SkillsUSA Professional Development Test Study Guide

The SkillsUSA Championships is the premier showcase of America's most highly skilled career and technical education students. It's also one of the largest hands-on workforce development events in the world. The SkillsUSA Championships is the national culmination of a year-long process that begins in local SkillsUSA chapters across the country. Local winners advance to district or regional competitions, testing their skills against competitors from other schools. Those winners advance to state competitions, and state gold medalists earn the right to compete nationally at the SkillsUSA Championships each June.

In addition to the technical skills demonstrated in these competitions, competitors are expected to showcase personal and workplace skills gained through SkillsUSA chapter activities. SkillsUSA Framework skills are exhibited through activities and questions asked during competitions and through the SkillsUSA Professional Development Test.

The SkillsUSA Professional Development Test is designed to evaluate SkillsUSA Framework skills using a common language for competitors to articulate what they gain from SkillsUSA participation. The test includes both knowledge and scenario based multiple choice questions that assess the content topics and sub-topics listed below. Study prompts and questions are also provided to guide students to relevant study material that will empower them to be successful on the test and in SkillsUSA competitions. Links to information sources found on the SkillsUSA website are included, and similar information may also be obtained from the SkillsUSA Member Handbook.

Study Guide Resources:

The following are recommended resources that will provide insight for each of the study prompts.

- **Student Membership Benefits** (access resources available in SkillsUSA Pathful)
    - SkillsUSA Pathful is your all-in-one career exploration and workforce readiness platform. It connects students with real professionals, virtual job shadows, and industry resources to build skills and prepare for future success. The SkillsUSA Championships Technical Standards are available to students within SkillsUSA Pathful.
- Web resources: Who We Are
    - We Are SkillsUSA
    - SkillsUSA Framework
    - SkillsUSA Symbols and Traditions
- Web resource: Student Member Resources
    - SkillsUSA members receive access to a variety of resources and opportunities to help them learn, grow, and succeed.
- Web Resource: Chapter Activities
    - SkillsUSA Framework Kahoot!
    - SkillsUSA Framework BINGO
- Web resource: Annual SkillsUSA Theme
- Web resource: SkillsUSA Program of Work
- Web resource: Student Member | Maximizing Potential
    - Charge is a video series that covers topics that chapter officers will find useful in the day-to-day management of their local SkillsUSA chapters. Each Charge video features an activity guide to guide chapter officer growth and development. Members and competitors can also benefit from the leadership development offered.

Guiding Study Questions: SkillsUSA "Who We Are"
Learn more about SkillsUSA and the vital mission we accomplish every day: to empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members.

- What does the SkillsUSA mission mean?
- What are the SkillsUSA values and definitions?
- What does the SkillsUSA vision mean?
- What does each component of the SkillsUSA creed mean?
- Do you know the SkillsUSA pledge?
- What are the components of the emblem and what do they represent?
- What do the official colors of the organization represent?

Guiding Study Information and Questions: SkillsUSA Framework

SkillsUSA Framework is a common language for students to explain to others how they benefit from SkillsUSA. A total of 17 "Essential Elements" are divided among the Framework's three components.

Components: Personal Skills, Workplace Skills, and Technical Skills Grounded in Academics

Essential Elements are specific skills identified as crucial to success by the more than 1,000 industry partners who helped create the Framework.

1. **Integrity**: doing the right thing in a reliable way, being honest, holding yourself accountable.
2. **Work Ethic**: being committed to punctuality, meeting deadlines, and following established policies and procedures to get work done.
3. **Professionalism**: behaving in alignment with workplace standards to display a positive image.
4. **Responsibility**: taking ownership of one's work performance, behavior, and actions.
5. **Adaptability/Flexibility**: embracing change and fostering creativity; being resilient.
6. **Self-Motivation**: exhibiting a passion for life and career.
7. **Communication**: sending and receiving clear messages.
8. **Decision Making**: using information and processes to solve problems and make choices.
9. **Teamwork**: working with others to achieve a common goal.
10. **Multicultural Sensitivity and Awareness**: respecting all people and cultures by fostering appropriate and respectful workplace relationships and interacting.
11. **Planning, Organization and Management**: designing and implementing processes to complete projects and tasks at established standards of quality.
12. **Leadership**: influencing the hearts, minds and actions of others.
13. **Computer and Technology Literacy**: using technology in effective, appropriate, and innovative ways.
14. **Job-Specific Skills**: identifying, developing, and implementing unique knowledge and skills required by a specific job.
15. **Safety and Health**: following workplace health, wellness, financial and safety guidelines
16. Service Orientation: meeting the needs of internal and external customers in respectful and effective ways.
17. **Professional Development**: engaging intentionally in learning experiences that contribute positively to career path progression.

Guiding Questions:

- What is SkillsUSA Framework's purpose?
- What do each of the Essential Elements look like in action?
- What are example behaviors of each of the Essential Elements?

Remember as you prepare for a SkillsUSA Championships competition, use the SkillsUSA Framework's common language to assist with developing narratives that tell personal professional development stories. Competitors should provide specific examples about how career and technical education training provide opportunities to develop these skills. For example:

- How has it improved your decision-making processes?
- When/how did you use problem solving techniques? Did the plan work?
- How did you work with other members to achieve the best solutions?
- How did you benefit from interaction with others who may not be of the same ethnic background, religion, race, or culture?

SkillsUSA members have an advantage over their peers. Like developing a professional portfolio, students should build Framework stories as a collection of examples and evidence to showcase experience, capability and potential for employment and professional development. Students can also review example Framework stories at: SkillsUSA Framework Success Story Video Library

Guiding Study Information and Questions: SkillsUSA Program of Work

SkillsUSA's Program of Work (PoW) is the road map for planning and implementing an annual calendar of chapter activities. When a SkillsUSA chapter aligns its yearly activities with the PoW, students receive rich experiences that empower them to become career ready. The PoW features six categories that define areas of focus for a well-run chapter in the same way a well-run business may be divided into different divisions. The six categories of the PoW are:

1. Advocacy and Marketing: This category promotes SkillsUSA chapter programs, career and technical education programs, public relations initiatives, and experiences to help students build social responsibility. Participation in the Advocacy and Marketing category creates a career-ready student able to:
    - Identify characteristics of effective marketing.
    - Promote SkillsUSA.
    - Advocate for themselves and their ideas.
2. Community Engagement: In this category, students will assess community needs, identify services, and employ skills to meet needs that develop long-lasting partnerships. Participation in the Community Engagement category creates a career-ready student able to:
    - Assess and analyze needs.
    - Create a heart of service.
    - Apply technical skills for the benefit of others.
3. Financial Management: This category helps students develop personal financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills through relevant work experience, project management and chapter fundraising. Participation in the Financial Management category creates a career-ready student able to:
    - Work efficiently and effectively within a budget.
    - Manage personal finances effectively.

- Manage resources efficiently.

4. Leadership Development: In this category, students establish interpersonal relationships along with individual and team development through chapter operations, leadership competitions and individualized growth plans. Participation in the Leadership Development category creates a career-ready student able to:
    - Communicate vision.
    - Inspire others to reach a common goal.
    - Equip and empower team members.
    - Develop interpersonal skills.
5. Partner and Alumni Engagement: This PoW category encourages students to engage former members, parents, advisory committees, administrators, faculty and partners in SkillsUSA chapter and classroom activities. Participation in the Alumni and Partner Engagement category creates a career-ready student able to:
    - Appreciate the contributions of others.
    - Build a personal and professional network.
    - Recognize and value the expertise of others.
6. Workplace experiences: This category encourages participation in career exploration, planning and work-based learning opportunities, including the SkillsUSA Championships. Participation in the Workplace Experiences category creates a career-ready student able to:
    - Gain relevant work experience.
    - Develop job-seeking skills.
    - Understand workplace expectations.

Guiding Questions:

- What are example projects, programs, and/or activities that could occur within each category?
- What are the goals of each category?

Teachers/Advisors: Support your students' preparation for the topics listed above by utilizing the classroom resources available to professional members of SkillsUSA. These resources are among the most effective ways to demonstrate the value and opportunities that SkillsUSA membership provides to students. SkillsUSA advisors play a pivotal role in advancing our mission to empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders, and responsible community members. As a professional member, you receive online access to the classroom resources referenced here, along with additional instructional tools designed to support student success.

- **Professional Membership Benefits** (access curriculum in SkillsUSA Pathful)
    - Program of Work Toolkit
        - Program of Work Activity Guides
        - Program of Work Videos
        - Program of Work Category Sheets
        - Program of Work Committee Experiential Activity
    - Framework Integration Toolkit
        - SkillsUSA Framework Essential Elements Definitions and Behaviors
        - SkillsUSA Framework Foundations Lesson Plans
        - SkillsUSA Framework Motion Graphic Videos
        - SkillsUSA Framework Integration Strategies
        - Experiential Actvities to Promote the SkillsUSA Framework

- Business Partner Outreach and Preparation Guide
- Framework Story Lesson Plan and Videos
- SkillsUSA Framework Bingo
- SkillsUSA Framework Kahoot!

Advisors learn more about "**The SkillsUSA Advantage**" a 2023 report from the Student Research Foundation shows that SkillsUSA members consistently outperform their peers not enrolled in a career and technical student organization (CTSO) in seven essential areas.

- SkillsUSA Advantage Report
- SkillsUSA Advantage Asset Collection