

New Jersey FFA - State Officer Study Guide

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This resource is to be used in preparation for the State Officer Selection Process. While this study guide is quite robust, it is not the sole resource for preparation.

STATE OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS DISCLAIMER

Although the New Jersey FFA Association uses the National FFA Nominating Committee Process as a guideline, the Association is entitled to modify the process to better suit the needs of its members. Materials found in the National Officer Selection Process Handbook may be used and/or modified for state use.

STATE OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS ROUNDS

The rounds for the nominating committee process are as follows:

Writing Exercise – 60 minutes

This round will happen online one week prior to the State FFA Convention. All candidates will have 60 minutes to complete a writing exercise which places them in a situation they may encounter as a state officer. Possible writing assignments include (but are not limited to) a blog post, magazine article, written testimony relating to the National FFA Delegate process, etc. The writing exercise will be based off of a list of topics which will be published for all candidates. Candidates are encouraged to understand each topic well. However, the exercise will also require candidates to demonstrate an understanding of how that particular topic relates to all themes (agriculture, FFA, and American education).

Social Media Exercise – 60 minutes

This round will happen online one week prior to the State FFA Convention. All candidates will have 60 minutes to demonstrate how they would utilize social media as a state officer through prompted scenarios. Candidates will be given the social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) and the scenario they are expected to utilize it for and will be asked to create a post based on that that scenario. Candidates can expect 2-5 scenarios that must be completed. This round will be a simulation and not conducted using actual social media platforms to protect candidates' privacy and the integrity of the process.

Media Interview – 3 minutes

Throughout a state officers' year of service, they may engage in newspaper, radio or TV interviews. Prior to the official start of the State Officer Selection Process, each state officer candidate will be interviewed and recorded by the Nominating Committee Assistant. The focus of the Media Round is on the candidate's demonstration of FFA and Food, Agriculture, and Natural Resources Education knowledge and self-promotion while conducting a media interview. **This round will not be scored.** The answers candidates provide in this round will be used for evidence during deliberations only.

Personal Round 1 (6:1) – 4 minutes, 3 questions

In this introductory round, candidates will have four minutes to answer three questions posed by the nominating committee. Questions will be in the realm of “tell us about yourself”, “why have you decided to run for state FFA office”, etc. Additionally, candidates can expect one question posed by the committee to be in direct relation to something from the candidate’s application.

One-on-One (1:1) – 5 minutes, 5 questions

Over the course of thirty minutes, candidates will have an opportunity for a one-on-one conversation with each committee member. The purpose of this round is for the committee to develop rapport with candidates and get to know them, as well as have an opportunity for evaluation of targeted indicators for measures of success through structured questions. Each conversation will last no longer than five minutes, with two minutes given for committee members to score in between.

Facilitation (6:1) – 20 minutes to prepare, 10 minutes to deliver

This round focuses on a candidate’s ability to influence through facilitated presentation in front of a live audience. Candidates will have twenty (20) minutes to plan, prepare, and organize their workshop with the materials provided. In addition to materials, candidates will also be provided with instructions that provide specific content objectives for their workshop. Following their preparation time, candidates will have ten (10) minutes to present their workshop portion to an audience of 5-10 live students, with the nominating committee observing. This round is strictly observation only and no questions will be asked.

Representation Round (6:1) – 20 minutes to prepare, 5 minutes to deliver, 5 minute conversation

This round focuses on a candidate’s ability to advocate for agriculture, FFA, or American education. Candidates will have twenty (20) minutes to plan, prepare, and organize their advocacy speech based on the instructions provided. Following their preparation time, candidates will have five (5) minutes to deliver their presentation to the nominating committee and industry representative(s). Following the five minutes of delivery, candidates will have a five (5) minute follow-up conversation with an industry representative. The committee will evaluate the candidates’ ability to advocate and articulate facts and key messages regarding the agriculture industry, FFA, and American education.

Personal Round II (6:1) – 10 minutes, undetermined number of questions

This final round of the process gives both the candidates and the committee one final opportunity to ask or answer any questions they feel are pivotal to making their final decision. The structure of this round, including room setup, number of questions asked, and what is asked, is highly autonomous and is largely at the discretion of the nominating committee. Candidates will have ten (10) minutes to answer the committee’s questions and articulate anything else they feel the committee should know. **This round will not be scored.** The answers candidates provide in this round will be used for evidence during deliberations only.

STATE OFFICER SELECTION PROCESS SCORING

Scoring of candidates will be based the state officer “Measures of Success.” National FFA has identified eleven measures required for fulfilling the job description of a state officer.

Measure – indicators that can be used for evaluation of individual development

Example: Measure #1: Is of Sound Character

Builder – identifies specific attributes or skills to further define the behaviors of that measure.

Example: Communicates true self with tact

Indicators – a description of how someone might demonstrate the competency builder.

Example: Communicates with enthusiasm their passions and desires for the future; fully communicates vulnerabilities or weaknesses without hesitation; fully describes a plan to overcome weaknesses

MEASURES OF SUCCESS DESCRIPTIONS

Measures of Success Descriptions:

The following is a listing of the measures of success essential for serving as a state officer. The state officer selection process is designed to screen candidates to find those who demonstrate these measures consistently. It is expected that state officers continue to demonstrate these and also work to develop and refine their skill set in each area throughout their year of service. The measures of success are listed in no particular order.

Is of Sound Character

A person of sound character displays a disposition that is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful and has a positive outlook on life.

BUILDERS

Communicates true self with tact

Displays high integrity; does the right thing

Shows respect and empathy towards others

Assumes responsibility for personal actions

Focuses attention and credit on others before self

Acts appropriately in given situations, using appropriate language and mannerisms

Influences Others Through Positive Actions

A person of influence demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships and growing the organization

BUILDERS

Identifies opportunities to encourage others to achieve their full potential

Makes decisions with consideration of the larger group (team, organization, etc.)

Delivers feedback in manner that affects positive change

Has positive contact with and encourages all members of the group

Modifies behavior in order to operate as a positive role model

Demonstrates an optimistic attitude

Understands Team Dynamics

A person who understands team dynamics demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values varying personality styles, works to be inclusive in the process and is willing to put others above self.

BUILDERS

Leverages the strengths and personality style of team members to capitalize on team

Takes responsibility for undesirable team outcomes

Can manage team dynamics with professionalism, producing positive results

Flexes personal communicate style to best communicate with the personality styles of others

Has an awareness of personality styles of self and others

Takes responsibility for own tasks in a group setting while respecting the work of others

Develops Effective Tools of Communication

A person who has effective communication tools demonstrates the effective use of various forms of communication clearly while remembering others' diversity of opinion.

BUILDERS

Makes the presentation meaningful by using real-world examples to which the audience can relate

Plans the right amount of time to spend on key points and activity components

Considers others' point of view and experiences when planning presentations

Chooses words and phrases in examples and stories that are vivid, precise and clearly explained

Has clearly defined relevant objectives and outcomes appropriate for the audience

Constructs a clear and logical structure for presentations

Asks clarifying questions of audience needs prior to presentation development

Demonstrates Professionalism

A person who demonstrates professionalism is appropriate at all times and abides by the code of conduct and ethical living agreement.

BUILDERS

Challenges others to demonstrate adherence to codes of conduct and ethical living

Demonstrates appropriate behavior for the situation

Uses mature language and mannerisms

Understands that different situations require varying levels of professionalism

Operates in accordance with codes of conduct and ethical living

Manages Time Effectively

A person who manages time effectively has time management skills and the ability to prioritize tasks.

BUILDERS

Effortlessly adapts to changes in schedules and logistics

Always helps direct the group in completing necessary action planning steps to accomplish task completion

Completes multiple tasks with competing deadlines regardless of the circumstances

Handles both small and large tasks by breaking down large tasks into more management components

Utilizes a time management tool and monitors time effectively

Starts and competes projects independently

Develops Clear Messaging Related to FFA, Ag and Education

A person who has clear messaging can deliver consistent, clear messages related to FFA, agriculture and education.

BUILDERS

Adjusts messages about FFA and agricultural education based on the audience's point of view or needs

Explains the relationships among FFA, Departments of Education and the industry of agriculture (if applicable), career and technical education, funding sources, and the issues connecting them

Articulates information related to current issues and trends impacting agriculture locally and globally

Explains the mission of FFA, the agricultural education model, opportunities for youth within FFA, and the ability of FFA to develop leadership

Serves as an Advocate for Agriculture and FFA

A person who serves as an advocate for agriculture and FFA is someone who represents, upholds ideals, and advocates the FFA brand and the agricultural industry.

BUILDERS

Recognizes the appropriate time to take action as an advocate for agriculture and FFA

Demonstrates a strong sense of ownership of the role as an advocate for agriculture and FFA

Seeks to discuss agriculture and FFA and to make connections to initiatives and interests of others

Uses and is able to cite correct and valid sources of information to support statements about agriculture and FFA

Speaks with passion, emotion, interest and insight about agriculture and FFA

Respects others' points of view

Displays Strong Conversation Skills

A person who has strong conversation skills has meaningful conversations and is able to create proper conversation starters while maintaining conversations, being articulate and asking relevant questions.

BUILDERS

Always employs strategies to learn about others and find common ground

Effortlessly connects and transfers between conversations and discussions

Listens for understanding and asks clarifying questions in conversations

Demonstrates a genuine interest in others

Attracts others with an enjoyable presence and an optimistic attitude

Recalls information from conversations

Exhibits Strong Public Speaking Skills

A person who exhibits strong public speaking skills is someone who can develop and deliver effective speeches, workshops, curriculum, welcomes, and reflections to specific target audiences.

BUILDERS

Speaks authentically with comfort and ease

Fully captures the audiences' attention in an engaging speech

Uses relevant examples that are effective, logical and original

Speaks with appropriate volume, tone and pace for venue and audience

Communicates ideas clearly, with strong organization

Eye contact and gestures are effective and purposeful

Delivers Successful Workshops

A person who can deliver successful workshops is effective and engaging while delivering workshops to various audiences.

BUILDERS

Incorporates a wide variety of techniques to accommodate multiple learning styles and adjusts accordingly to meet student needs

Proactively seeks feedback and uses it in a constructive manner

Suggests post-workshop activities that apply key points

Values preparation and makes time to practice prior to the event

Consistently addresses and checks students' understanding throughout workshop

Emphasizes key points through activities and discussion in a workshop setting

Generates audience buy-in by finding common ground and building rapport

RESOURCES

New Jersey FFA State Officer Candidate Resources Webpage

https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/ag_ed/ffa/officers/candidateresources.html

State Officer Candidate Handbook

https://www.nj.gov/agriculture/ag_ed/ffa/activity/15.011.pdf

National Officer Study Guide

<https://ffa.app.box.com/v/Library/folder/57097325786>

NJ Agricultural Statistics

<http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/about/overview.html>

NJ Farm Bureau

<https://njfb.org/>

NJ Department of Agriculture

<http://www.nj.gov/agriculture/>

NJ Department of Education

<http://www.state.nj.us/education/index.html>

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

<https://njaes.rutgers.edu/extension/>

Behavioral Interviewing (Virginia Tech Career and Professional Development)

https://career.vt.edu/job-search/presenting_yourself/interviewing/types-locations/behavioral-interviews.html

The New Jersey FFA Association is a resource and support organization that does not select, control or supervise local chapter or individual member activities except as expressly provided for in the state FFA constitution, bylaws or policies.

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