

***EMPLOYMENT SKILLS  
LEADERSHIP  
DEVELOPMENT EVENT***

***RULES AND REGULATIONS  
INDIVIDUAL COMPETITION***



***ALABAMA FFA ASSOCIATION***

<b>Purpose.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Eligibility and Regulations .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Event Format .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Event Procedures.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Levels of Competition.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>State Awards .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Selecting Winner .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Tie Breakers.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Cover Letter Rubric.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Resume Rubric.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Application Rubric .....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Interview Rubric .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Follow-Up Correspondence Rubric.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Summary Sheet.....</b>	<b>15</b>

Alabama State Department of Education, Dr. Eric G. Mackey, State Superintendent of Education

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**Revised December 2022**  
**Employment Skills LDE**

## **FFA EMPLOYMENT SKILLS LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EVENT**

### **PURPOSE**

The Employment Skills Leadership Development Event is designed to prepare students for entering the work force of the agricultural industry. Students seeking careers within the agricultural industry must not only develop a high degree of knowledge and skill; they must also develop the ability to interview through communication in both written and oral forms; and be able to complete a resume, cover letter and job application accurately.

### **ELIGIBILITY AND REGULATIONS**

1. For specific Eligibility Rules and Regulations, refer to Contests and Awards Booklet.
2. A participant shall be in official FFA dress as defined in the *Official FFA Manual*.  
Personal appearance  
Official Dress  
Male Members: Black slacks, white collared shirt, official FFA tie, black socks and black dress shoes, and the official jacket zipped to the top. Bow ties are not considered official dress.  
Female Members: Black skirt or slacks, white collared blouse with official FFA blue scarf, black nylon hosiery, black dress shoes, and the official jacket zipped to the top.
3. To be eligible for the state event, contestants must submit a resume, cover letter, and job description to the State Executive Secretary by the due date on the FFA calendar found at [www.alabamaffa.org](http://www.alabamaffa.org). Chapters may submit one applicant per chapter. If there are multiple contestants from the same chapter, a local event will need to be held. Resumes and cover letters will be scored and the top two contestants from each respective district will move on to the state competition.
4. If a cell phone is seen or heard in the possession of a competitor, that individual student will be disqualified from competition and receive a score of zero.

### **DISCLAIMER**

In the event that contests (CDE, LDE, TDE's) cannot be held in person, a virtual option may be conducted. Contest rules and guidelines are subject to change to meet the needs of a virtual experience.

## **STATE AWARDS/SPONSOR(S)**

Refer to Alabama FFA Contests and Awards Booklet at:

[http://www.alabamaffa.org/forms\\_applications.htm](http://www.alabamaffa.org/forms_applications.htm)

### **Event Format**

The event is developed to help participants in their current job search (for their Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs, internships, and part-time and full-time employment). Therefore, materials submitted by the participant should reflect their current skills and abilities and should be targeted to a job for which they would like to apply. In other words, participants should not develop a fictitious resume; they should utilize their actual experience. They are expected to target the resume toward a real job for which they presently qualify.

The following items should be submitted to the Executive Secretary by the due date found on the FFA calendar at [www.alabamaffa.org](http://www.alabamaffa.org) and will serve as the preliminary phase of this event. These items will be scored and two applicants from each district will advance to the state event.

1. **Cover Letter (100 points)**- The cover letter is to be typed, one page, single spaced, left justified using Times, Times New Roman or Arial 10-to 12-point minimum font. The letter is to be dated for the date of the state event and addressed to:

Alabama FFA Advisor  
P.O. Box 302101  
Montgomery, AL 36130

The criteria for scoring can be found in the grading rubric included in this document.

2. **Resume (200 points)**- The resume should not exceed two pages total. Resume must be non-fictitious and based upon actual work history. The criteria to be included in each resume is included in the scoring rubric in this document. Please use the National FFA Resume Generator to complete your resume. You must sign in on National FFA's website to access the resume generator at <https://resumegenerator.ffa.org/>. You may have to download and manipulate the format to get everything to two pages.
3. **Job Description (Required but not scored)**- This should be a written description of the job the student is applying for. This can be from an actual job description through a company or may be a fictitious job description designed for this event.

The six selected finalists advance to compete in the following phases during the state event:

1. **Application (100 points)**- Participants will complete a standard job application. Students will have 30 minutes to complete the application.
2. **Personal Interview (500 points)**- The interview will be conducted by a panel of judges. Each interview will last a maximum of 15 minutes.
3. **Follow-up Correspondence (50 points)**- Participants will submit follow-up correspondence after the interview. Members will be supplied the necessary materials to compose the follow-up correspondence. Correspondence may include, but is not

limited to, one of the following: e-mail, hand-written note, or typed letter. Participants will have 30 minutes to complete the follow-up correspondence. The type of follow-up will be selected by the contest superintendent each year.

Participants are allowed to bring the following items to the event: writing utensils, blank paper, resume, cover letter, list of references, business cards, and pad folio. The following items are not permitted: letters of reference, samples of work, pictures, and personal pages.

## **EVENT PROCEDURES**

1. A timekeeper(s) will keep time. The interview can last a maximum of 15 minutes. Once the 15 minute mark has passed, the interview will end once the contestant has finished answering the current question.
2. Three competent and impartial persons will be selected to judge the event. At least one judge should have an agricultural background.
3. At the time of the event, the judges will be seated in close proximity to one another in the room in which the event is held. They will score each participant on the overall interview, using the score sheet provided.
4. Each judge shall formulate and ask questions related to that participants choice of occupation as well as general career skill questions. Judges will score each participant on the ability to answer all questions asked by all judges.
5. Contestants will not hear each other's interviews. Only members or representatives (parents and/or advisor) of the speaker's chapter will be allowed to observe. Contest officials reserve the right to ask anyone whom is a distraction to the contestant to leave.
6. Contestants will be in a place separate from the room where the event is being held.
7. Chapter representative may only video speaker from his/her chapter.
8. Time will begin when the first question is asked. If time expires in the middle of a contestant answering a question, they will be permitted to finish their answer. The time keeper will let judges know time has expired at this point and should not interrupt the contestant.

## **LEVELS OF COMPETITION**

### **District Event**

1. This will be a preliminary judging. Contestants will send in their resume and cover letter to be scored by the due date found on the FFA calendar at [www.alabamaffa.org](http://www.alabamaffa.org).
2. The first and second place winners will represent the district at state competition.

## **State Event**

- 1. The first and second place winners from the three districts (North, Central and South) will compete in the state event. If a district does not submit at least two applications, the next high scoring application regardless of district will advance.**
- 2. The first-place state winner will represent Alabama at the National Employment Skills Leadership Development Event.**

## **State Awards**

**The top four participants will be recognized at the annual Alabama FFA State Convention.**

## **SELECTING A WINNER**

**Participants shall be ranked in numerical order on the basis of the final score to be determined by each judge without consultation. The judges' ranking of each participant then shall be added, and the winner will be that participant whose total of rankings is the lowest. Other placings shall be determined in the same manner (low point score method of selection).**

## **TIEBREAKERS**

**Ties will be broken based on the greatest number of low ranks. Participant's low rankings will be counted and the participant with the greatest number of low rankings will be declared the winner. If a tie still exists, the participant with the highest score (highest number of points) on the interview will be declared the winner. If a tie still exists, then the participant's raw scores will be totaled. The participant with the greatest total of raw points will be declared the winner.**

# Cover Letter Rubric

100 POINTS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Member Number \_\_\_\_\_

Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 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 are 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 are 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	
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		X4	
Skills and Experiences	Identifies two to three strongest qualifications for the job; indicates how education has prepared them for this job; states why you 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		X4	
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 leaves reader to pursue a follow up	Does not thank reader; does not mention a plan for follow up; does not provide any contact information		X3	
Spelling/ Grammar/ 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		X5	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>						

# Resume Rubric

200 POINTS

Name				Member Number		
Chapter				State		
Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Contact Information	Includes name, address, email address and phone number; name stands out on resume; provides professional e-mail address	Name does not stand out; email address is too casual	Missing name, address, email address or phone number; email used is inappropriate or unprofessional		X 2	
Employment Objective	Focused objective that states how employee will help company achieve its goals	Focused objective that states what employee wants from the company	No objective identified		X2	
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		X7	
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/accomplishments; results are quantified; bullets are listed in order of importance	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 are not quantified when appropriate; irrelevant or outdated information is listed		X9	



Achievements and Honors	Appropriate and relevant achievements and honors 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 and honors 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 achievement or honors are listed		X5	
References	Listed appropriate references and provided complete contact information for references	References are listed, but not all are appropriate or not all contact information for references is included	Inappropriate references are listed; no references listed; no contact information listed		X2	
Spelling/ Grammar/ 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		X5	
Format and General Appearance	Does not exceed two pages without overcrowding; margins are acceptable; font size and style are readable (10–12 point); 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 are readable (10–12 point); headings don't necessarily 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		X8	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>						

# Electronic Employment Application Rubric

**100 POINTS**

Name _____	Member Number _____
Chapter _____	State _____

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 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.		X4	
Grammar/ Punctuation/ 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		X6	
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 and missing information		X4	
Overall Impression	Application was consistent and appropriately highlighted candidates' qualifications for the position	Application was consistent and generally highlighted candidates' qualifications for the position	The application was not consistent and did not highlight candidates' qualifications for the position		X6	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>						

# Personal Interview Rubric

500 POINTS

Name	Member Number
Chapter	State

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Appearance	Professional dress/groomed: Follows standard dress code, polished shoes, clothes pressed, conservative accessories	Dress appropriate: Just not as professional and "put together", shoes clean, but not polished	Very disheveled: Dirty shoes, not wearing black shoes		x 10	
First Impression	Greeting: Appropriate salutation and firm handshake Introduction: States name Body language: Smiling and pleasant, does not sit until invited, confident in manner	Greeting: Confident but uneasy, soft handshake Introduction: States name only when asked Body language: Rarely smiles, cologne or perfume is distracting	Greeting: Does not use salutation, very informal Introduction: Fails to introduce self, fails to shake hands with interviewer Body language: Obnoxious cologne or perfume, chewing gum		x 15	
Response to Questions	Used appropriate language for career: Cited relevant examples; knowledge of career field evident (talk the talk); knows education and experience required for position; discussed skills gained through school or past jobs and how they are relevant to position applied; abilities described match the resume; responses concise and logically communicated; responses do not sound "canned"; provided in-depth description of skills, not just a list; provided in-depth response to questions, not yes/no responses to questions; established a "theme" that overall describes their abilities	Seemed to know terms associated with career: Some holes, cited several relevant examples; but list is incomplete, knew about career, but conveyed incomplete picture; unsure of education or experience required for position; incomplete list of skills gained through school and past jobs and relevance to position applied; abilities mostly match resume; responses seemed rehearsed and somewhat disorganized; provided some depth to description of job skills; provided some depth to responses to questions; provided some yes/no responses; was able to tie some abilities together to form a	Knew some of the language of position, but used incorrectly or did not show understanding of terms: Unable to cite or provided few relevant examples; position education and requirements not known or does not match applicants skill set; unable to relate skills learned in school or past jobs and relevance to position applied; abilities hardly match resume; responses seemed "canned" with little logical progression; mainly provided list of skills with little explanation; provided yes/no responses; unable to see an overall theme of persons' abilities		x 30	

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
		picture of qualifications.				
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 question asked.</p> <p>Confident: Exhibited self-confidence with body language and verbally</p> <p>Appropriate volume: Spoke with proper volume for room to hear clearly; not too loud, not too soft</p> <p>Enunciation/grammar: Avoided words like "git" versus "get" and "agin" versus "again"; used proper words when speaking (didn't use 10-dollar words when a five-dollar word would do)</p> <p>Concise: Avoided run-on sentences and answered with logical and organized thoughts</p> <p>Sincere: Expressed true interest in the position they were seeking</p> <p>Poise: Avoids distracting mannerisms, such as drumming fingers or overuse of "um" and "you know"</p> <p>Discretion/Tact: Shared appropriate information and did not create an awkward situation through responses</p>	<p>Persuasive: Expanded somewhat on skills that are a fit for the position, volunteered some additional information to questions asked.</p> <p>Confident: Exhibited some nervousness, but covered well; voice and body language showed some uncertainty</p> <p>Appropriate volume: Did not modulate volume to express answers, could hear sometimes; but was quiet when unsure of response and hard to hear</p> <p>Enunciation/grammar: Some language not appropriate for position applied, used some slang and exhibited some "dialect"</p> <p>Concise: Some questions answered in a rambling fashion, but point made; thoughts were logical but somewhat disorganized</p> <p>Poise: Seemed comfortable with some nervousness, caught self before exhibiting distracting mannerisms, rarely used "um" or "you know"</p> <p>Discretion/tact: Most professional in tone and shared information that created little, if any, awkwardness</p>	<p>Persuasive: Answered yes or no to most questions; did not expand on skill set</p> <p>Confident: Did not appear comfortable, nervous, slouched in chair</p> <p>Appropriate volume: Hard to hear answers or volume too loud for room</p> <p>Enunciation/grammar: Used overly complex or simplistic language, sprinkled in words like "git" versus "get" and "agin" versus "again"</p> <p>Concise: Rambled and used run on sentences; answers were poorly organized and thoughts not clearly expressed</p> <p>Sincere: Seemed uninterested in the position and distracted</p> <p>Poise: Demonstrated distracted mannerisms such as tapping foot, drumming fingers, cracking knuckles, etc.; Excessive use of "um" and "you know"</p> <p>Discretion/tact: Shared information that may be seen as personal about someone else creating awkwardness, appeared unprofessional</p>		x 30	
Conclusion	Posed appropriate questions of interviewer: e.g., when	Questions posed were somewhat	Asks no questions: Questions asked (if		x 15	

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
	<p>notification of selection will occur and how. Clarified next steps, inquired as to next step in interview process e.g., if there will be additional interviews, etc.</p> <p><b>Appropriate thanks and exit:</b> Asked for business card, thanked interviewer, stood and shook hands prior to exiting room</p>	<p>appropriate: Some had no relevance to interview; incomplete inquiry of the next steps in the interview process; asked for business card, thanked interviewer and shook hand, but seemed uncertain how to end the interview and exit</p>	<p>asked) have no relevance to next steps in the interview process; ended interview abruptly or awkwardly; exited without thanks or shaking hands</p>			
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>						



# Follow-Up Correspondence Rubric

50 POINTS

Name	Member Number
Chapter	State

Indicator	Very strong evidence of skill 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Score
Format	The document was directed to the appropriate person with an appropriate address and salutation. The level of formality was appropriate for the type of correspondence.	The document was directed to the appropriate person with an appropriate address and salutation with minor errors. The level of formality was generally appropriate for the type of correspondence.	The document was not directed to the appropriate person. No address or salutation was included. The level of formality was not appropriate.		X 2	
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		X3	
Grammar/ Punctuation/ 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.		X2	
Overall Impression	Writing (when appropriate) was legible and length was appropriate	Writing (when appropriate) was difficult to read and length was generally appropriate	Writing (when appropriate) was illegible; length was inappropriate		X3	
TOTAL POINTS						

## EMPLOYMENT SKILLS LDE

### Summary Scoring Sheet

Participant: \_\_\_\_\_

Judge: \_\_\_\_\_

Area	Points Possible	Score	Comments
Cover Letter	100		
Resume	200		
Application	100		
Personal Interview	500		
Follow-up Correspondence	50		
points			Total Score= / 950

## SUMMARY SHEET

When all contestants have finished, the judges will retire and make their placings (1, 2, 3, etc.) without any discussion. The judges' rankings of each contestant then shall be added, and the winner will be the speaker whose total ranking (score) is the lowest. This is the low point score method of selection.

The person in charge will assist by recording the final placings of each judge on the Summary Sheet to determine the winners. In case of a tie, please see criteria listed in awards book.

The Summary Sheet should be checked and double-checked before the winners are announced. The decision announced is final! The individual score sheets should be destroyed immediately by the judges; no one else will be allowed to see the score sheets.

<b>Judges</b>	<b>Contestants Names and Placing of Contestants by Judges (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, etc.)</b>							
	Contestant 1	Contestant 2	Contestant 3	Contestant 4	Contestant 5	Contestant 6	Contestant 7	Contestant 8
<b>Judge 1</b>								
<b>Judge 2</b>								
<b>Judge 3</b>								
<b>TOTAL SCORE/SPEAKER</b> [Judge 1+2+3] (Add up the judges' placings for each speaker)								
<b>FINAL PLACING</b> [1 <sup>ST</sup> , 2 <sup>ND</sup> , 3 <sup>RD</sup> , 4 <sup>TH</sup> , ETC.] [Lowest TOTAL SCORE/SPEAKER is 1 <sup>st</sup> Place, etc.]								

\*TOTAL SCORE: The Total Score is the sum of the placing given to a speaker by each of the three judges. The low score wins.