Competition Tips for Students

- Read the rules….. ALL the rules.
  - Begin with the **General Rules** in the front section of the Competitive Events Guide. These rules are universal and apply for all competitions. They establish specific norms, such as no personal/school identification on competition entries.
  - Next, carefully review the **specific rules for the competitive event** you wish to enter. If you have questions about any rules or regulations, ask your chapter advisor for clarification.
- When planning your entry, remember that it is important to follow a research-based approach. In other words, let the research drive the solution and not the other way around.
- As you develop your entry, use the rules for your event as a checklist, marking each task as it is completed.
- If the event you are competing in has an annual theme, make sure to check the National TSA website ("Themes & Problems") to obtain the theme or problem for the current school year.
- Remember, the rules of the events are not suggestions, they are requirements. If the portfolio calls for one page of research, don't produce two pages. This is a rules violation, and your entry will be penalized.
- In addition to the rules, let the official event rating form/ rubric guide you as you develop your entry. There are two areas of the scoring rubric that require attention:
  1. Go/No Go Section at the top of the official event rating form/rubric.

     Go/No Go Specifications are a checklist at the beginning of the official event rating form/rubric. Specifications in the checklist are required items that must be met, or the entry will not be judged.
  2. Rubric Descriptions for each section of the entry.

     Rubric Descriptions are descriptors for each criterion being measured in a rubric. Descriptors provide TSA members with a greater understanding of the expectations for each section of their entry, allowing them to better prepare for an event.

- Check the National TSA website ("Competition Updates") multiple times during your preparation process for updated information about TSA general rules and competitive event guidelines.
- Make sure all required forms are included and signed by your chapter advisor. Many research based events will require a Copyright Checklist and/or a Plan of Work Log. Requirements such as these will be listed as part of the rules for the competitive event. Forms must be signed by a chapter advisor and must be present at the time of entry submission.
- For all competitive events that require a portfolio and/ or documentation, references must follow an approved citation style.
- Make sure you are aware of and comply with the required dress code for your competitive event. Dress code requirements are identified at the beginning of each competitive event, and a detailed explanation of dress code guidelines can be found in the front section of the Competitive Events Guide.