



CAREER PREPARATION

OVERVIEW

During the school year, participants research technology-related careers designated by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics as falling in the top ten employment growth areas. Participants research and prepare a resume and cover letter for each of the careers noted. Semifinalists participate in an on-site job interview related to one of the careers.

Participants research each of the careers noted in the specified year.

2015: Aeronautical engineer
Computer information security specialist professional (CISSP)
Geographic Information System (GIS) analyst

2016: Manufacturing engineer
Web developer
Data communication analyst

PURPOSE

The purpose of this event is to provide participants the opportunity to practice preparation for a career. Participants research three (3) technology-related careers, prepare a resume and cover letter for each of the three (3) careers, and prepare to participate in a mock interview about any of the three (3) careers as a semifinalist.

ELIGIBILITY

Participants are limited to six (6) individuals per state.

TIME LIMITS

- A. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program to submit three (3) sets of a resume and cover letter in separate and appropriately marked envelopes.
- B. Semifinalist interviews are limited to ten (10) minutes.

ATTIRE

Competition attire, as described in National TSA Dress Code (www.tsaweb.org/Dress-Code), is required for this event.


PROCEDURE

- A. In preparation for this event, participants thoroughly research the three (3) given careers and gain enough understanding to answer job-specific questions, as well as complete a resume and cover letter for each career. Students enter this event with the scenario below in mind.
1. You have graduated from high school and have the appropriate level of education and training (four [4]-year college, technical school, certification and training, etc.) that is required for successful employment in the given career.
 2. Your training, education, and other qualifications are realistic for successful employment in the given career and are reflected in your resume and cover letter.
- B. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program to turn in three (3) sets of a resume and cover letter in individual 9" x 12" envelopes. The envelopes must display a single computer address label (1" x 2⁵/₈") with the career name and a place for inserting the student's identification number. Example below:

Aeronautical engineer Student ID#

- C. Entries are reviewed by evaluators to determine the twelve (12) semifinalists. Neither students nor advisors are present at this time.
- D. A semifinalist list in random order is posted. At this time the career position for which each semifinalist will be interviewed will be posted. All semifinalists will interview for the same position.
- E. Semifinalists report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program to schedule and participate in a mock interview.

It is essential that students and advisors routinely check the TSA website (www.tsaweb.org) for updated information about TSA general rules and competitive events. This information is found on the website under [Competitions/Updates and Clarification](#). When students participate in any TSA competitive event, they are responsible for knowing of updates, changes, or clarification related to that event.

 Read the General Rules and Regulations in the front of this guide for information that applies to all of TSA's competitive events.

REGULATIONS

- A. All resumes and cover letters must be completed before entering the event area.
- B. Resumes must be typed and are limited to two (2) single-side 8½" x 11" pages.
- C. Cover letters must be typed and are limited to one (1) single-sided 8½" x 11" page.
- D. Only participants are allowed in the event area.
- E. Participants should be prepared to interview for any of the three (3) careers designated in a given year. Semifinalists will be informed of the designated career prior to the interview portion of the event.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is based on the participant's cover letter and resume. Semifinalists are evaluated on their interview. All scores carry over to the final score.

STEM INTEGRATION

This event aligns with the STEM educational standards noted below. Please refer to the STEM Integration section of this guide for more information.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS (CCSS) INTEGRATION

Please refer to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Integration section of this guide for more information.

PRIMARY LEADERSHIP SKILLS

Leadership skills promoted in this event:

- COMMUNICATION — Students communicate ideas to judges in an interview. Suggested leadership lessons: *Fact or Fiction* and *Listening Skills*
- CRITICAL THINKING — Students research and evaluate careers. Suggested leadership lessons: *And The Answer Is* and *Critical Thinking Tips*
- ORGANIZATION — Students prepare an organized resume and cover letter. Suggested leadership lessons: *New Club In Town* and *Parliamentary Procedure*

Additional leadership skills promoted in this event: ethics, evaluation, self-esteem

TSA AND CAREERS

This competition connects to one or more of the career areas featured in the TSA AND CAREERS section of this guide. Use *The 16 Career Clusters* chart and the *TSA Competitions and The 16 Career Clusters* grid as resources for information about careers.

CAREERS RELATED TO THIS EVENT

Careers will vary, based on the student's area of interest.

CAREER PREPARATION EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Assistants, two (2)
- C. Event evaluators, two (2) or more for written entries
- D. Assistants, two (2)
- E. Event evaluators, two (2) or more for mock interviews

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's notebook, containing:
 - 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each evaluator
 - 2. Official rating form, thirty (30) copies
 - 3. List of entries with finalist report
 - 4. List of evaluators/assistants
 - 5. Marking pens for evaluators
 - 6. Semifinalist list for posting
 - 7. Results envelope
- B. Interview questions appropriate for each of the three (3) given careers
- C. Stapler and staples
- D. Tables and chairs for participants
- E. Tables and chairs for evaluators

RESPONSIBILITIES

Submission of resume and cover letter

- A. Upon arrival at the conference, report to the CRC room and check the contents of the coordinator's notebook. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough evaluators/assistants have been scheduled.
- B. Inspect the area or room in which the event is being held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.

- C. Meet with your evaluators/assistants to review time limits, procedures, regulations, and all other details related to the event. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.
- D. For participants who violate the rules, the decision either to deduct 20% of the total possible points or to disqualify the entry must be discussed and verified with the evaluators, event coordinator, and a CRC manager; all must initial either of these actions on the rating form.
- E. At entry check-in time, designate three (3) locations—one for each career area—where students submit their envelopes. (Keep entries separated based on the career area.)
- F. Designate one (1) career area the judges should use for evaluation. Only move to a second or third career area if a tie-breaker situation occurs.
- G. Evaluators independently assess the entries and then tally their rating forms.
- H. Prepare a list of the twelve (12) semifinalists and submit it to the CRC chairperson for posting. Be sure to include instructions about where and when semifinalists can sign up for interview times. Post the job position for which the semifinalists will interview.

Mock interview

- A. Inspect the area(s) in which the interviews will be held for appropriate set-up, including room size, chairs, tables, outlets, etc. Notify the event manager of any potential problems.
- B. Meet with your evaluators to review time limits, procedures, and regulations. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.
- C. Each student is interviewed by the evaluators.
- D. Evaluators review and determine the ranking of the semifinalists, discussing and breaking any ties.
- E. Complete and submit the finalist report, including a ranking of the ten (10) finalists, and all related forms in the results envelope to the CRC room.
- F. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the area.



Participant/Team ID# _____

CAREER PREPARATION**2015 & 2016 OFFICIAL RATING FORM****HIGH SCHOOL****Cover Letter (40 points)**

CRITERIA	Minimal performance 1-4 points	Adequate performance 5-8 points	Exemplary performance 9-10 points
Evaluators: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points) or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the far right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an "adequate" score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an "adequate" score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.)			
Introduction (X1)	The introduction fails to describe the participant, and/or does not clearly identify the position or reason for contact, and/or does not indicate how the position was discovered, and/or it does not indicate interest, and/or it does not grab the employer's attention.	The introduction describes many of the elements (e.g., participant description, how the position was identified, reason for applying, etc.) and briefly addresses others (e.g., how the position was discovered, interest level, etc.), resulting in an adequate introduction.	The introduction incorporates all elements—the participant, the position or reason for contact, how the opening was discovered, and genuine interest in the position—and ultimately grabs the employer's attention.
Body (identification of skills) (X1)	Participant fails to identify any skills or qualifications, does not explain interest, and does not indicate how his/her skills would provide benefit to the company.	Participant indicates his/her skills, with a general explanation of how the skills relate to the position at hand; participant conveys interest, and briefly connects the skills to benefits for the company.	Participant provides one or two strong qualifications and clearly relates these skills to the job at hand; participant clearly explains how his/her interest and skills can benefit the company.
Conclusion (X1)	The conclusion does not include a thank-you to the employer and/or, does not note contact information, is not assertive, and/or lacks mention of follow-up after a given period of time.	The conclusion may or may not include a thank-you and follow-up to the employer with contact information; overall, it is adequate.	The conclusion includes a thank-you to the employer for his/her time and contact information; it is assertive and mentions a method of follow-up within a given period of time.
Overall writing quality and grammar (X1)	The writing does not make sense; participant has written too much or too little (the employer could be turned off); there are multiple spelling and grammatical errors.	The writing is average, and includes relevant information and content; it is somewhat convincing to an employer; there are minor spelling or grammatical errors.	The writing flows well, is clear, concise, and gets right to the point; it is convincing and contains no spelling or grammatical errors.
SUBTOTAL (40 points)			

Resume (40 points)

CRITERIA	Minimal performance 1-4 points	Adequate performance 5-8 points	Exemplary performance 9-10 points
Audience and purpose (X1)	The resume does not address a particular audience; purpose is not clearly stated; revision is needed.	The audience and purpose are generally implied; the resume is somewhat tailored to the employer	The audience is clearly addressed and the resume is tailored to the employer; the purpose is clearly stated.
Presentation and format (X1)	The resume does not have a clear design format; headers are not used or are used incorrectly or inappropriately; the resume does not use reverse chronological format.	The resume attempts (and partially succeeds) to use a reverse chronological format; headers are used for a somewhat professional and concise presentation.	The resume follows a reverse chronological format; it uses clear and appropriate headers to organize information; it has a professional appearance.

Record scores in the column spaces below.

CAREER PREPARATION (continued)

Resume (40 points) (continued)

Appropriate Information (X1)	Information is not relevant to the position, and/or it does not convey the necessary skills needed to fulfill job requirements; it is obvious that no research on the position has been done.	Information is somewhat relevant to the position, skills are addressed, job requirements are somewhat taken into consideration when preparing the resume, and some research is evident.	Information is relevant to the position being applied for, it is obvious that research has been done on skills needed and requirements for the position, and all information is appropriate for the position being sought.
Language and style (X1)	Participant fails to use action words; phrasing is wordy and lacks focus, and/or phrases need revision to make them concise and clear.	Participant uses some action words and some concise and clear words in parts of the resume.	Participant consistently uses strong, clear and concise words throughout the resume; clarity of expression is consistent.
SUBTOTAL (40 points)			

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points) must be initialed by the evaluator, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the far right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____

Semifinalist Interview (50 points)

CRITERIA	Minimal performance 1-4 points	Adequate performance 5-8 points	Exemplary performance 9-10 points
Organization (X1)	Participant seems unorganized for the interview.	Participant is generally organized for the interview.	The interview with evaluators is well organized and logically completed.
Knowledge (X2)	Participant seems to have very little understanding of the concepts in the presentation and provides vague responses to interview questions.	Participant presents a generalized understanding of the concepts discussed and answers questions fairly well.	Participant shows clear evidence of a thorough understanding of the job discussed and understands issues of the job in the future.
Articulation (X1)	The interview is full of illogical thoughts that indicate lack of understanding.	The interview is somewhat logical and easy to understand and follow.	The interview provides a clear, concise, and easy-to-follow description of the project.
Delivery (X1)	Delivery detracts from the message; eye contact is limited and participant may look at the floor, mumble, speak inaudibly, fidget or read most of the presentation; gestures and movements may be jerky or excessive; participant is verbose, illogical, and uses many "uhs, ums, hmms," etc.	Delivery is generally good, with some effective use of volume, eye contact, vocal control, etc.; some hesitancy may be observed, however, vocal tone, facial expressions, and/or other nonverbal expressions do not detract from the message; participant is logical, well-spoken, and uses only a few "uhs, ums, hmms," etc.	Delivery is seemingly extemporaneous, natural, and confident and enhances the message; posture, eye contact, smooth gestures, facial expressions, volume and pace also enhance the interview; commitment to the career and a willingness to communicate are evident; participant is well-spoken, distinct, and responds clearly, with little or no use of "uhs, ums, hmms," etc.
SUBTOTAL (50 points)			



CAREER PREPARATION (continued)

Semifinalist Interview (50 points) (continued)

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points) must be initialed by the evaluator, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the far right.

Indicate the rule violated: _____

(To arrive at TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary. Check your math twice!) **TOTAL (130 points)**

Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Evaluator

Printed name: _____

Signature: _____