

COMPETITIVE EVENTS BEST PRACTICES

Every year, HOSA takes a careful look at the successes and challenges of the HOSA Competitive Events Program in order to make improvements. And it works! The following best practices are shared in an effort to assure the best possible event experience for HOSA.

1. TIMING & SCHEDULING

- a. The ILC schedule is designed to avoid room conflicts and the overlapping of events - **when events run on time**. At HOSA conferences, everything is carefully planned. Room space is at a premium, and rooms are constantly in use. Events **MUST** run on time in order to prevent undue competitor anxiety, overuse of judges, and room space conflicts.

“Break time” for judges is usually not scheduled in an effort to assure the events run on time, and to best utilize the judges’ time. Judges who need a break will be accommodated.

- b. **Sections** – The goal of scheduling events is to provide a fair event environment for competitors. That requires the fewest sections possible in a 3-hour time period. We don’t schedule judges for more than 3 hours out of respect for their time. We also don’t schedule more sections than we need just to hurry things along. It is not a good use of judge time for them to come to judge for one hour.
- c. **Round Two** – In some events, a Round One test or presentation is used to “qualify” competitors for Round Two. This is done to assure that the most qualified competitors go on to be evaluated by judges.

The number of competitors who qualify for Round Two is either determined in the event guidelines or as a percentage of the number of competitors who participated in Round One, based on event logistics and competitor scores.

- d. **Posting** – Finalist lists are posted online and at the location listed in the ILC Program. The time listed in the program is the latest posting time. As soon as the event is tabulated, the finalist list will be posted.
- e. **Stop Watch** – In most events, a stop watch is used to time intervals of less than 10 minutes. What is important is to assure that the event is timed accurately and stopped at the end of time. Often, when the same procedure is performed in a room at multiple stations, all competitors are told when to start (they all start at the same time) and all are told when to stop.

HOSA Bowl **MUST** use a stop watch when timing 10 minute rounds. Judges may stop and restart a round at any time during the match.

Selected events are timed using a Flow Chart and a clock. When a flow chart is used, it is imperative that event personnel follow the chart times and do not use a stop watch.

- f. **Stopping time** – For all HOSA events, time is called at the end of the time allowed and the competitor is stopped. This rule includes Special Needs events.
- g. **Bus Captain** – For every bus going to a clinical event site, there will be an adult assigned to coordinate the bus and assure it arrives and leaves on time. They will keep a list of who gets on and off the bus, and will be in cell phone contact with the Event Manager and CE headquarters as needed.
- h. **Recording Time to Complete Skills**— In skill events, please record the time it takes the competitor to complete the skill on the applicable Timekeeper Log. If time was called and the skill was not completed, please have the judges indicate on the rating sheet the step the competitor was performing when time was called.
- i. **Appointment Times** – Competitors should be asked to arrive 15 minutes before their scheduled appointment time. When too many competitors arrive too soon, the area around the event rooms becomes crowded with people, noisy, and difficult to manage. Event Personnel should be sensitive to noise and crowding issues if they occur, and work with the HOSACE Management Team to correct the problem. If an event starts to run late, Event Personnel should notify competitors who are waiting to help ease their stress-level.
- j. **Timekeepers** - Make sure time keepers are in clear site of competitors! They should stand and/or hold warning cards in plain view of competitors, and complete timekeeper logs thoroughly and accurately. Timekeeper is vital for making sure events run on time!

2. PAPERWORK & FORMS

- a. All event documents such as participant printouts, section summary forms, Scantron forms, rating sheets, etc.... ARE VERY IMPORTANT. Event personnel must accurately and completely fill out forms, and be sure that all information is recorded. Often, questions arise after the Event Managers, QA and Section Leaders have left the site/room where the events are held. Documentation must be clear and logical, with notes attached to explain anything out of the ordinary.
- b. **Tests** – If Event Personnel or judges find anything questionable in a written test or word list, they MUST circle the problem on the test document, describe the concern in writing, and give it to a member of the CE Management Team.
- c. **Rating Sheet Details** - All challenges and potential scoring issues should include a written explanation on the event rating sheet or Section Summary. For example, a competitor in a skill event does not complete a skill because he/she began feeling ill. Rather than just writing zeros for the remaining steps, have the judge or section leader write a brief explanation of what happened, what was said, etc.
- d. **Section Summary Form** – Follow process for submission of Section Summary forms. All rating sheets for a single competitor/team should be together, and all rating sheets from a section should be bound together with a detailed Section Summary form as a cover page.

- e. **Scenarios and Secret Topics** – Give competitors (teams) the written scenario or topic. Do not read it to them (except in special needs events). Do not alter the written scenario or topic.
- f. **Triple-check Event Boxes** – Make sure event boxes have all the needed paperwork and forms. Are there extra scantrons? Are there enough rating sheets for the number of judges and the number of skills/competitors? Are there enough evaluations for competitors and event personnel?
- g. **Sections** – Do NOT change competitor sections at the ILC. If sections are changed, make a note of the change on the Section Summary form and notify the Tabulations Director.
- h. **Check Rating Sheets During Event** - Event Managers, QAs and Lieutenants need to review rating sheets while the event is in progress to assure that correct processes are being followed and that there is consistency in judging the event.
- i. **Timekeeper Logs** – it is the timekeeper's responsibility to monitor timing for each section/event. They should record individual presentations/topics/skills on the timekeeper log as appropriate and have the QA review and sign them. This information is vital for continual improvement, and is our official record of this event occurring. Please be sure a reliable person has been assigned this task.

3. BEHAVIOR & POLICIES

- a. **General Rules and Regulations** – All members of the CE Program must be very familiar with the General Rules and Regulations for HOSA Competitive Events – found in the front of Section B of the HOSA Handbook.
- b. **Compassion** – Remind event personnel and judges to be NICE to competitors. There are too many competitor comments each year about mean judges and personnel. We need to treat each other kindly – and that includes HOSA competitors.
- c. **Providing Reasonable Explanations** – Event personnel at all levels should help HOSA members, and each other, understand event practices and processes. Explaining the “why” and honestly answering questions can help alleviate frustration and improve understanding of the event process and results.

Competitive events staff members know that, at an International Leadership Conference with thousands of competitors, anything can happen. When something happens which you don't understand, ask. It is always better to:

1. Find out what and why something happened.
2. Talk to the CE Chairs and/or HOSA Management for an explanation and/or suggestions.
3. Follow the rules and show fairness to all competitors. "Asking the question" is not a sign of weakness; it is a responsibility.

- d. **Unusual Circumstances** – Anytime something unusual happens that is not directly addressed in the guidelines, ask the Lt. or Category Chair how to handle it. When in doubt, ask HOSA Management.
- e. **Event Management Ethics** – Ethics rule of thumb; if it can be avoided, avoid it! While all competitive event personnel are trusted implicitly, most prefer NOT to be in a situation where they are making decisions about their students. For example, if a secondary advisor who wishes to serve as a judge has a student competing, let the advisor judge the postsecondary/collegiate section. The same rule holds true when breaking ties or making inquiry decisions. Generally, sensitive situations can and should be avoided. Whenever possible, use your management team to discuss challenges and reach consensus in decision-making.
- f. **Consistency from State to Nationals** – Take this experience (serving on the CE Management Team, serving as an Event Manager, QA, Event Personnel, etc.) and bring it back to your state level. The number one thing we hear from competitors is “well, that’s not how we did it at our state competition.” Do your best at the state level to follow the HOSA guidelines and expectations so competitors aren’t surprised when they arrive at the ILC.
- g. **If it does not say you can do something in the guidelines** – that generally means you cannot do it. For example, if it doesn’t say you can give a gift to the judges, then that means you cannot do it. HOSA events rely on competitors to use logic, reasoning, and common sense when reading the guidelines. Play it safe and follow the guidelines as written.
- h. **Ethics Rule Violation** - Allow competitors to compete in the event, and handle the situation discreetly. Report any infractions to appropriate CE personnel (Lieutenant and Chair) and document occurrence, as well as competitor ID number, on section summary form. When possible, confirm discreetly with more than one event personnel member who has witnessed the violation. Post-event decisions can be made by CE Leadership to enter a score or assess penalty points if necessary. Regardless of what happens with scoring, the HOSA member should be allowed to compete and should not be confronted under any circumstances.
- i. **Proxy Process** – If for any reason a competitor cannot attend an orientation, they must send a proxy. A proxy is a person who represents the absent competitor, and who has a properly completed and signed proxy form to give to the event personnel when the proxy registers for the competitor.

NOTE: Proxies are NOT permitted in certain event orientations because of testing or preliminary round requirements.

4. POINTS

- a. **Points for Following Guidelines** – When the rating sheet awards points to competitors for following the guidelines, event personnel should help judges identify what points should be awarded.

- b. **Points for Dress Code** – Dress code points are not awarded by the judges. The Event Lieutenant in conjunction with the Category Chair should determine any dress code violations. Event Personnel should not tell students they have lost dress points. This causes undue stress to the competitors.

5. ORIENTATION (GENERAL TIPS)

- a. **Walk-Through** – Chairs and Lieutenants should walk the space for their events. The Lieutenants should walk the space with the Event Managers and QAs to determine set-up. (Also see where other events are located ... especially with big events next to each other.)

6. COMPETITOR ORIENTATION

- a. **Missing Orientation** – According to Rule #31 in the General Rules and Regulations, there may be a 10-point penalty for missing orientation. This should be documented on the section summary form. These points will be deducted AFTER the event is tabulated.
- b. **Communication & Event Set-Up** - Tell students where the event will be held and what to expect in terms of set-up. Point out the room location or the bus departure location in the program. If they will be competing in the same room at the same time as other competitors, be sure to let them know. Explain how that will work, and that all competitors will have the same event setting. Be sure they know what room to report to when they arrive to compete. The Round Two Info Sheet, found on the HOSA app, will help give competitors an idea of what to expect in events with two rounds.
- c. **Materials Collection** - Some events require materials (for example, two copies of portfolios) to be turned in at competition time and some do not. Follow the guidelines and do not collect these materials during orientation unless instructed to do so. Remind competitors during orientation when copies will be turned in.
- d. **Equipment** – Prior to each event, CE Management will make a decision whether or not a one-minute preview will be provided to competitors to become familiar with the equipment to be used. Discuss with the CE Lieutenant to determine which events this preview will be provided.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. **Supplies** – HOSA-Future Health Professionals maintains a generous supply of stopwatches, calculators, pencils, pens, note cards, and other event supplies in CE Headquarters. If event personnel need supplies during an event, they should ask the Lieutenant who can obtain those needed supplies.
- b. **Skill Event Patients** – Event Managers & QAs must assure that the patients in multiple sections of any skill event are as similar as possible regarding gender and stature, in an effort to provide fairness and consistency.

- c. **Confidentiality vs. “the-good-of-the-process.”** Sometimes fairness involves sharing information that you normally would not share, but is important information for the time and place, and to improve the event experience for competitors (such as sharing scenario info with Event Manager to promote better preparation).

- d. **Event Environment** - HOSA competitive events and conference activities often take up every room in the convention facility or hotel. That means that sometimes a testing event will be beside a speaking event, and competitors will be in the halls, waiting to compete. Sometimes, there will be more noise than we would like. All event personnel should do their best to monitor noise and the flow of students in order to provide the best event experience possible for everyone concerned. Often the Event Manager is outside the event, and can monitor hallway noise. “Quiet Please” and “Event in Progress” signs will be available. In addition, CE personnel should avoid talking in the event room when their actions could disturb competitors.

- e. **Tests & Copies** – Make sure the test key is not copied and given to competitors. Tests should be numbered; count tests and place sticky note on top one with total number of tests. Ensure there are enough tests for every competitor prior to the competition. To ensure all tests are accounted for, write how many tests are collected after the event on same sticky note before returning them to the secure room.