



2011 UTAH FFA  
**AGRICULTURE COMMUNICATIONS**  
CAREER DEVELOPMENT EVENT



# Tips & Information Packet

*“FFA Recruitment &  
Educational Activities”*

## **Introduction**

The Utah FFA Agricultural Communications CDE is becoming more in depth and we are becoming more and more aligned with the National contest. A lot of teams really put all of their attention into just the proposal or the team presentation and think it will pull them through, but there are a lot of different parts to the contest that will affect the outcome for your team. I have decided to put together a Tips and Information Packet on the contest so you can get a better idea on how to train your team or even little tips that will make your team stand out above the rest.

## **Communication Quiz- 25pts for individual**

Each team member will complete a 25 question quiz that covers basic elements in the areas of communication. These questions will be randomly selected from the **2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009** National Agriculture Communication Quiz's. These quizzes' can be found in the past question and answer CD's Packets or by contacting the event superintendent.

### **Tips on Successfully Taking the Communication Quiz:**

- Make copies of each quiz and give to students in advance to study
- During each practice give students a different quiz to take
- The questions on the state quiz are word for word off the National Quiz's so if students have spent the time to memorize them they should do well at state on the quiz.
- Last year the average on the quiz was a **13** out of **25** points. Add that up between 4 students and it can really hurt your overall score!

## **Editing Quiz-25pts for individual**

Students will be given a printed document that contains up to 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members will be required to use correct proofreader's marks. Style, grammar, punctuation and spelling mistakes will be included. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

### **Tips on Successfully Taking the Editing Quiz:**

- Make copies of old National Editing Quiz and give to students in advance
- During practice give students a different quiz to take
- I have included a Proofreaders Marks page and those will be the symbols that students need to know. That will be the sheet the judges will be using.
- Last year the average on the editing quiz was a **14.5** out of **25** points.

# Proofreading Marks

The mark	What it means	How to use it
	Delete: take out something here.	car <del>y</del> mufflers should <del>should</del>
	Insert: add something here.	You <sup>are</sup> afraid o <sup>f</sup> mice.
	Add space here.	Jugglers <sup> </sup> buy <sup> </sup> a lot of eggs.
	No space: close the gap.	some <sup>(</sup> body
	Delete and close the gap.	the gir <del>r</del> affe
	New paragraph here.	"Yes." said Jack. <sup>¶</sup> "All right." said Jill.
	No paragraph: keep sentences together.	The meeting was brief. It lasted twenty minutes.
	Transpose: switch these things.	fr <del>ie</del> nds <sup>both</sup> were <sup>l</sup>
	Change or insert this letter.	l <sup>i</sup> ke s <sup>c</sup> uccess
	Make this a capital letter.	old dr. <sup>≡≡</sup> smith
	Make this a small letter.	My <del>U</del> ncle lost a <del>S</del> hovel.
	Spell it out.	His <sup>o</sup> friends are Fido <sup>o</sup> Spot.
	Insert a period.	It was raining. I got wet.
	Insert a comma.	"London, England," he said.
	Insert an apostrophe.	It's a dog's life.
	Insert quotation marks.	"You're a pane," said the door.
	Is this correct? Check it.	Columbus sailed in <u>1942</u> . <sup>?</sup>

**Proposal-150pts: 5 copies need to be postmarked on or before April 1<sup>st</sup>!**

The key to producing a good communications project proposal is to select a project that is specific enough that you will be able to do a good job with it.

**Tips for Making a Great Proposal**

- The maximum amount of pages for the proposal is 12 and I suggest you take up the entire 12 pages! A great proposal will explain the project in depth and it really should take almost those 12 pages to do so. If you have empty space in your proposal put pictures in it that pertain to your topic.
- Create a nice cover page for your proposal that captures what your project is about (photos, emblems, title, ect.) also stating your chapter, the contestants names and date.
- There are certain sections that Nationals outlines should be in a proposal and these are:
  - ✓ **A Rationale** for selecting the project, including background information that helps provide judges with an understanding of the project and the situation or locale where it will be implemented.
  - ✓ **Objectives** of the project and what it is to accomplish.
  - ✓ **Audiences** to be targeted by your project. Usually you have about 4-5 with a write up about each audience and how you plan to target them.
  - ✓ **Key Messages** of your project. State your key message and then explain in a paragraph below how you are going to affectively use that message to target your audiences.
  - ✓ **Media Resources.** This should be one of your biggest sections of your proposal. You should identify each one of your media resources (brochures, fliers, TV, radio, website, etc.) you are going to use for your project then state them in your proposal. Each one should have a write up about it to explain how that media resource will be used to target your audiences.
  - ✓ **Budget** to produce the materials of your project and show the expenses and income on how you're going to pay for the project.
  - ✓ **A Criteria or Evaluation** to show how well the project accomplished its stated objectives or if you haven't done your project yet how it will be evaluated.
- Use AP Style when editing and proofreading the proposal. Proofread, Proofread, Proofread your students work!
- Look at examples of past National Winning Proposals on the CDE Q & A guide. You can learn a lot on how to format your proposal so it looks nice.

### **Presentation-150 pts:**

The purpose of the presentation is to give students the chance to verbally explain their written proposal and demonstrate their media resources. There is no set structure in which the presentation should be made, but having said that there is certain things that you need to communicate your proposal.

### **Tips on Creating a Great Presentation**

- First and foremost, make sure your media equipment is running correctly! The last thing you want to happen is not have your presentation go as planned because of a technical difficulty. The college does have a projector to use, but if you have the ability to bring your own laptop hooked up to your own projector that you can just wheel it in on a cart all ready to go I guarantee your team will a lot more comfortable knowing everything is going to work!
- Follow the outline of your proposal! Judges have your proposal in hand and are looking for you to communicate it verbally to them. You should cover every section of the guidelines for the proposal.
- Bring copies of any media resources that you have in your proposal. If you say you're going to use a TV spot, make a TV ad and show it to the judges. The media section of your proposal should be crazy good and should be the highlight of the presentation.
- Have each student take equal turns during the presentation.
- Have your strongest public speaker start out and end the presentation.
- Use good transition phrases when going from speaker to speaker such as "I would now like to turn the presentation over to Jane to talk about our target audiences". Phrases like that make the presentation much easier to follow.
- Have students memorize their parts! It goes much more smoothly and the whole presentation looks a lot more professional.
- Be creative in some aspect of your presentation to try to set yourself apart from the rest of the teams. Amazing props, cool video, great intro, but keep it pertaining to your proposal.
- Remember that you are trying to sell your chapters' idea for a project so you are presenting like you are talking to whoever it is you want to approve this project. Not just telling them about it.
- Be confident and have fun!

## **Practicums- 100pts per individual**

Practicums are super important and can either win you the contest or lose it for your team. It is very important that students understand and know their practicums inside and out to be successful in the contest. Please refer to the 2006-2011 CDE handbook for explanations of all the individual practicums. Here are a few tips on each practicum to be successful in the Utah Ag. Communications Event.

### **Tips for the News Writer & Press Release Practicum**

- Unfortunately at this point we do not have computers for students to use so we provide lined paper.
- Make sure students write legibly and neatly
- Have them review story for any mistakes they may have made.
- Press Release should be in a Press Release Format to see what that looks like National FFA has some great examples if you google FFA press releases they will show up.

### **Tips for the Graphic Design Practicum**

- This year students will be using the National Agriculture Communications program Adobe InDesign CS5 for this practicum. This program is available for a free 30 day trial from the Adobe website and should be downloaded onto the laptop you choose to bring to the contest. InDesign can be a complicated program if students are not familiar with it so students need to practice setting up a two page format before the contest.
- Students will receive a disc with all the photos, graphics and dummy text on it.
- Have students select the best photos or graphics to communicate their story.
- For the graphic exercise, they will be given a sheet with statistics pertaining to the news conference. They need to choose the best statistic and create a chart based off those statistics. Pie charts are usually the best. **Tip:** Give chart a name and put a caption at the bottom of it.
- Make sure your captions follow AP Style. Example would be:

*On May 29, 2009 the Bigtown FFA Chapter reached their goal of raising just over 5,000 pounds of food for the local food bank.*

- Don't be afraid to use color!
- Make sure layout is nice and neat and would be usable in an agriculture magazine

## Tips for the Broadcaster Practicum

- Bring a tape recorder!
- Make sure your student knows how to use an old tape recorder!
- In the broadcasters packet they will have a quote sheet with quotes on it from the news conference in the morning. Broadcasters are to use at least 2 of those quotes in their broadcast. When they use a quote they are to say “insert quote 4” then they can say the quote they are to use. But make sure they identify the quote so they judge can know which one they used. This is new from last year but lines up with what national does in the broadcasting practicum.

## **Practice, Practice, Practice!**

One of the best things I ever did to prepare an agriculture communications team on practicums was to set up a mock press conference. I would have students take notes while I gave them a 5-10 minute speech on a topic. Usually it would be on community service or something easy that didn't take a lot of preparation. After I spoke I would give them 1 hour of uninterrupted time to do their practicum. For the graphic designer you need to set up a folder with photos, dummy text, and graphics (just grab some off the internet it will take you less than 10 minutes to set this up) and have them do a 2 page layout on InDesign. After they are done you can review there practicums with them and see what they need to work at. It truly makes a difference if students have practiced and know what to expect.

Hopefully this tips and info packet helps prepare your team. I want everyone to be successful and have a good experience so if you have any questions at all please don't hesitate to contact me.

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