

2025–2026 Competitive Events Guidelines

Foundations of Hospitality Management



Foundations of Hospitality Management challenges members to demonstrate their understanding of essential concepts in the hospitality and tourism industries through an objective test. This event covers topics such as customer service, event planning, travel and tourism, hotel operations, and industry trends.

Event Overview

Division	Collegiate
Event Type	Individual
Event Category	Objective Test
Event Elements	50-minute test, 100-multiple choice questions

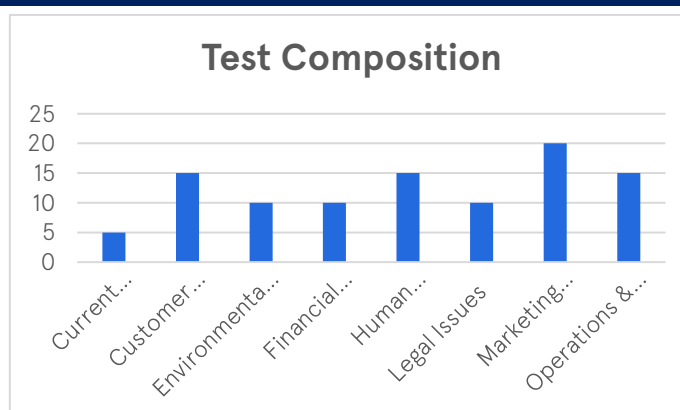
Educational Alignments

Career Cluster Framework Connection	Hospitality, Events, & Tourism
NACE Competency Alignment	Career & Self-Development, Critical Thinking, Technology

This event is intended for students who are early in their collegiate academic journey and just beginning their study of hospitality management. Only members who have completed no more than six credit hours on a semester schedule (or the equivalent number of quarter hours) of college-level hospitality management coursework by May 1, 2026, are eligible to compete.

Knowledge Areas

- Current Industry Trends
- Customer Expectations
- Environmental and Global Issues
- Financial Management & Budgeting
- Human Resources
- Legal Issues
- Marketing Concepts
- Operations & Management Functions



Test questions are based on the knowledge areas and objectives outlined for this event. Detailed objectives can be found in the study guide included in these guidelines.

State

Check with your State Leader for state-specific competition information and deadlines.

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National

Required Competition Items

Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides On-site
- Sharpened pencil - Fully powered device for online testing - Conference-provided nametag Photo identification - Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	- One piece of scratch paper per competitor - Internet access - Test login information (link & password provided at test check-in)

Important FBLA Documents

- Competitors should be familiar with the Competitive Events [Policy & Procedures Manual](#), [Honor Code](#), [Code of Conduct](#), and [Dress Code](#).

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in FBLA competitive events at the National Leadership Conference (NLC), the following criteria must be met:

- Membership Deadline:** FBLA national membership dues must be paid to the specific division by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1 of the current school year.
- Conference Registration:** Members must be officially registered for the NLC and must pay the national conference registration fee to participate.
- Official Hotel Requirement:** To be eligible to compete, competitors must stay within the official FBLA housing block.
- State Entry Limits:** Each state may submit up to four entries per event.
- Event Participation Limits:** Each member may participate in:
 - Two individual or team events, and
 - One chapter event (e.g., *Community Service Project* or *State of Chapter Presentation*).
- Participation Requirement:** To be eligible for an award, each competitor must complete all components of the event at the National Leadership Conference.
- Identification at Check-in:** Competitors must present valid photo identification (physical or digital) that matches the name on their conference name badge. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, passport, state-issued ID, or school ID.
- Late Arrivals:** Competitors will be allowed to compete until such time that the results are finalized, or participation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event, as determined by Competitive Events staff. Five penalty points will be assessed for late arrivals in any competitive event.
- Event Schedule Notes:**
 - Some events may begin before the Opening Session.
 - All schedules are posted in local time for the NLC host city.
 - Schedule changes are not permitted.

Event Administration

- Test Duration:** 50 minutes
- Format:** This event consists of an online objective test that is proctored and completed on-site at the National Leadership Conference (NLC).

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- **Materials:** Reference or study materials are not permitted at the testing site.
- **Calculators:** Personal calculators are not allowed; an online calculator will be available within the testing platform.
- **Question Review:** Competitors may flag questions within the testing platform for review prior to the finalization of results at the NLC.

Scoring

- Each correct answer is worth one point.
- No points are deducted for incorrect answers.
- Tiebreakers are determined as follows: (1) The number of correct responses to 10 pre-selected tiebreaker questions will be compared. (2) If a tie remains, the number of correct responses to 20 pre-selected questions will be reviewed. (3) If a tie still remains, the competitor who completed the test in the shortest amount of time will be ranked higher.
- Results announced at the National Leadership Conference are considered official and will not be changed after the conclusion of the National Leadership Conference.

Penalty Points

- Competitors may be disqualified if they violate the Code of Conduct or the Honor Code.
- Five points are deducted if competitors do not follow the Dress Code or are late to the testing site.

Recognition

- A maximum of 10 entries (individuals or teams) may be recognized per event.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- FBLA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodations for competitors. Accommodation requests must be submitted through the conference registration system by the official registration deadline. All requests will be reviewed, and additional documentation may be required to determine eligibility and appropriate support.

Electronic Devices

- Unless approved as part of a documented accommodation, all cell phones, smartwatches, electronic devices, and headphones must be turned off and stored away before the competition begins. Visible devices during the event will be considered a violation of the FBLA Honor Code.

Sample Preparation Resources

- Official sample test items can be found in [CONNECT](#). These sample items showcase the types of questions that may be asked on the test and familiarize competitors with the multiple-choice item options.

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Study Guide: Knowledge Areas and Objectives

A. Current Industry Trends

1. Discuss how technology has changed and continues to change the hospitality industry.
2. Describe the impact of technology on the reservation business/process.
3. Describe the latest trends and technologies affecting business travelers.
4. Describe how advances in technology allow the hospitality industry to keep up-to-date customer records.
5. Describe the latest trends regarding the leisure traveler.
6. Discuss industry trends as they relate to career opportunities and the overall future of the industry.
7. Identify current events that will have an impact on the hospitality/tourism industry.
8. Summarize the challenges of the airlines in regard to unions, security, flight delays, and the addition of low-cost airlines.
9. Report on the impact that major sports events have on the local economy.
10. Discuss the trends in hotel security operations.

B. Customer Expectations

1. Describe in-room hotel amenities and explain why they are important to guests.
2. Describe property wide hotel amenities and explain why they are important to guests.
3. Apply strategies for determining and adjusting prices to maximize on return and meet customer's perceptions of value.
4. Develop and deliver effective customer relation skills in order to provide good customer service.
5. Explain typical rating systems used in the lodging business.
6. Conduct research to determine customer needs and wants in the hospitality industry.
7. Analyze the characteristics, motivations, and behaviors of hospitality consumers.
8. Summarize techniques to build customer relationships.
9. Establish effective selling philosophies in order to develop customer loyalty and profitability.
10. Describe incentives and rewards for long-term repeat individuals/groups in the hospitality industry.
11. Describe the value of customer feedback in the hospitality industry as it relates to improvement to product and service.
12. Describe the concept of total quality and its relationship to customer service.
13. Define the roles of appearance and impressions in customer service.
14. Demonstrate proper telephone and e-mail etiquette for customer service.
15. Summarize techniques and strategies for handling difficult customers.
16. Compare how the business traveler is different from the leisure traveler emphasizing expense accounts, length of stay in a hotel, and the amount of travel time.

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17. Discuss the selection process and the role the business traveler plays with hotels, conventions, and the local economy.
 18. Analyze the importance of long-term hospitality relationships with other major industries and individuals.
- C. Environmental and Global Issues
1. Identify factors that encourage and influence global tourism.
 2. Explain special considerations for international travelers.
 3. Describe the importance of global travel.
 4. Apply ethical conduct in dealing with international business transactions.
 5. Define ecotourism.
 6. Identify the reasons for ecotourism including the impact of the environment, the financial benefits, and cultural awareness.
 7. Describe environmentally sound practices regarding guests in the hospitality industry.
 8. Describe environmentally sound practices for hospitality industry properties.
 9. Exhibit ethical and legal social behaviors when using information and technology in the hospitality industry and discuss the consequences of misuse.
- D. Financial Management and Budgeting
1. Describe the type of liability insurance needed in the hospitality industry.
 2. Identify reasons for liability insurance and disclaimers in the hospitality industry.
 3. Describe the impact of the economy on the travel industry.
 4. Explain the ripple direct and indirect effect of tourism dollars.
 5. Explain the economic role played by the hospitality industry in satisfying customer needs and wants in a free enterprise system.
 6. Explain the importance of monitoring economic trends in the hospitality industry as it relates to sales strategies for difference economic cycles.
 7. Select an accounting system using good accounting practices.
 8. Collect and interpret financial data to prepare financial statements such as balance sheet, income statement, cash flow projections, and summary of sales and receipts.
 9. Explain how the Balance Sheet and P&L Statement are used to manage operations.
 10. Analyze Profit and Loss statements, statements of cash flow, and balance sheets.
 11. Define fixed costs.
 12. State examples of how numbers are compared (e.g., budget to actual, this year to last year, and year-to-date to last year-to-date) to explain performance.
 13. Describe cash control policies.
 14. Explain the importance of liquidity and profitability.
 15. Explain the use of revenue management and forecasting reports.
 16. Discuss the use of budgets in business operations.
 17. Explain the steps in preparing an operating budget.
 18. Explain the relationship between occupancy rate and budget for a hospitality venue.
 19. Explain rack rates, business rates, and leisure rates in the hospitality industry.

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20. Describe strategies and procedures for determining room rates and prices in the hotel industry.
- E. Human Resources
1. Define human resources.
 2. Explain the importance of human resources in protecting the hotel through monitoring hiring, training, and disciplinary processes.
 3. Explain how job analysis, performance standards, and job descriptions impact selection, training, and management of employees.
 4. Develop an employee recruitment plan designed to identify and hire qualified employees.
 5. Discuss ways of screening applicants and selecting the most qualified for employment.
 6. Plan, develop, and implement employee orientation and training programs.
 7. Evaluate the effects of employee absenteeism, errors, or other negative employee behaviors on business productivity.
 8. Describe the salary and fringe benefit package that will attract the best employees to the hospitality industry.
 9. Develop a plan for evaluation of employee performance and productivity.
 10. Develop separation, termination, and transition procedures for processing employee personnel actions.
 11. Plan and manage work schedules and personnel to maximize operations.
 12. Explain the purpose and benefits of performance reviews.
 13. Discuss reasons for employee discipline.
 14. Describe the differences between positive and negative discipline.
 15. Define the term diversity and explain ways to increase positive cross-cultural interaction.
 16. Discuss ways to deal with and prevent sexual harassment.
 17. Discuss ways to deal with substance abuse.
 18. Describe safe working conditions in the hospitality industry to include OSHA Guidelines.
 19. Identify basic principles of organized labor and describe its influence on the hospitality industry.
 20. Define equal opportunity on the job and explain the impact of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action on the hospitality industry.
 21. Define and discuss wrongful termination and its consequences.
 22. Define the at-will employment relationship.
 23. Discuss the employee manual and its role in defining the responsibilities and rights of employer and employee.
 24. Identify personal characteristics of effective employees within the hospitality industry.
- F. Legal Issues
1. Discuss legal responsibility in admitting guests and denying admission or service to guests.
 2. Define duty of care owed by hospitality operators to guests, including providing a safe premise, serving food and beverages safely and responsibly, hiring and

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training employees, terminating employees with they pose a danger, warning of unsafe conditions, and safeguarding guest property.

3. Analyze the importance of guest security and anonymity in the hospitality industry.
4. Discuss standards of care for the hospitality industry that focus on preventing lawsuits, preventing accidents, and preventing problems.
5. Discuss the concept of reasonable care as it applies to the hospitality industry.
6. Define the components of an enforceable contract (e.g., legality, offer, consideration, and acceptance).
7. Discuss remedies and consequences of breaching a contract by either the customer or the hospitality enterprise.
8. Describe the role of the following federal agencies in the operation of hospitality enterprises: IRS, OSHA, EPA, FDA, EEOC, ATF, DOL, and DOJ.
9. Describe the role of the following state agencies in the operation of hospitality enterprises: Employment Security Agency, Alcohol Beverage Commission, Treasury Department, Attorney General, Public Health Department, and Department of Transportation.
10. Describe the role of the following local agencies in the operation of hospitality enterprises: Health and Sanitation, Building and Zoning, Courts and Garnishment, Historical Preservation, Fire Department, Law Enforcement, and Tax Collector.
11. Analyze the impact of Federal, State, and Local government regulations on the hospitality industry.
12. Describe accommodations that meet ADA standards.
13. Review the laws that impact employee selection and retention (Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII, Americans with Disabilities Act, Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Immigration Reform and Control Act, and Fair Labor Standards Act).
14. Discuss the importance of employee selection, training, ongoing management, and education in preventing lawsuits.
15. Apply legal interpretations to employee situations, retention of records, safety and security issues, and financial data.
16. List guidelines that help analyze and evaluate ethical behavior.
17. Discuss the legal issues related to managerial decisions.
18. Discuss employee compensation and the implications of violating minimum wage and overtime pay requirements.
19. Discuss the unemployment claims process and the effect of poor policies and procedures on unemployment tax rates.

G. Marketing Concepts

1. Describe the basic concepts of marketing as they relate to the hospitality industry.
2. Define the seven key marketing functions (Selling, Marketing Information Management, Financing, Pricing, Promotion, Product/Service Management, and Distribution).
3. Explain public relations and publicity and its advantages and disadvantages as they relate to the hospitality industry.

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4. Describe market segmentation and meeting the needs of various target markets in the hospitality industry.
 5. Determine, maintain, and improve the marketing mix (e.g., product, price, place, and promotion).
 6. Describe marketing strategies for the hospitality industry.
 7. Explain the difference between marketing and sales.
 8. Describe the impact of internet sales on the hospitality industry.
 9. List sales strategies for event marketing, group sales, and leisure/business customers.
 10. Apply the steps of the sales process in the hospitality industry.
 11. Explain how sales efforts are tied to personal service.
 12. Describe effective strategies for servicing hospitality meetings and individual hotel guests.
 13. Describe sales strategies for economic downturns.
 14. Identify various marketing terms such as position, branding, market share, etc.
 15. Explain the product life cycle of a hospitality-related product.
 16. Discuss the role of ethics in hospitality marketing.
 17. Interpret specific challenges marketers face when creating worldwide marketing programs.
 18. Explain how convention and visitors' bureaus and state tourism agencies can assist hospitality related companies.
 19. Describe the importance of a company's image and identify the many tools that companies use to improve their image including logos, menus, brochures, letterhead, etc.
 20. Identify the many types of advertising media that are utilized by companies such as radio, television, billboards, word of mouth, and direct mail.
 21. Discover the advantages and disadvantages of utilizing the various forms of advertising.
 22. Describe the importance of websites in marketing and advertising through blogs, and social media such as Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, etc.
 23. Identify the ways promotions can assist in increasing sales.
 24. Discover the importance of merchandizing and give examples of merchandising tools used in the hospitality industry.
 25. Define packaging and how it is utilized in the hospitality industry.
- H. Operations and Management Functions
1. Interpret data from financial statements to develop short- and long-term budgetary plans, to determine point of profitability and viability and to analyze cash flow forecast (e.g., RevPar)
 2. Describe basic purchasing procedures commonly used in the hospitality industry.
 3. Discuss strategies for increasing occupancy rates.
 4. Define occupancy rate and yield management in the hospitality industry.
 5. Explain the four basic functions of hospitality management (planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling).
 6. Describe the importance of planning and forecasting for the hospitality industry.

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7. Analyze the importance of having good hospitality personnel to support meetings, events, and lodging for the customer.
8. Explain the importance of strategic planning and synergy for successful management of hospitality events.
9. Describe the leadership characteristics and human relations skills that help managers influence employees to perform at a higher level.
10. Explain the relationship of business ethics to product/service management.
11. Describe the role of ethics and social responsibility on decision making in the hospitality industry.
12. Describe the operational and management structure for various types of hospitality/tourism facilities.
13. Describe various leadership styles (e.g., autocratic, bureaucratic, democratic, laissez-faire, situational transactional, and transformational).
14. Explain the importance of planning in supervision.
15. Discuss ways supervisors/managers can organize their work to become more effective.
16. Describe techniques for overcoming resistance to change.
17. Discuss current theories and practices of motivating employees.
18. Discuss ways to build a positive work environment.
19. Discuss the need for training in the hospitality industry.
20. Identify steps to prevent and resolve conflict.
21. Discuss how perception, cultural diversity, age, and background impact communication.
22. Discuss the chain of command and accountability.
23. List benefits of delegation to a supervisor/manager's success.
24. Develop an organizational chart with staffing/human resource plans including job descriptions and recruitment techniques.
25. Identify ways to improve employee morale and customer satisfaction.
26. Gather and evaluate marketing information to make hospitality business decisions.