

JOB INTERVIEW

SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

The purpose of the FFA Job Interview Event is for FFA members to develop, practice and demonstrate skills needed while seeking employment in the agricultural industry. Each part of the event simulates “real world” activities that will be used by real world employers.

The event is developed to help participants in their current job search (for SAE projects, part-time and full-time employment). Therefore, the job description, cover letter, résumé and references submitted by the participants must reflect their current skills and abilities and must be targeted to a realistic agricultural job or internship for which they are qualified to apply. Participants cannot develop a fictitious résumé for a fictitious job or internship; instead they must utilize their actual experience. They are expected to target the resume toward a real job for which they presently qualify.

I. FORMAT

The contest site will provide all equipment and paper necessary, except writing pens.

There are seven (7) sections to this event: 1) Job Description, 2) Cover Letter; 3) Résumé; 4) Application; 5) Telephone Interview; 6) Personal Interview; and 7) Follow-Up Letter.

II. RULES

1. This event is limited to one member per chapter.
2. All cover letters, job descriptions and résumés must be submitted electronically to contest officials at Sam Houston State University via the judgingcard.com entry system as a PDF file, no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Monday preceding the state events. The electronic material is what the judges will score – the judges will NOT be scoring any documents turned in after this deadline.

A. Equipment

1. Contestants may bring to all areas of the contest:
 - a. Writing Utensils
 - b. Blank paper
 - c. Resume
 - d. Cover letter
 - e. Business cards
 - f. Pad folio
2. The following items are **not** permitted:
 - a. Letters of reference
 - b. Samples of work
 - c. Pictures
 - d. Personal pages
3. Job Description – NOT SCORED
 - a. The contestant must submit a single – spaced, 500-word maximum job description using 8 1/2” x 11” white paper in order for the judges to evaluate the contestant’s knowledge of the job, how well they fit the job, and how they are best qualified for the job.
 - b. The job description should include a title of the position, a description of the position the student is applying for, desired qualifications and work experience. Sources for job descriptions can be

found by looking in the various forms of printed media, newspapers, online through job search websites, or company websites. (Sample Job Descriptions: Monster.com hiring.monster.com/hr)

- c. The relevant personal characteristics and skills listed in the job description will be evaluated during the Personal Interview, indicator “Response to Questions.”
- d. The written job description will NOT be directly scored for content or format by the judges. Instead it will serve as a reference document to assist the judges when formulating questions in the personal interview section.

4. Cover Letter – (100 points)

- a. The contestants must submit a single-spaced letter of intent [cover letter] using 8½” x 11” *white* paper.
- b. The paper is to be single-sided only, typed using 11 point Times New Roman font and left justified.
- c. The letter is to be addressed to Dr. Doug Ullrich, Superintendent, Job Interview LDE and dated for the day of the event. The following address should be used: P.O. Box 2088, Huntsville, Texas 77341.
- d. Greeting should be addressed to: Dear Dr. Ullrich.

5. Résumé – (200 points)

- a. The contestants must submit a single-spaced résumé using 8½” x 11” *white* paper.
- b. The résumé is to be single-sided only, typed and not to exceed two pages total.
- c. The body of the résumé shall be in 11 point Times New Roman font.
- d. The résumé must be non-fictitious and based upon their work and educational history.

6. Application – (100 points)

- a. Contestants will complete either an electronic or paper job application on-site, prior to the personal interview. Contestants may use their résumé to complete the application. The application will be provided by the provider and is not a set or standard application. Contestants should be prepared for any application.
- b. The application completion will last a maximum of thirty (30) minutes.
- c. Pens must be provided by the contestant.
- d. Paper will be provided by the contest site.
- e. All applicants will begin the application process at the same time.

7. Telephone Interview – (50 points)

- a. Contestants will interview with one of the following three (3) people:
 - i. Human, Fiscal and Resource personnel director
 - ii. Employer’s Assistant
 - iii. Employer
- b. The telephone interview will last a maximum of three (3) minutes.
- c. Contestants are to position themselves so that they obtain a personal interview with the employer.
- d. Contestants should interview with the thought that the company has already received their cover letter and résumé.
- e. Students will initiate the telephone interview when facilities permit. If not permissible, the judges will initiate the telephone interview.
- f. One of the judges will be designated as the interviewer.
- g. All judges will evaluate the telephone interview individually.

8. Personal Interview – (500 points)

- a. The personal interview will consist of an interview in front of a panel of judges. Each interview will last a maximum of ten (10) minutes. A timekeeper will notify the judges and contestants when the time elapsed reaches the 7 and 9 minute marks. The notification will be a silent

reminder using a numbered sign to be held by the timekeeper for everyone in the interview room to see.

- b. All judges should ask questions during the personal interview.
- c. At the conclusion of the 10-minute interview, if the contestant has not been afforded the opportunity to ask questions, an additional two minutes will be allowed for the contestant to ask questions. The timekeeper will announce the end of the two-minute period and effectively end the interview. The contestant will stop talking when the time limit is called.

9. Follow-Up Letter – (50 points)

- a. Contestants will submit a computer-generated follow-up letter after the interview. A computer and printer will be provided and no prewritten or pre-printed letters will be accepted. The site provider will declare the computer system to be used for the state contest at the beginning of each school year.
- b. The letter should be addressed to Dr. Doug Ullrich and dated for the day of the event. The following address should be used: PO Box 2088, Huntsville, Texas 77341.
- c. The letter should be a response to their interview.
- d. The contestant will have fifteen (15) minutes to complete the computer-generated follow-up letter.

10. Official dress is required as outlined in the Official FFA Manual but according to Texas Standards (black dress boots are acceptable).

11. This contest is not open to the public.

12. Initial résumé, cover letter, and application scores will be carried through to the Final Round.

13. The top five contestants from each heat will advance to the finals.

14. These are state rules. District and area rules may vary.

15. The National FFA Employment Skills CDE rubrics will be utilized to score the Job Interview Contest.

III. TIEBREAKERS

In the event of a tie, the ranks of the contestant's personal interview will be utilized to break the tie. If further tiebreakers are necessary, the following should be used in order: 1) Telephone Interview; 2) Follow-Up Letter; 3) Application; 4) Résumé; 5) Cover Letter; 6) Job Description; 7) Match.

References:

The list of references is not intended to be inclusive. Other sources may be utilized and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. Make sure to use discretion when selecting website references by only using reputable, proven sites. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation. The most current edition of resources will be used.

Past CDE materials and other resources FFA.org

Open Colleges – How to Write a Resume.

<http://www.opencolleges.edu.au/careers/resumes/how-to-write-a-resume>

8 Subtle Ways to Ace the Interview.

<http://www.businessinsider.com/subtle-ways-to-ace-the-interview-2015-2>

Killer Questions Candidates Ought to Ask the Interviewer.

<http://theundercoverrecruiter.com/9-killer-questions-candidatesought-ask-interviewer/>

9 Keys to Telephone Job Interview Success.

http://www.job-hunt.org/job_interviews/telephone-interviews.shtml

Sending Your Thank You After the Job Interview.

http://www.job-hunt.org/job_interviews/job-interview-thank-you.shtml

Accepting a Job Offer? Asking These 10 Questions First.

<http://www.wetfeet.com/articles/accepting-a-job-offer-ask-these-10-questions-first>

References from the career center at the land-grant university in your respective state

FFA resume generator FFA.org

Cover Letter Rubric - 100 points

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Format and General Appearance	Does not exceed one page without overcrowding; margins are acceptable; font size and style is readable (10-12 pt); uses appropriate business format, date and address at top; addressed to appropriate person; appropriate signature block.	Does not exceed one page without overcrowding; margins are acceptable; font size and style is readable (10-12 pt); uses appropriate business format, date and address at top; not addressed to appropriate person; inappropriate signature block.	Exceeds one page; margins are inappropriate; font style is unreadable; font size is too small or too large; no signature; no date or address; no inside address; not in appropriate business format.		X 4	
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 that 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	

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Closing Paragraph	Thanks reader for taking time to read; provides appropriate contact information, makes appropriate provisions for follow up.	Thanks reader for taking time to read; provides contact information, but makes reader to assume a follow up.	Does not thank reader; does not mention a plan for follow up; does not provide any contact information.		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	
TOTAL POINTS						

Resume Rubric - 200 points

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Contact Information	Includes name, address, email, and phone number; name stands out on resume; provides professional e-mail.	Name does not stand out; email is too casual.	Missing name, address, email, 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 you want 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	

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
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 reserve 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 or 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 for related to achievements and honors; listed in reserve chronological order.	Appropriate and relevant achievements and honors listed; achievements and honors related to career goal; lacks specific details for related to achievements and honors; listed in reserve 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 provide complete contact information for references.	References are listed but not all may be appropriate or not all contact information for references is included.	Inappropriate references are listed; no 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 is 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 is 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	
TOTAL POINTS						

Employment Application Rubric - 100 points

(Dist/Area/State will use paper application. National contest will use electronic application)

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Consistent with Resume	Name, education, experience and other personal information matches information provided on resume.	Name, education, experience and other personal information generally matches information provided on resume.	Name, education, experience and other personal information do not match information provided on resume.		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	
TOTAL POINTS						

Initial Phone Interview Rubric - 50 points

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
First Impression	Introduced self when answering the phone. Spoke articulately with no Hesitation. Appropriate tone, speaks at right pace to be clear, pronunciation of words very clear and intent is apparent. Confident tone, no nervousness.	Incomplete introduction. Speaks articulately, but with some hesitation. Appropriate tone is usually consistent, speaks at right pace, but shows some nervousness. Pronunciation of words is usually clear, sometimes vague.	Did not introduce self upon answering the phone, Appropriate tone, but frequently hesitates, Has difficulty using appropriate tone, pace is too fast, nervous. Pronunciation of words is difficult to understand or unclear.		X 3	
Response to Questions	Confirmed date, time and location along with contact person/information. Provided complete, accurate and concise answers. Sold themselves without being pushy. Used correct terminology. Communicated knowledge of the related industry. Used time efficiently.	Did not confirm all needed information for interview. Provided some answers, some incomplete, rambled occasionally. Seemed off-putting at times in an attempt to sell themselves. Some question as to correct terminology. Seemed to have holes in knowledge of related industry.	Caller had to offer interview and provide information. Unable to answer questioned asked. Off-putting presentation (tried to sell self too hard). Used incorrect terminology forevent. Did not have a firm knowledge of the related industry.		X5	
Overall Impression	Exhibited poise (cool under pressure). Was pleasant, professional and courteous. Ended call appropriately and smoothly (thanked caller, said good-bye). Did not have distracting mannerisms that affected their effectiveness.	Seemed nervous under pressure which impacted poise, pleasantness. Used incorrect grammar which distracted from interview. Mannerisms distracted from interview (use of "ums" and "you know"). Ended call without thanking caller or somewhat appropriately (not sure what to do).	Very nervous, not poised (cracks under pressure). Ended call awkwardly and abruptly, did not thank caller or say good-bye, just hung up. Distracted from interview by mannerisms (excessive "ums" or "you know").		X2	
TOTAL POINTS						

Personal Interview Rubric - 500 points

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 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 and state association. 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, evidence knowledge of career field (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, provides in-depth response to questions, not yes/no responses do responses provided establish a “theme” that overall describes their abilities.	Seemed to know terms associated with career: Some holes, cited several relevant examples, but list 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, some listing, provided some depth to responses to question, some yes/no, was able to tie some abilities together to form a picture of qualifications.	Knew some of the language of position, but used incorrectly or did not show understanding of terms: Unable to cite or few relevant examples, position education and requirements not known or do 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	

Chapter/Area: _____ Student Name: _____

Judge's Signature: _____ Area: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 1-0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
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 confidence in self with body language and verbally.</p> <p>Appropriate volume: Spoke with proper volume for room to be heard clearly; not too loud, not too soft.</p> <p>Enunciation/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 will 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 are seeking.</p> <p>Poise: avoids distracting mannerisms such as drumming fingers or overuse of “uhm” and “you know”.</p> <p>Discretion/Tact: Shared appropriate information and did not create an awkward situation through responses.</p>	<p>Persuasive: Was able to expand 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 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 was able to be made. Thoughts were logical, but somewhat disorganized.</p> <p>Poise: Seemed comfortable with some nervousness, caught self before exhibiting distracting mannerisms, rarely used “uhm” 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 thought 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 “uhm” 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	<p>Posed appropriate questions of interviewer: e.g., when 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>Appropriate thanks and exit: Asked for business card, thanked interviewer, stands and shakes hands prior to exiting room.</p>	<p>Questions posed were somewhat appropriate: Some had no relevance to interview, Incomplete inquiry of the next steps in the interview process, Asked for business card, thanks interviewer and shook hand but seemed uncertain how to end the interview and exit.</p>	<p>Asks no questions: Questions asked (if asked, have no relevance to next steps in the interview process, Ends interview abruptly or awkwardly, exits without thanks or shaking hands.</p>		x 15	

TOTAL POINTS

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Follow Up Correspondence Rubric - 50 points

Chapter: _____ Student Name: _____ Area: _____

Judge's Signature: _____

INDICATOR	Very strong evidence of skill is present 5-4 points	Moderate evidence of skill is present 3-2 points	Weak evidence of skill is present 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						