



Tips from Past ICDC Winners: Written Events

California DECA takes you into the mind of elite DECA champions to sharpen your competitive skills. These DECA members are part of the world's finest, defeating the best of the best to achieve top honors at DECA's International Career Development Conference (ICDC). California DECA thanks them for their assistance in providing insight to all of our members.



Janel Lee
Amador Valley High School
2nd Place
Buying and Merchandising
Operations Research
ICDC 2013

What has been your greatest mistake and how did you recover?

At ICDC, I had made a new PowerPoint to use instead of the one I had used at State. Unfortunately, when I started presenting I saw that I was using my old slides. I was really thrown off guard and wanted to start over. Instead, I just smiled at the judge and said all the things I had prepared for the new presentation while using the old one. The judge didn't even notice.

Key to Success

Remember that the judges score you based on questions. Know those questions beforehand and be prepared to answer them.

Andrew Tan
Irvington High School
4th Place
Entrepreneurship-Growing
Your Business
ICDC 2013
(with partner Greg Chi)



What is most important to remember when writing your written report?

Always have the outline of your report in mind. Don't forget the purpose of your project and who your audience is. This will help keep you on track to reach your goal.

How do you engage your judge if they don't seem interested in what you're saying?

Be aware of your surroundings and anything that may influence the judge. Use something the judge can relate to during your presentation as an example or transition. It could refer to a phrase he said or even something he was wearing. A friend of mine who did FMP told me about an incident where she noticed a Macy's shopping bag on the ground next to her judge, so she incorporated "Macy's" into her presentation and it really caught the judge's attention.

Key to Success

Don't be discouraged by failure; it's the only way to get better.
"Fall down seven times, get up eight."

How did you find most of the information for your Operations Research (OR) event?
As OR is focused on applying an annual topic to a business, I found it helpful to go to the owner or workers first to find out what THEY thought were the problems in their business. It's also useful to ask about potential solutions, but you should ultimately be the one with the proposal. Research bases, the US Census, and ultimately Google were my best friends in finding solutions and choosing the best for the business.

Megan Yelsangikar

Monta Vista High School

1st Place, Advertising Campaign
ICDC 2013
(with partner Shivani Komma)

Top Ten, Advertising Campaign
ICDC 2012



How early in the year did you start working on your project?

Approximately two months before our regional conference. Our first few meetings were solely dedicated to brainstorming ideas that we wanted to focus on, and closer to the conference was when we went on to refine and put our content in writing.

Megan (right) and her partner Shivani Komma

What are good visuals to supplement a written event?

Good visuals are ones that are realistic and pertinent to your content and enhance (but not distract from) the judge's understanding of what you are saying. Mockups are a great way to show the judge how you are going to implement something as opposed to just writing it in your plan without visual justification.

Key to Success

Embrace change. Always push yourself to go beyond what you previously thought was the limit. From our experience, you'll more often than not exceed your expectations so long as you simply believe in yourself and your capability to produce excellent results. You get out of DECA what you put in. If you are dedicated, ambitious, and resilient, there is nothing that can stop you from having a trophy of your own.