



THIS IS HOW WE USE ROLE-PLAYS AND CASE STUDIES IN THE CLASSROOM

OVERVIEW

AN INTRODUCTION TO ROLE-PLAYS AND CASE STUDIES

DECA's role-plays and case studies bring business concepts to life by challenging students to analyze authentic situations, apply classroom knowledge and develop practical solutions. Guided by the National Career Clusters® Framework that is stewarded by Advance CTE and industry-validated performance indicators, they can be seamlessly integrated into instruction as learning activities, formative assessments or performance-based assessments.

Through these experiences, students strengthen critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, collaboration and creativity while applying knowledge from marketing, business management and administration, finance, hospitality and tourism, entrepreneurship and personal financial literacy.

Each role-play and case study identifies a career cluster and primary instructional area, helping advisors select activities that align with current classroom instruction. Scenarios are developed through industry research to reflect current business issues and trends and are connected to specific performance indicators. Students are challenged to apply those indicators as they analyze the situation, develop a solution and communicate their realistic recommendations. Individual Series Events are also connected to a specific career pathway.

UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

DECA uses seven lists of performance indicators: business administration core, business management and administration, entrepreneurship, finance, hospitality and tourism, marketing, and personal financial literacy. Performance indicators are specific knowledge and skills students should know and be able to perform as it relates to a career. One of DECA's strong points is that the performance indicators used in its competitive events program are industry-validated. A variety of industry-based primary and secondary sources are used to collect information, including: c-level business interviews, industry certifications, job websites for job descriptions, labor statistics, professional organizations, journals, articles, webinars and LinkedIn industry groups. Validation panels are also used to verify the research in developing the performance indicator lists.

Each performance indicator list is organized by instructional areas to assist advisors with planning units of instruction. Instructional areas are broad areas of content knowledge (such as promotion, pricing, emotional intelligence or business law) that are comprised of many performance indicators. As you teach different instructional areas during the year, you can use corresponding role-plays and case studies as learning tools.

For each role-play and case study, over half of the performance indicators come from the instructional area indicated on the front page of the role-play or case study. One strategy is to organize sample role-plays and case studies by career cluster and instructional area. For example, if you are teaching promotion in your marketing course, you can then decide if you want to use an apparel and accessories marketing series role-play or a sports and entertainment marketing team decision making case study, depending on the student's interests, time of the year or special area of focus.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

While the traditional competitive event setting requires interaction with judges and specific timing, many advisors have used role-plays and case studies in a variety of instructional methods. These include:

Warm-up activities and classroom discussions

Begin the class by asking students to read the role-play or case study and develop a solution. Engage the class in a meaningful discussion around various solutions. Ensure that each performance indicator is discussed.

Think-Pair-Share

Provide the role-play or case study to your students to review and develop ideas individually. Then group students in pairs and have each student play the role of the participant and play the role of a judge. After one round, you can encourage the students to find a different partner to serve in the other role. Then expand the sharing into a classroom discussion, discussing a variety of solutions and approaches.

Writing exercises

Provide the scenario to your students and ask them to write their ideas for solving the problem presented in the role-play or case study. You may also ask that they develop their solution in a slide deck and provide more information in the notes section of each slide.

Public speaking exercises

Provide the scenario to your students and ask them to deliver an oral presentation or recorded video that presents their ideas for solving the problem presented in the role-play or case study. You can ask your students to use the evaluation from when they are watching the oral presentation or recorded video. This not only requires students to deliver a solution, but also encourages students to evaluate their peers – a powerful activity when sitting on the “other side” as the judge.

Quick Performance Practice

Select one performance indicator and provide students with a short, one- or two-sentence business scenario. Give students several minutes to define the concept, apply it to the situation and develop a specific example or recommendation. Invite several students to share their responses and provide brief feedback. Students submit a 3-part response: definition, application, recommendation

Case Study Sprint

Give students a short business challenge and limited preparation time. Individually or in small groups, students develop and briefly present a recommendation. Begin with simple scenarios and gradually introduce performance indicators, evaluation criteria and longer preparation times as students build confidence. Students deliver a 60-second recommendation supported by two reasons.

Change the Conditions

After students develop a solution, introduce a new piece of information or constraint, such as a reduced budget, customer concern, staffing challenge or change in target market. Ask students to adjust their recommendation and explain how the new information affected their decision. Students revise one element of their original solution and explain why.

Assessment tools in lieu of a multiple-choice quiz/test

Use a role-play or case study as a written or oral assessment.



TIP | Students do not need to begin with a complete competitive-event simulation. Start with short scenarios, selected performance indicators or collaborative discussions. As students become more comfortable analyzing business situations and communicating solutions, gradually add preparation times, presentations, judge questions and evaluation forms.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

The performance indicators on the first page of the role-play are the exact performance indicators on the evaluation form the judge uses. Since the evaluation form for each role-play and case study includes the performance indicators, by using DECA's role-plays and case studies, you are assessing students' performance according to national curriculum standards, which are industry validated and aligned to career clusters. The evaluation form also assesses the students' ability to demonstrate many Career Competencies.