

Tips from Past ICDC Winners: Roleplays

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.

Vivek Raghuram

Monta Vista High School

1st Place

Marketing Management
ICDC 2012

2nd Place

Principles of
Hospitality and Tourism
ICDC 2010

4th Place

Retail Merchandising
ICDC 2013



Picture by Eric Xu

How do you practice for your roleplays and how much time do you usually spend?

For me, I never practiced roleplays after freshman year. Instead I taught others, which helped me get better because I had to thoroughly think through the advice I was giving and I learned a lot by observing others. What I recommend is to do as many roleplays as possible with as many different people as possible. And think with your head. What you say has to be reasonable and impressive.

What's the most important thing to remember going in to your presentation?

Remember that you will probably never see that judge again. Make those 10 minutes (or more depending on event) count. Don't be afraid to leave your comfort zone either. After all, if you screw up, you'll never see your judge again anyway.

Key to Success

The key is passion. Love and enjoy what you do. If you're passionate about your event, you can work twice as hard and twice as long as the next guy and during your presentation you'll be twice as enthusiastic and twice as interesting.

Kelly McCormick

Encinal High School

4th Place

Hotel and Lodging Management
ICDC 2013

7th Place

Hotel and Lodging Management
ICDC 2012

Key to Success

Be confident! If you smile, relax, and remember that you're well-prepared, both you and your judge will have a better time and you'll know that you did your best.

How did you prepare for your cluster exam?

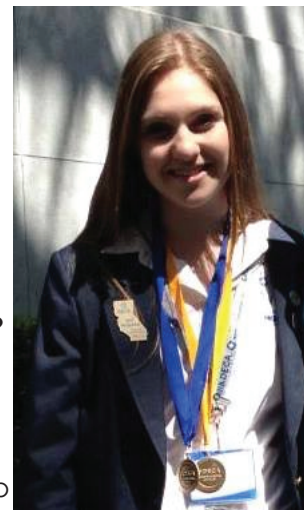
I took as many practice exams as I could. The questions started to look repetitive, but that's the point. As time went on, most of the questions were similar to ones that I had seen and both my scores and confidence improved.

What's the best way to use the limited prep time that you have?

Addressing the performance indicators is the number one priority. After that, I try to make any extras (charts, etc) and brainstorm creative ideas to help communicate my PI responses.

How do you approach a term in a question or performance indicator (PI) that you don't know?

Fake it 'till you make it. I try not to let it throw me off and focus more on the aspects of it that I do know - partial credit is better than nothing at all. Also make sure you look through the PI possibilities online to familiarize yourself with any new terms that might come up.

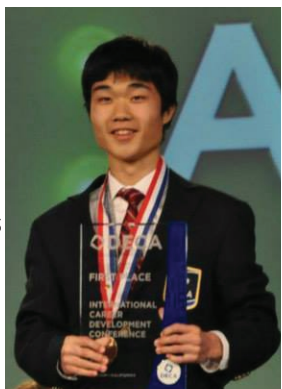


Timothy Lin

Lynbrook High School

1st Place

Apparel and Accessories
Marketing
ICDC 2013



How do you close your role-plays?

I always want to end strong and leave a good impression. I start my conclusion with a summary of my plan. Repeat your best points so the judge remembers. Let the judge know why your plan will work and why it's the best. The judge sits through a lot of roleplays, so give something unique. Finish off by closing the sale. Be confident, professional, and ask your judge to implement your plan.

Key to Success

Be observant and ready to learn. You need business knowledge to create content for your roleplay. Research your event's industry or field. Read relevant news and study vocabulary. You can conduct research by walking into a store or viewing an ad. Observe businesses and think about why failing ones fail and successful ones succeed. Incorporate that knowledge in your roleplays and the judges will be impressed.

How do you recover if you stumble and/or lose your train of thought?

Always stay calm and cool. Pretend it didn't happen and continue through the roleplay normally. It's okay to take a second, look at your paper, and remind yourself what you were about to say next. During prep time, come up with an outline, so you always know what's next. However, stumbling does happen, so when it does, stay calm and cool.