

Start your year with a **POW**erful program of work

The backbone of your DECA year, and the most versatile organizational tool you have, is your program of work (POW). A program of work is a plan of activities for your chapter for the year.

Whether you construct your POW with your chapter officers alone as one of their primary responsibilities, or with the whole chapter or with some combination, this is the tool you will refer to throughout the year. Then you can use the POW to structure your next year, noting what worked and what could have been improved.

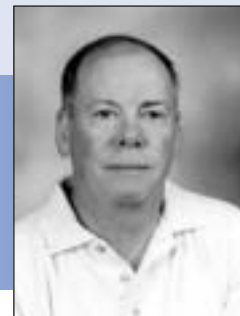
Lettie Dilbeck, state advisor of Oklahoma, operates a Chapter Program of Work Event in her state. You can access Oklahoma's information at:

www.okcareertech.org/mkted/deca%20guide/pow.pdf.

You may organize the POW activities in two different ways:

1. One way is to **run activities that correspond to the four points of the DECA Diamond**: plan activities that promote civic consciousness, vocational understanding, leadership development and social understanding. This plan teaches a lot about the purposes of DECA.
2. Use a list of activities like the one on pages 99–100 of the Oklahoma plan. The Oklahoma list uses the Diamond points but adds activities such as installation/initiation, DECA conferences, public relations, employer functions, DECA Week activities and membership recruitment.

Check our Web site (www.deca.org) for more sample programs of work—or submit yours!



Bill Lind is now retired after 32 years as a DECA advisor. His recognized skill and diligent work for Nebraska DECA led to his receiving DECA's Outstanding Service Award at last year's ICDC. We hope to include more insights from him in future issues.

Advice from the Field

Program of Work . . . a Path to Success

by *Bill Lind, Millard South High School DECA*

A good program of work has many benefits. First, this is a goal-setting process, something you should be teaching your members. Second, this is a form of strategic planning in that you update and carry over goals from year to year.

My personal opinion is that goal setting has little value if it doesn't include a plan to accomplish goals. Not much detail is needed for the POW, but it becomes a framework for more in-depth planning.

Setting up a POW!

1. Start with an example. (See above and the DECA Web site.)
2. Start with things you've done before, such as achieving 100% membership, doing a civic project that involved the whole chapter or fielding a state officer candidate.
3. Try to limit the actual document to one page.
4. State the parts as a series of goals along with deadlines for achieving them and a breakdown of smaller steps toward the goals.

When do you set up the POW?

Pre-retreat: Prior to our chapter's annual retreat we have an executive board meeting. For our chapter this includes the president, vice president, secretary and PR person along with the chapter advisor. This meeting has several purposes. This group plans the retreat and develops a reminder to send to the other officers with an agenda. They also develop a draft POW to send with the mailing.

Note: Our chapter has had 150–200 members annually for the last 15 years. Senior officers are elected in the late spring after ICDC. This group of 12–15 seniors form the board. They are selected by application and interview by the outgoing senior officers. If we have a state officer, he/she is part of the board, but not one of the top four positions.

The annual retreat

This session is held in late summer. It runs from early afternoon until the next day. Time is split between working and social activities. One purpose of this retreat is group bonding. At the retreat attendees:

1. Review and modify the POW. Second-semester planning can be sketchy at this point. It will be filled out later in the year.
2. Coordinate the DECA calendar with the calendars of the school and state DECA.
3. Leave work for the junior officers, who will be elected after school starts. POW work will show you which junior officers will make the best senior officers.
4. Develop:
 - Deadline dates and benchmarks for major events.
 - Committee chairs for major events.
 - Balance—plan activities in the four major areas of DECA (Diamond points—see above.)

This program of work, its goals, and the reports from the chairpersons then become the old and new business sections of future officer meetings.

Your program of work becomes:

- A way to show the school administration the plan for your chapter's year
- An outline to share with advisory boards and parents
- A guide for following years
- A way to evaluate your chapter's year

Thank you

Gregg Christensen, state advisor of Nebraska, Lettie Dilbeck, and, of course, Bill Lind contributed to this page. Thank you.