

Week 1: Foundations & Culture

- **Icebreakers with a business twist** — "elevator pitch" intros, what is your favorite brand/company.
 - I love starting with a "painless" icebreak (one where they don't have to share out to the entire room. We work our way up to that.)
 - Lego Building with a Purpose: students have to grab a handful of Legos and using only that handful, they have to build based on a prompt. Here are some examples:
 - Something they did over the summer
 - A goal they want to achieve this year
 - A version of their future self
 - Something about them I may not know
- **Syllabus + expectations**, but frame it like a "company handbook" to set tone.
 - Look at your current syllabus (if you have one) and see what things you can translate into a "company handbook." I find that I get a lot more buy-in using this over a traditional syllabus.
 - Remember that they are going over a syllabus in every single class. How can you make yours stand out from the rest?
 - Give a tour of your learning management system so students know where to find items when they are not with you.
- **Intro to DECA/FBLA** — what the organization is, membership benefits, competitive events overview, chapter history if it's an established chapter. Use their national orgs' own intro videos:
 - [DECA Membership Video 2025-2026](#)
 - Will update to the 2026-2027 Video when it is released!
 - [Colorado DECA Hype Video](#)
 - [Colorado FBLA Hype Video](#)
 - Share photos/videos from last year (if you have them!)
 - Here is an example of an [iMovie](#) I made to hype students up
- **Teaching Philosophy:** a big part of our job is teaching resourcefulness. Be upfront! You will provide a ton of resources this semester/year and I am happy to make adaptations to the resources. But I do not have all of the answers! Remember that a lot of the content we get into will require you to do your own research.
- **Email Etiquette Assignment:** have students send you an email as their first assignment. Teach them your expectations! Should each email have a proper greeting, professional tone, and appropriate closing? Show them an example.
 - This helps them lock in expectations AND they now have your email address handy!
 - What happens when a student sends you an email not in email etiquette?

Week 2: Business DECA/FBLA FUNDamentals

- **Basic economics/business concepts** — I find that a great entry point to all business things are the 5 P's of Marketing (the 5th "P" being people.)
 - Use these [slides](#) provided by DECA as a starting point.
 - Want to add a little bell ringer competition to the mix? Try a "Guess the Logo" activity.
 - Here is a great one from Empowered Ed: [Alphabet Soup](#)
 - After introducing logos, you can also have a [Create Your Own Logo assignment](#) so you can learn more about your class!
- **Case study practice** — DECA and FBLA competitive events are built around case studies/roleplays, so starting early helps students master the concept.
 - I like to start with roleplays that they can really relate to:
 - *You are to assume the role of Principal of (insert school here.) You have been tasked with encouraging more students to register to come to your school. You and your team have decided to create a marketing campaign to showcase all of the amazing things your school has to offer. Create a campaign, that includes social media, a commercial, and a billboard. Make sure you tailor your message to your target market.*
- **Team-building activities** tied to future group competitive events (many DECA/FBLA events are done in pairs or teams).
 - SBEs Brainstorming: if you have an SBE, this is a great time to gather feedback and brainstorm new products or ideas. I always love to hear what new business students think of our businesses and how they would improve them.
 - Infomercial Assignment: Want to get silly? Show your class example of an over the top infomercial. Then, they can draw "Not A Problem" cards and create an infomercial that addresses a problem (that's maybe not really a problem.)
 - If you don't have "Not A Problem" you can easily make a set of cards with adjectives and a set of cards with nouns. For example, they could draw "unattractive" and "diapers." Then, they must create a product and a corresponding infomercial.
 - You can also assign problems like: socks disappearing in the laundry, cereal gets soggy too fast, awkward silences that last too long, lockers that won't open when someone is watching you put in your combination, etc. Have fun with it!
 - Leadership Styles assessment: whether students are in DECA or not, this [leadership styles assessment](#) is a great way to see personalities in your class. You can also make small groups based on what they are assigned. You could put 1 analyzer, caregiver, driver, and energizer in a group.
- **Buy-in courtesy of your alumni**: if you have amazing alumni still in town before they head to college, book them as your guest speaker! They can talk about how your class set them up for success for college, career, etc.

Week 3 & Beyond: Membership Drive & Chapter Building, Getting into the Meat of Your Course

- **Membership recruitment push** — posters, social media, morning announcements. Early membership = eligibility for conferences.
 - Decide when you want permission slips (if applicable) due for your CTSO.
 - If you have an officer team in place, let them speak to your classes about why students should join your CTSO.
 - **Set chapter goals or classroom goals for the semester** — competition goals, community service, fundraising target, school-based enterprise, etc. I find this gets students invested in their commitment to the class. We talk about our progress during the staff meeting.
 - **Intro to competitive events structure** — role-play events, written events, test-only events. Let students explore the event guide and pick an interest area.
 - **Soft skills lessons** — professional dress, business etiquette, interview skills (useful for role-plays and job readiness alike).
 - **First fundraiser or community service kickoff** — DECA/FBLA both value civic/community engagement in judging criteria and chapter recognition programs.
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Helpful Tools & Resources

- DECA: <https://www.deca.org>
- DECA competitive events guides: <https://www.deca.org/competitions/>
- FBLA: <https://www.fbla.org>
- FBLA competitive events: <https://www.fbla.org/high-school/competitive-events/>
- Colorado BMEF Resources: <https://cobmef.org/>
- CTE in Colorado: <https://cteincolorado.org/>
- EmpoweredEd: <https://teachempowered.org/>
- Next Gen Personal Finance (not just personal finance lessons): <https://www.ngpf.org/>