must be formatted to fit standard 8.5" x 11" paper.
- Links and QR codes are not permitted.
- Advisers or others may not assist in preparing the asset. It must be created entirely by the competitor(s).
- All content must be original and created specifically for this competition.

Judging & Ownership

- Assets will be judged prior to the National Leadership Conference (NLC).
- Pre-judged assets will not be returned. All submitted projects become the property of FBLA and may be published or reproduced for promotional purposes.

Asset Specific Information

- Competitors must research the topic and prepare a one-page executive summary prior to the conference.
- Competitors must interview three local businesspeople as part of their research and explain how the interview findings factored into their recommendations. This information must be addressed in the report and the presentation.
- The first page of the report must include only the title (Business Ethics Summary) on the first line, names of all competitors on the second line, the name of the school on the third line, the state on the fourth line and the year (2026-2027) on the fifth line.
- The second page of the report is a one-page summary of the topic and findings, with the following headings: Why the Ethical Issue Happened, How the Ethical Issue Should be Resolved, What Could Have Prevented the Ethical Issue. The one-page summary can be single spaced.
- The third page is a works cited page.

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Objective Test

Each competitor will complete a 100-question multiple-choice objective test.

Test Duration

- **Test Duration:** 50 minutes

Format

- This event consists of an online objective test that is proctored and completed on-site at the National Leadership Conference (NLC).

Materials

- Reference or study materials are not permitted at the testing site.

Electronic Devices

- All electronic devices, including cell phones, smart watches, and similar technology, must be powered off prior to the start of the competition.

Team Tests

- If competing as a team, competitors must begin testing individually within a few minutes of one another. Each competitor's score will be averaged to determine the team's overall test score.

Calculators

- Personal calculators are not allowed; an online calculator will be available within the testing platform.

Question Review

- Competitors may flag questions within the testing platform for review prior to the finalization of results at the NLC.

Preliminary Presentation Details

Timing Structure

- **Equipment Set-Up:** 3 minutes
- **Presentation:** 7 minutes (a one-minute warning will be provided)
- **Question & Answer (Q&A):** 3 minutes
- **Important:** Time allocations are exclusive. The presentation must begin immediately after the 3-minute set-up time concludes. Time may not be shifted between segments. Competitors will not interact with judges during the set-up period.

Venue & Format

- Presentations occur in-person at the National Leadership Conference (NLC).
- Competitors/teams are randomly assigned to presentation sections.
- Presentations will take place in a large, open area with a designated space of approximately 10' x 10', which includes a table and chairs for the judges.
- The preliminary round is closed to conference attendees and audience.

Technology Guidelines

- **Internet Access:** Not Provided
- Presentations must be delivered using one or two personal devices (laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or monitor approximately laptop-sized).
- If using two devices, one must face the judges and the other must face the presenters.
- Projectors and projector screens are not permitted, and competitors may not bring their own.
- Wireless slide advancers (e.g., presentation clickers or mice) are allowed.
- External speakers are not allowed; audio must come directly from the presenting device(s).

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- Electricity will not be available.

Non-Technology Items

- Visual aids, samples, notes, and other physical materials related to the project may be used.
- Items may be placed on the provided table or on the judges table, if space allows.
- No items may be left with the judges following the presentation.

Restricted Items

- Animals, except for authorized service animals.
- Food, which may be used for display only and may not be consumed by judges.
- Links and QR codes, which may be shown but may not be scanned or clicked by judges at any time.

Research

- Information must be supported by credible, well-documented sources.
- Any use of copyrighted material, images, logos, or trademarks must be properly documented.

Team Expectations

- In team presentations, all members must actively participate in the delivery of the presentation.

Event Specific Information: Competitors should incorporate the following aspects in response to the topic

- **Define the Ethical Issue:** Identify and clearly define the ethical dilemma using appropriate industry terminology.
- **Analyze Contributing Factors:** Explain at least two key reasons behind the issue. Provide thoughtful analysis to demonstrate understanding of how these factors impact the situation.
- **Offer Ethical Recommendations:** Present two or more well-supported solutions to address the ethical dilemma, using credible evidence to justify each recommendation.
- **Recommend Safeguards:** Suggest at least two safeguards or preventative measures with strong supporting rationale to help avoid similar issues in the future.
- **Incorporate Research and Real-World Input:** Use accurate, well-sourced research and include insights from business professionals gathered through interviews or outreach to strengthen your analysis.

Final Presentation Details

Timing Structure

- **Equipment Set-Up:** 3 minutes
- **Presentation:** 7 minutes (a one-minute warning will be provided)
- **Question & Answer (Q&A):** 3 minutes
- **Note:** Each time segment is exclusive. Once the 3-minute set-up period ends, the 7-minute presentation time begins automatically. Competitors may not shift time between segments. Competitors will not interact with judges during the set-up period.

Advancement to Finals

- The top-scoring competitors or teams from each preliminary section will advance to the final round in equal numbers.
- The number of competitors or teams advancing to the final round depends on the number of preliminary sections:
 - 2 sections: Top 6 from each section advance

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- 3 sections: Top 4 from each section advance
- 4 sections: Top 3 from each section advance
- 5 sections: Top 3 from each section advance
- More than 5 sections: Top 2 from each section advance

Audience & Viewing Rules

- Final presentations may be open to conference attendees, depending on space availability.
- Finalists may not view other presentations in their own event.

Technology Guidelines

- **Internet Access:** Not Provided
- Presentations must be delivered using one or two personal devices (laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or monitor approximately laptop-sized).
- If using two devices, one must face the judges and the other must face the presenters.
- If the final round takes place in a conference room, the following equipment will be provided: a projector, projector screen, power access, and a table.
- Competitors using laptops or devices without an HDMI port must bring their own compatible adapters.
- It is the responsibility of final-round competitors to decide whether or not to use the provided technology.
- Wireless slide advancers (e.g., presentation clickers or mice) are allowed.
- Electricity will not be available.

Non-Technology Items

- Visual aids, samples, notes, and other physical materials related to the project may be used.
- Items may be placed on the provided table or on the judges table, if space allows.
- No items may be left with the judges following the presentation.

Restricted Items

- Animals, except for authorized service animals.
- Food, which may be used for display only and may not be consumed by judges.
- Links and QR codes, which may be shown but may not be scanned or clicked by judges at any time.

Research

- Information must be supported by credible, well-documented sources.
- Any use of copyrighted material, images, logos, or trademarks must be properly documented.

Team Expectations

- In team presentations, all members must actively participate in the delivery of the presentation.

Event Specific Information: Competitors should incorporate the following aspects in response to the topic

- **Define the Ethical Issue:** Identify and clearly define the ethical dilemma using appropriate industry terminology.
- **Analyze Contributing Factors:** Explain at least two key reasons behind the issue. Provide thoughtful analysis to demonstrate understanding of how these factors impact the situation.
- **Offer Ethical Recommendations:** Present two or more well-supported solutions to address the ethical dilemma, using credible evidence to justify each recommendation.

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- **Recommend Safeguards:** Suggest at least two safeguards or preventative measures with strong supporting rationale to help avoid similar issues in the future.
- **Support Analysis with Research and Professional Perspectives:** Use accurate, well-sourced research and include insights from business professionals gathered through interviews or outreach to strengthen your analysis.

Scoring

- The pre-judged asset score, team-averaged objective test score, and preliminary presentation round scores will be added together to determine which competitors advance to the final round from each section.
- The final presentation score determines the top winners.
- Pre-judged asset score will be used to break a tie.
- All judging decisions are final. Results announced at the National Leadership Conference are considered official and will not be changed after the conclusion of the National Leadership Conference.

Penalty Points

- Competitors may be disqualified if they violate the Code of Conduct or the Honor Code.
- Five points are deducted if competitors do not follow the Dress Code or are late to their assigned presentation time.

Recognition

- A maximum of 10 entries (individuals or teams) may be recognized per event.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- FBLA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodations for competitors. Accommodation requests must be submitted through the conference registration system by the official registration deadline. All requests will be reviewed, and additional documentation may be required to determine eligibility and appropriate support.

Recording of Presentations

- Unauthorized audio or video recording is strictly prohibited in all competitive events.
- FBLA reserves the right to record presentations for educational, training, or archival purposes. Competitors should be aware that their presentations may be recorded by FBLA-authorized personnel.

Important FBLA Documents

- Competitors should be familiar with the [Competitive Events Operations Manual](#), [Honor Code](#), [Code of Conduct](#), and [Dress Code](#).

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Background Information and Topic

You've probably heard phrases like "grace under fire," "rising to the occasion," or "cool under pressure" to describe athletes, first responders, or doctors before. Being at your best when facing adversity is an excellent quality for individuals, but it's also a great quality for businesses. Just one organization can have hundreds, thousands, or even millions of stakeholders who are impacted by its actions. That means when challenges arise and the stakes are at their highest, businesses need to make sound decisions...or else risk hurting others.

One sector where businesses must constantly be at the top of their game is the food industry. There is perhaps no commodity more universal than food—people need it every day, which means that food companies must oversee incredibly complicated and diverse production, processing, and distribution systems to fulfill demand.

It also means that when something goes wrong, the consequences can be severe. In July 2026, it was revealed that some commercially sold lettuce in the United States contained the parasite *Cyclospora*. The resulting foodborne illnesses caused hundreds of hospitalizations and several deaths. Producer Taylor Farms was pressured to recall its lettuce in 27 states, and the company is now losing business and under intense scrutiny.

It is simply essential that businesses, especially those in industries where the safety of the public is at stake, be equipped with the tools to quickly and correctly address crises. They need a strong ethical framework to help them navigate challenging situations and make difficult decisions.

Ethics are the basic principles (such as integrity, transparency, and trust) that govern our behavior. In the business world, ethics are essential to navigating issues ranging from individual employee conflicts to corporate sustainability practices. For organizations in the food industry, demonstrating sound ethical principles ensures that no matter what comes their way—whether it be logistical failures, like product shortages and transportation breakdowns, or public health emergencies, like contaminated or diseased food—they can reduce societal harm and maintain stakeholder trust.

High School Topic

Tony is the CEO of Prime Label Meats, a beef and poultry processing company. Prime Label is one of the largest meat companies in the country and sells hundreds of millions of pounds of meat every week.

The quality assurance team brings an urgent development to Tony: Traces of a highly dangerous and infectious bacterium were found in a small batch of their beef product. Thankfully, this was an isolated incident, and the bacteria have been contained. The quality team has identified the cattle herd and processing plant that sourced the infected beef and has adjusted production and quarantine patterns accordingly. The team is continuing to run tests nationwide to find any additional traces of the bacteria.

But seeing as Prime Label distributes massive amounts of beef every day, it will be impossible to check every batch. Tony consults with the operations and legal teams, and he is considering enacting a complete recall of all their beef products. A recall is the only way to ensure that all infected beef is identified and customers aren't harmed.

However, a consultation with the financial and public relations teams makes Tony hesitate. The company's CFO warns him that a total beef recall would have grave consequences. Prime Label would experience huge losses that might take years—or even decades—to recover from. Furthermore, the food industry as a whole would suffer. Supermarkets, cattle ranchers, and fast food restaurants would all take serious hits.

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The public relations team also reminds Tony that a recall would likely incite panic among customers. Consumer trust in Prime Label would plummet, as would trust in any restaurant or retailer that sells beef. The finance and PR teams suggest resuming most operations as normal, and perhaps not even informing the public of the contamination in the first place.

What do you think Tony should do? Should he implement the recall? Should he inform the public of the food safety issue? How should Prime Label balance consumer safety with the broader economic consequences of their decisions?

Suggested Questions

- What ethical principles (e.g., respect, transparency, integrity, trust, fairness, accountability, viability, rule of law) play a role in this dilemma? Does one play a larger role than others? Which one—and why is that the case?
- Who will be impacted by Tony's decision in this dilemma? Which stakeholders should Tony prioritize?
- Consider the different Prime Label departments mentioned in this scenario: quality assurance, operations, legal, finance, public relations. How should Tony balance the perspectives, input, and objectives of these different teams as he manages this dilemma?

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Objective Test Study Guide: Knowledge Areas and Objectives

*This study guide outlines the skills and knowledge assessed for this event. Objectives followed by a two-letter, three-digit code in parentheses are aligned to the National Business Administration Standards from MBA Research and Curriculum Center. Some objectives reference MBA Research's Learning Activity Packages (LAPs), which are instructional resources with readings, activities, and assessments available **exclusively to teacher advisers**. For more information, visit MBAResearch.org/FBLA.*

Important Notice Regarding Test Preparation

*MBA Research materials are **not required** to study for or prepare for FBLA competitive event tests. MBA Research provides curriculum and instructional resources directly to teachers and does not administer or manage individual student testing or competition participation.*

Note for members and parents: All questions related to tests, study materials, scores, or competition guidelines should be directed to the local FBLA adviser. Only teacher advisers should contact MBA Research directly.

Communication Skills (10 test items)

1. Demonstrate active listening skills (CO:017, LAP-CO-017) (PQ)
2. Explain the nature of effective communications (EI:007, LAP-EI-140) (PQ)
3. Foster open, honest communication (EI:129, LAP-EI-129) (SP)

Self-Awareness (15 test items)

1. Describe the nature of emotional intelligence (EI:001, LAP-EI-001) (PQ)
2. Recognize and overcome personal biases and stereotypes (EI:017, LAP-EI-917) (PQ)
3. Assess personal strengths and weaknesses (EI:002, LAP-EI-902) (PQ)
4. Assess personal behavior and values (EI:126, LAP-EI-126) (PQ)
5. Assess risks of personal decisions (EI:091, LAP-EI-091) (PQ)

Doing the Right Thing (30 test items)

1. Demonstrate honesty and integrity (EI:022, LAP-EI-138) (PQ)
2. Demonstrate responsible behavior (EI:021, LAP-EI-021) (PQ)
3. Demonstrate fairness (EI:127, LAP-EI-127) (PQ)
4. Take responsibility for decisions and actions (EI:075, LAP-EI-075) (PQ)
5. Build trust in relationships (EI:128, LAP-EI-128) (CS)
6. Describe the nature of ethics (EI:123, LAP-EI-123) (CS)
7. Explain reasons for ethical dilemmas (EI:124, LAP-EI-124) (CS)
8. Recognize and respond to ethical dilemmas (EI:125, LAP-EI-125) (CS)
9. Explain the use of feedback for personal growth (EI:003, LAP-EI-903) (PQ)
10. Show empathy for others (EI:030, LAP-EI-030) (PQ)
11. Comply with the spirit and intent of laws and regulations (BL:163, LAP-BL-163) (CS)

Teamwork Skills (15 test items)

1. Participate as a team member (EI:045, LAP-EI-045) (CS)
2. Treat others with dignity and respect (EI:036, LAP-EI-036) (PQ)
3. Foster positive working relationships (EI:037, LAP-EI-037) (CS)
4. Assess long-term value and impact of actions on others (EI:137, LAP-EI-137) (SP)

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Leadership Skills (20 test items)

1. Explain the concept of leadership (EI:009, LAP-EI-909) (CS)
2. Explain the nature of ethical leadership (EI:131, LAP-EI-131) (CS)
3. Model ethical behavior (EI:132, LAP-EI-132) (CS)
4. Determine personal vision (EI:063, LAP-EI-063) (CS)
5. Inspire others (EI:133, LAP-EI-133) (CS)
6. Develop an achievement orientation (EI:027, LAP-EI-027) (CS)
7. Enlist others in working toward a shared vision (EI:060, LAP-EI-060) (CS)

Career Readiness (10 test items)

1. Set personal goals (PD:018, LAP-PD-918) (CS)
2. Follow rules of conduct (PD:251, LAP-PD-251) (CS)
3. Make decisions (PD:017, LAP-PD-017) (CS)
4. Demonstrate problem-solving skills (PD:077, LAP-PD-077) (CS)

References for Knowledge Areas & Objectives

Daniels Fund. *Daniels Fund Ethics Initiative*. <https://www.danielsfund.org/ethics/overview>

MBA Research and Curriculum Center. *National Business Administration Standards*.
<https://www.mbaresearch.org/local-educators/teaching-resources/standards/>

Ethics Unwrapped. <https://ethicsunwrapped.utexas.edu>

Harvard Business School Online. *What are business ethics & why are they important?*
<https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/business-ethics>

Markkula Center for Applied Ethics. <https://www.scu.edu/ethics/>

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Business Ethics Pre-Judged Asset (Report) Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Content					
Identifies and defines ethical issues presented in the topic	<i>No identification of ethical issues as it relates to the event guidelines</i>	<i>Identifies OR defines the ethical issues</i>	<i>Identifies and defines the ethical issues</i>	<i>Identifies and defines the ethical issues using industry terminology</i>	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
Explains why the ethical issues happened	<i>No reasons cited for the ethical issues</i>	<i>Reasons for the ethical issues identified but were not on target</i>	<i>Several, but not all, reasons accurately identified</i>	<i>All reasons addressed and analyzed</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Provides logical solutions as to how the ethical issues should be resolved	<i>No solutions are presented, or solutions are unrelated to the identified ethical issue.</i>	<i>One solution is presented, but it lacks clarity, relevance, or logical support.</i>	<i>One or two logical solutions are provided, showing understanding of the ethical issue and supported with some reasoning.</i>	<i>Two or more well-reasoned, clearly explained solutions are provided, demonstrating strong understanding of the ethical issue and supported with credible evidence or analysis.</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Recommends safeguards that should have been in place to prevent the ethical issues	<i>No safeguards are identified or proposed.</i>	<i>One general safeguard is mentioned, but it lacks detail, relevance, or explanation of how it would prevent the issue.</i>	<i>One or two relevant safeguards are recommended, with a basic explanation of how they could have prevented the ethical issue.</i>	<i>Two or more clearly defined, realistic safeguards are recommended and thoroughly explained, showing strong understanding of how each could have proactively addressed or prevented the ethical dilemma</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Substantiates and cites sources used while conducting research	<i>Sources are not cited</i>	<i>Sources/References are seldom cited to support statements</i>	<i>Professionally legitimate sources & resources that support statements are generally present</i>	<i>Compelling evidence from professionally legitimate sources & resources is given to support statements</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Business Interviews & Integration of Insights	<i>No business interviews are included, or interviews are mentioned without any explanation or relevance to the recommendations.</i>	<i>Fewer than three businesspeople are interviewed, or the explanation of their input is unclear or only loosely connected to the recommendations.</i>	<i>Three interviews are completed, and findings are summarized with a basic explanation of how insights influenced the recommendations.</i>	<i>Three or more interviews are clearly summarized, and insights are thoughtfully analyzed and directly connected to the recommendations, demonstrating a strong integration of real-world perspectives.</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Report Format					
Includes correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling	<i>5 or more grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors</i>	<i>3-4 grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors</i>	<i>No more than 2 grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors</i>	<i>No more than 1 grammar, punctuation, or spelling error</i>	

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	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points
Guideline Protocols				
Adherence to Competitive Events Guidelines	Competitor(s) Did Not Follow Guidelines	Execution Aligned with Guidelines: ✓ Executive Summary was submitted as PDF ✓ Links or QR codes were not used (unless in citations) ✓ Executive Summary was no more than 3 pages: Page 1 title, Page 2 summary, Page 3 works cited ✓ Executive Summary was formatted for 8 ½" x 11" paper		
	0 points	1-10 points		
Pre-Judged Asset Total (70 points)				
Name(s):				
School:				Section:
Judge Signature:				Date:
Comments:				

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Business Ethics Presentation Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Content					
Identifies and defines ethical issues presented in the topic	No identification of ethical issues as it relates to the event guidelines	Identifies OR defines the ethical issues	Identifies and defines the ethical issues	Identifies and defines the ethical issues using industry terminology	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Explains why the ethical issues happened	No reasons cited for the ethical issues	One reason for the ethical issue(s) identified but were not on target	One reason identified for the ethical issue(s) identified and on target	Two or more reasons identified, on target, and analyzed	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Provides logical recommendations as to how the ethical issues should be resolved	No solutions are presented, or solutions are unrelated to the identified ethical issue.	One solution is presented, but it lacks clarity, relevance, or logical support.	One or two logical solutions are provided, showing understanding of the ethical issue and supported with some reasoning.	Two or more well-reasoned, clearly explained solutions are provided, demonstrating strong understanding of the ethical issue and supported with credible evidence or analysis.	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Recommends safeguards that should have been in place to prevent the ethical issues	No safeguards are identified or proposed.	One general safeguard is mentioned, but it lacks detail, relevance, or explanation of how it would prevent the issue.	One or two relevant safeguards are recommended, with a basic explanation of how they could have prevented the ethical issue.	Two or more clearly defined, realistic safeguards are recommended and thoroughly explained, showing strong understanding of how each could have proactively addressed or prevented the ethical dilemma	
	0 points	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Research shows quality and related information to the ethical issues and incorporates input of businesspeople interviewed	No research done with 3 or more inaccurate statements	Research is unrelated to the ethical topic and 1-2 inaccurate statements	All research is accurate with no reference made to supporting evidence	Research is accurate with supporting evidence provided; incorporates input of businesspeople interviewed as part of presentation	
	0 points	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Substantiates and cites sources used while conducting research	Sources are not cited	Sources/References are seldom cited to support statements	Professionally legitimate sources & resources that support statements are generally present	Compelling evidence from professionally legitimate sources & resources is given to support statements	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Presentation Delivery					
Statements are well-organized and clearly stated	Competitor(s) did not appear prepared	Competitor(s) were prepared, but flow was not logical	Presentation flowed in logical sequence	Presentation flowed in a logical sequence; statements were well organized	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Consistently displays confidence, poised body language, engaging eye contact, and effective voice projection.	Did not demonstrate any of the listed skills	Demonstrated 1-2 of the listed skills (confidence, body language, eye contact, or voice projection)	Demonstrated 3 of the listed skills (confidence, body language, eye contact, or voice projection)	Demonstrated all skills, enhancing the overall presentation	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Demonstrates the ability to effectively answer questions	Does not respond to questions or responses are completely off-topic.	Provides incomplete or unclear answers that show limited understanding.	Responds accurately and clearly to most questions, showing adequate understanding.	Responds confidently with clear, accurate, and thoughtful answers that enhance the overall presentation.	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	

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Presentation Protocols			
Adherence to Competitive Events Guidelines	Competitor(s) Did Not Follow Guidelines	Execution Aligned with Guidelines: ✓ Used only allowable technology devices (sizing specs followed; maximum of two, with only one facing judges at a time) ✓ Presentation aligned with the assigned topic ✓ Maintained professional boundaries during set-up time (no interaction with judges) ✓ Did not leave materials behind after the presentation ✓ Links or QR codes were displayed appropriately (not clicked or scanned by judges) ✓ Audio was presented without external speakers (preliminary round) ✓ Avoided use of food or live animals	
	0 points	1-10 points	
Staff Only: Penalty Points (5 points for dress code penalty and/or 5 points for late arrival penalty)			
Presentation Total (110 points)			
Name(s):			
School:			Section:
Judge Signature:			Date:
Comments:			