

Topic: Competitive Event Prep—MDMs

Advisor: Dennis Sweetapple

School: Spanish River High School, Florida

The topic for this month's Advisor Corner is competitive event preparation, with a special emphasis on DECA's new Management Team Decision Making Pilot Events. To deal with these topics, we have chosen to feature remarks by Dennis Sweetapple, DECA advisor at Spanish River High School in Boca Raton, Florida.

Sweetapple is one of those advisors who make the most of competitive events as a co-curricular structure for classroom teaching. He builds his classes and class assignments around the program. Each of his students does a marketing research paper as 25 percent of the required coursework. Once the work is done, he asks them if they would like to test their work against that of students in other high schools. With the work already completed, the step between the classroom and DECA competition is small.

DECA as an organization is also integrated into Sweetapple's courses, since all marketing students are members of all levels of DECA, and DECA activities are considered part of a student's class participation. Embedding DECA into his class organization demonstrates that Sweetapple regards DECA as an important educational aid.

Many advisors like DECA's emphasis on team events. Alan Gancarz (East Syracuse-Minoa DECA) feels that the process of working in teams gives students more confidence than working alone. As an advisor who has helped run competitive events at National CDC, Dennis Sweetapple expresses special approval for the Management Team Decision Making (MTDM) Events. In his opinion, these events have the advantages of team events, with the added dimension that each student participant is equally responsible for the judge's evaluation. Each of the two participants must take the test and the results are averaged. In the interview portion, each team member must answer the judge's questions. These requirements lessen the possibility that one of the team members will carry the whole event.