

# 2024-25 Competitive Events Guidelines

## Interpersonal Communication



Interpersonal Communication provides members with the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge around competencies in interpersonal communication. This competitive event consists of an objective test. It aims to inspire members to learn about how communication, between two or more people, happens by exchanging messages, ideas, and information.

### Event Overview

**Division:** Middle School

**Event Type:** Individual

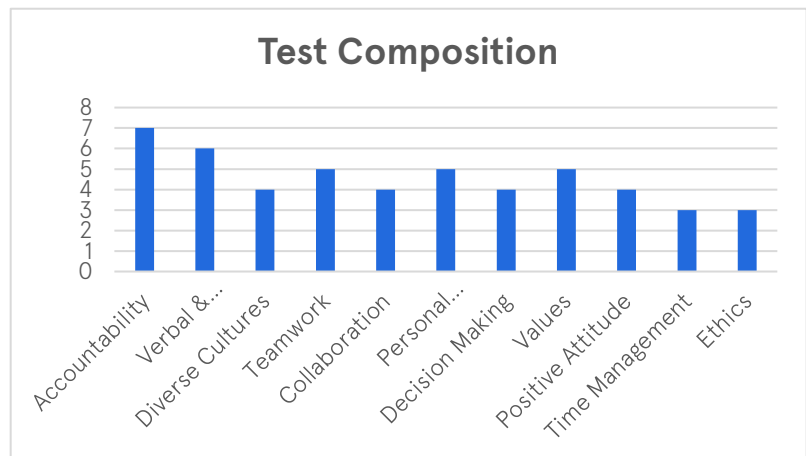
**Event Category:** Objective Test, 50-multiple choice questions (breakdown of question by competencies below)

**Objective Test Time:** 30 minutes

**NACE Connections:** Career & Self-Development

### Competencies

- Accountability
- Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
- Diverse Cultures
- Teamwork
- Collaboration
- Personal Appearance
- Decision Making
- Values
- Positive Attitude
- Time Management
- Ethics



### State

Testing will happen prior to the State Leadership Conference. Check the Call to Conference for any other competitive events information and deadlines.

### National

#### Required Competition Items

Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharpened pencil</li> <li>• Fully powered <a href="#">device for online testing</a></li> <li>• Conference-provided nametag</li> <li>• Attire that meets the <a href="#">FBLA Dress Code</a></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One piece of scratch paper per competitor</li> <li>• Internet access</li> <li>• Test login information (link &amp; password)</li> </ul>

#### Important FBLA Documents

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

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### *Eligibility*

- FBLA membership dues are paid by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on March 1 of the current program year.
- Members may compete in an event at the National Leadership Conference (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.
- Members must be registered for the NLC and pay the national conference registration fee to participate in competitive events.
- Members must stay in an official FBLA hotel block to compete.
- Each state may submit four entries per event.
- Each member can only compete in one individual/team event and one chapter event (Annual Chapter Activities Presentation or Community Service Presentation).
- If competitors are late for their assigned objective test time, they will be allowed to compete with a five-point penalty until such time that results are finalized, or the accommodation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event.
- Some competitive events start in the morning before the Opening Session of NLC. The schedules for competitive events are displayed in the local time of the NLC location. Competitive event schedules cannot be changed.

### *Recognition*

- The number of competitors will determine the number of winners. The maximum number of winners for each competitive event is 10.

### *Event Administration*

- This event is an objective test administered online at the NLC.
- No reference or study materials may be brought to the testing site.
- No calculators may be brought into the testing site; online calculators will be provided through the testing software.
- Competitors may flag questions within the online testing platform for the Competitive Events Committee to review before finalizing results at the NLC.

### *Tie Breaker*

- Ties are broken by comparing the correct number of answers to 10 pre-determined questions on the test. If a tie remains, answers to 20 pre-determined questions on the test will be reviewed to determine the winner. If a tie remains, the competitor who completed the test in a shorter amount of time will place higher.

### *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*

- FBLA meets the criteria specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act for all competitors with accommodations submitted through the conference registration system by the registration deadline.

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### *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 the testing site.

### *Electronic Devices*

- Unless a pre-approved accommodation is in place, all cell phones, smart watches, and headphones must be turned off and put away before competition begins. Any visibility of these devices will be considered a violation of the Honor Code.

## Study Guide: Competencies and Tasks

- A. Accountability
  1. Define accountability.
  2. Explain how effective leaders are accountable for their actions.
  3. Explain tenants of accountability (goals, expectations, successes, and failures).
  4. Describe how accountability is the key to great communication.
  5. Explain why accountability of all team members is important for success.
  6. Explain how personal accountability serves as a role model for other members of a team.
  7. Describe how improving communication in the workplace counts toward transparency and accountability.
- B. Verbal and Nonverbal Communication
  1. List examples of effective verbal communication skills.
  2. Explain the importance of active listening.
  3. Define open-ended questions.
  4. Emphasize the importance of speaking clearly and concisely.
  5. Describe how humor can enhance communication.
  6. Explain how open-ended questions gain greater insights.
  7. Explain how asking for clarification can improve communication.
  8. Define verbal communication.
  9. List the steps for effective verbal communication (strong, confident speaking voice, active listening, and avoid filler words).
  10. List examples of nonverbal communication.
  11. Define nonverbal communication.
  12. Give examples of effective visual communication for different audiences.
  13. Explain how to refine written communication skills (review written communications for accuracy and keep a file of writing you find effective or enjoyable).
  14. List and define forms of communication (verbal, written, and nonverbal).
  15. Describe types of nonverbal communication (proximity, body movements, posture, touch, facial expressions, and eye contact).
  16. List reasons why eye contact is important.
  17. Explain the relationship between effective communication and self-confidence.
  18. Define the benefits of self-confidence (improves problem-solving skills, improves company communication, overcomes workplace obstacles and challenges, and improves overall work performance).
- C. Diverse Cultures

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1. Explain the importance of communicating effectively with people from other cultures.
  2. Explain why it is important to learn about different cultures before meeting someone.
  3. Understand how cultures are impacted by hierarchies.
  4. Describe obstacles that must be overcome when communicating with individuals from other cultures.
  5. Explain the roles of respect and tolerance when communicating with people from other cultures.
  6. Define high-context cultures (heavily nonverbal).
  7. Define low-context cultures (depend largely on words).
  8. Describe how eye contact, touch, gestures, physical distance, facial expressions, appearance, posture, paralanguage, and context impact cultural communication.
- D. Teamwork
1. Explain the use of teams in organizations.
  2. Explain the difference between a group and a team.
  3. Explain advantages and disadvantages of teamwork.
  4. Describe characteristics of effective teams and the role of leadership.
  5. Contrast characteristics of different teams (functional, cross-functional, and self-managed).
  6. Describe the difference between leader-centered and group-centered decision making.
  7. Explain the difference between individual and team decision making.
  8. Explain how successful teams build relationships that thrive.
  9. Explain how effective teamwork involves openly communicating ideas without the fear of outrage.
  10. Explain the importance of respecting team members' ideas for effective communication.
  11. Explain how effective teams create workplace satisfaction.
  12. Explain how effective teams increase employee engagement and foster a more productive and talented workforce.
  13. Describe how effective teams create a safe place for people to think creatively.
- E. Collaboration
1. Define collaborative communication.
  2. List skills that contribute to successful collaboration.
  3. Explain how successful collaboration depends on the ability to get along with people, be able to listen, and be open-minded.
  4. Describe how the roles of compromise, ability to see the big picture, and problem-solving abilities have a direct relationship to collaboration.
  5. Explain the role of conflict negotiation for groups.
  6. List essential skills for successful collaborators and project managers.
  7. Define brainstorming.
  8. Describe the need for commitment and enthusiasm for effective collaboration.
- F. Personal Appearance
1. Describe how personal appearance affects communication.
  2. Explain how personal appearance is nonverbal communication.
  3. Explain why personal appearance is important in the workplace.
  4. Describe assumptions individuals make based upon a person's appearance.

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5. Describe the elements of personal appearance (choice of color, clothing, hairstyles, and other factors).
  6. Describe how personal appearance provides the visual and video modes of human communication.
  7. Explain stereotyping based upon personal appearance.
- G. Decision Making
1. List the steps of the decision-making process (identify the decision, gather relevant information, identify alternatives, weigh the evidence, and select an alternative).
  2. Identify the four stages of the decision-making process (intelligence, design, choice, and implementation).
  3. Describe an autocratic leader.
  4. Describe a democratic leader.
  5. Describe how decisions are based upon past personal experiences.
  6. Explain why it is important to evaluate decisions.
  7. Explain how decisions are based upon precedent.
- H. Values
1. Define values.
  2. Explain how interpersonal communication is impacted by personal values.
  3. Explain how different values can result in a breakdown of communication.
  4. Explain the importance of respecting individuals who have different values.
  5. Explain the high value placed upon free speech.
  6. Understand that workplace teams will have individuals with differing values.
- I. Positive Attitude
1. Explain the relationship between positive attitude and open communication.
  2. Explain how effective communication depends on the ability to read the attitudes of other persons or groups.
  3. Explain how attitude can affect business communication in both positive and negative ways.
  4. Define the four types of attitudes (passive, passive aggressive, aggressive, and assertive).
  5. Explain how your emotions and your awareness of others' emotions could improve your communication.
  6. Explain how pleasant, respectful, upbeat, attitudes throughout an office improve upward and downward communication, which increases morale, productivity, and sales.
- J. Time Management
1. Define time management.
  2. Explain how time management involves setting priorities.
  3. Describe how time management involves goal setting.
  4. List time management skills (organization, prioritization, goal setting, communication, planning, and delegation).
  5. Define delegation of duties.
  6. Describe time saving techniques.
  7. Explain why it is important to evaluate project end results to improve time management.
- K. Ethics
1. Explain the fundamentals of ethical communication.

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2. Describe how interpersonal communication ethics are different from other forms of communication ethics.
3. Explain how interpersonal communication is the ethical mandate to protect and promote the good of the relationship.
4. List the fundamentals of ethical communication (transparency, consideration of potential roadblocks, and development of relationships).
5. List the principles of ethical communication (truthful and honest, active listening, speaking non-judgmentally, speak from your own experience, and consider the receiver's preferred communication channel).
6. Explain how ethical communication strives to understand, avoids a negative tone, does not interrupt others, respects privacy and confidentiality, and accepts responsibility.
7. List examples of businesses directly involved with ethical issues (medical, education, and real estate).