

# Agricultural Communications

A Special Project of the South Dakota FFA Foundation

## Important Note:

Please thoroughly read the General Rules at the beginning of this handbook for complete rules and procedures that are relevant to all South Dakota FFA Leadership and Career Development Events.

## Purpose

The purpose of the agricultural communications career development event is to excite and inspire students to develop basic skills relevant to the agricultural communications industry. Students will be equipped with strong communication skills and will have developed the ability to work collaboratively to effectively communicate and advocate for the industry of agriculture.

## Objectives

Provide students the opportunity to develop fundamental skills for success in careers and team environments.

Employ public speaking skills to communicate an important agricultural message.

Contribute to a team through a career-based, mock situation.

## Career Development Event Rules

- Each team will be comprised of four members.
- It is highly recommended that participants wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
- All scores will be used to determine the total team score.

## Career Development Event Format

The scenario utilized for the Ag Communications CDE media plan and presentation will follow the National FFA theme for the next year's National Convention (Example: 2018 theme will be used Fall 2017)

## Equipment Provided:

- Easel
- Projector screen
- Table

## Team Activities

### Agriculture-Related Media Plan (200 pts./team)

Teams will play the role of communications consultants and will develop a media plan for an assigned scenario. The scenario will identify a client with a communications' need and a budget.

A media plan is a written document that describes the following items:

- **Objectives:** What the group wants to accomplish with the media plan.
- **Target Audience:** Description of who the client is trying to reach, including demographic data.
- **Strategic plan and tactics:** Ways in which the objectives can be accomplished. Including social media plan
- **Timeline:** When the objectives will be accomplished.
- **Evaluation:** How the results will be measured.

- **Budget:** Teams may not go over a maximum of \$5,000
- **References**

#### Guidelines for media plan:

- Eight to 10 typed pages not including cover page, table of contents, references or appendices.
- Double spaced with 1-inch margins.
- Paginated (numbered pages not including cover page).
- 12-point Times New Roman font (not including display text or headings).
- Formatted and edited according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA) when citing sources.
- No extra Pages ie: no pages separating sections of the media plan that may have the heading of that section on them. For example - do not place a page that only says "Timeline" before the actual written portion that covers the Timeline information. No pages separating sections of the Appendix \*\*

#### Page Limits:

- Introduction and Overview – 2-page max
- Audience – 1-page max
- Strategic Plan - 3 - 4 pages max
  - Must include Social Media tactic
- Timeline – 1-page max
- Evaluation – 1-page max
- Budget and Justification – 1-page max
- Conclusion – 1-page max

Even though the maximum pages add up to 11 - the maximum pages for the **Media Plan** (not counting the cover page, table of contents, references or your 3-5 pages of appendices) is **10**.

#### **The media plan must include the following sections (points will be deducted for missing or incomplete sections):**

##### Cover page

- Must include the title of the media plan, CDE name, state, chapter name, team member names and year.
- May include a creative design.

##### Table of Contents

##### Introduction and Overview

- Two pages maximum
- Introduction-
  - Brief background of the issue/topic and a statement of the problem establishing the need for this media plan.
- Overview (Executive summary)-
  - Brief preview of what is contained in the plan and how it will benefit the client.
  - Objectives of the media plan

##### Audience

- One page maximum
- Who the client is trying to reach with the media plan.
- The demographic characteristics of the intended audience.
- Note: teams may have a primary and a secondary audience.

### Strategic Plan

- Three to four pages maximum
- Key messages or themes to communicate to the audience.
- Explanation of how the objectives will be met  
Plan to attract media attention using social media.  
Description of how the plan will be executed.

### Social media tactic of the strategic plan

Social Media Plan is required to address the following:

- Social media platforms to be used.
- Plan to gain followers.
- Plan to engage followers.
- General idea for the messages to be posted.
- One page example post must be provided as an appendix (can include Facebook posts, tweets, Instagram photos and others).
- Content of the "About" section of pages.

### Timeline

- One page maximum
- Explanation of the duration of the plan and the timing of the media tactics.

### Evaluation

- One page maximum
- Description of proposed methods to determine if the media plan objectives were met.
- What are the key performances? (How will you measure that you are successful?)
- Examples may include number of participants, impressions, likes, shares, retweets, circulation of publications, number of video views

### Budget and Justification

- One page maximum
- Table of all costs associated with implementing the media plan.
- Explain why you have allocated this amount for each activity.

### Conclusion

- One page maximum
- A final summary of key points related to the strategic plan and a statement persuading the client that the plan is a good solution to the communication problem.
- Not a restatement of the introduction and overview.

### References

- Formatted and edited according to the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

### Appendices

- 3-5 examples, no more than 5 pages of Appendices.
- One page of social media posts.
- Three to five other communication examples.
- Suggestions include mock up or example of website, links to student created video, press releases, blogs, op-eds.
- Include three to five examples in the appendices.
- Examples of tactics include but are not limited to: broadcast advertising print advertising press releases fliers brochure web site blogging displays.

Total number of pieces of paper in your media plan - including your cover page, table of contents, written material (8-10 pages), References (usually not more than 1 page) Appendices (3-5 pages) should not exceed 18 pieces of paper.

### Submission

- All written materials will be submitted electronically per instructions from the State FFA Office. Please refer to the website (<https://www.sdaged.org/>) for more information about electronic submission of written materials.

### Media Plan Presentation (175 points/team)

- The team should present the media plan as if pitching it to the client identified in the scenario.
- The presentation should follow the structure of the written media plan.
- Teams are encouraged to bring examples of materials that would be used in the execution of the plan (e.g. social media, broadcast advertising, print advertising, press releases, fliers, brochures, web site, blogging and displays).
- Each team member must participate in the presentation.
- Each team will be allowed 15 minutes to present its media plan to a panel of judges, who will play the role of the client. Five points will be deducted for each major fraction of a minute over the 15 minutes allowed for the presentation. Following the presentation, judges will be allowed five minutes to ask questions.
- Provided equipment includes an easel, projector screen and table.
- Teams will have a total of 10 minutes for setting-up and tearing-down equipment (e.g. 5 minutes to set up and 5 minutes to tear down).
  - Advisors may help with technology set-up and tear-down.
  - **Note:** Teams may bring additional equipment for the presentation as long as they are able to set up and tear down equipment in the time allowed. In the case of equipment failure, the team may be asked to move forward with the presentation. A back-up plan is recommended.

### Individual Activities

30 minutes will be allowed for each activity

#### Editing exercise – 25 points/person; 100 points/team

Because editing is a critical skill for all communicators, each team member will complete an editing exercise. They will be given a printed document that contains 25 mistakes. In correcting the mistakes, team members will be required to use correct proofreading marks (see Associated Press Stylebook). 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.

#### Communications quiz – 25 points/person; 100 points/team

Each team member will complete a quiz that covers the content of the current Associated Press Stylebook. Questions may come from any section excluding sports guidelines. Team members will NOT be able to use the style manual or a dictionary during this exercise.

## Scoring

|                                           |            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| <b>Individual Tests</b>                   |            |
| Communications Quiz                       | 25         |
| Editing Exercise                          | 25         |
| <b>Total Possible Individual Score</b>    | <b>50</b>  |
| <b>Team Scores</b>                        |            |
| Media Plan Proposal                       | 200        |
| Media Plan Presentation                   | 175        |
| Test Scores (total of all 4 team members) | 200        |
| <b>Total Possible Team Score</b>          | <b>575</b> |

## Tiebreakers

In the case of a team tie, the order to break the tie will be:

1. Combined individual test scores
2. Media Plan Proposal score
3. Media Plan Presentation score

## References

National FFA Core Catalog – Past CDE Materials

(<http://shop.ffa.org/cde-materials-c1289.aspx>)

Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual

Bivins, T. Public Relations Writings: The Essentials of Style and Format, 4<sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-844-20315-3

Harrower, T. Newspaper Designer's Handbook, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-07-249291-0

Kalbfeld, B. Association Press Broadcast News Handbook. McGraw-Hill Higher Education, ISBN 0-07-136388-2

Telg, R. and T. Irani. Agricultural Communications in Action: A Hands-On Approach, 1<sup>st</sup> edition. Cengage/Delmar Publishing, ISBN 1111317143

Agricultural Communications in the Classroom Guidebook:

[https://www.ffa.org/documents/cde\\_agcomm\\_resources.pdf](https://www.ffa.org/documents/cde_agcomm_resources.pdf)