

Broadcast Journalism

Your community is known for its diverse and vibrant culture and has been struck by a major emergency. The specific nature of the emergency is left for teams to decide and can range from a natural disaster (like a hurricane or earthquake) to a large-scale industrial accident, a widespread health crisis, or even a cyber-attack affecting critical infrastructure.

You are part of your school’s broadcast program. Deliver a LIVE broadcast event that includes the following:

- A story highlighting a first responder to the emergency
- Cause of emergency
- Emergency’s Impact to the community
- Interview of someone impacted

Business Ethics

Honesty & Integrity in the Workplace – Why it Matters

Background Info

In 2022, FTX, one of the biggest cryptocurrency exchanges in the world, declared bankruptcy after extensive financial mismanagement and dishonesty were discovered throughout the company. FTX had been hiding billions of dollars in liabilities from the public and allowed sister companies to borrow nearly unlimited funds in customer deposits. FTX’s customers lost billions, and the worldwide crypto market collapsed.

At the center of what became one of the biggest financial scandals in American history was the young, talented inner circle of FTX executives who went from rising stars to fraudsters. FTX founder Sam Bankman-Fried—who was 30 years old at the time of the scandal and once dubbed the “crypto king”—was sentenced to 25 years in prison. FTX’s former chief executive officer (age 28), chief technology officer (29), and director of engineering (27) all pleaded guilty to fraud as well.

As extreme as they were, the actions of these prodigious professionals present a learning opportunity for younger generations entering the workforce. Young professionals need more than just technical skills in the workplace. They need a strong ethical framework to help them distinguish right from wrong and make difficult decisions. Without it, they run the risk of making the same mistakes as the once-promising leadership at FTX. Not every employee can defraud millions like them, but any employee can demonstrate dishonesty, greed, or a lack of integrity if they don’t uphold their own ethical principles.

But what are ethics? Ethics are the basic principles that govern your behavior. Although people often have different views on what ethics exactly means, following ethical principles means one’s ethical beliefs remain unchanged no matter the circumstances, including—and especially—in professional settings like the workplace. Ethical principles can guide any employee through dilemmas with coworkers, superiors, and customers. Examples of ethical principles include honesty and integrity (adhering to a set of personal ethics).

And the need for greater integrity in the workplace has never been more relevant. According to a 2024 study from ethics education firm LRN, Gen Z employees are 2.5 times more likely than any other generation to agree that it’s OK to break the rules to get the job done. In addition, 22% of Gen Zers admit to violating their company’s code of conduct in the past year, a far higher number than Millennials, Gen Xers, or Baby Boomers.

What explains these statistics? Do Gen Zers inherently struggle to be as ethical as previous generations? Or does Gen Z’s ethical culture simply differ from those of their predecessors? Whether the answer is one or the other—or both—does not change the underlying need for young professionals to develop a strong understanding of ethics in the workplace.

2024–25 Competitive Events

High School Topics



This development does not begin the first day on the job; it starts years before, in the classroom and at home. Every day, young adults encounter many situations in which they can demonstrate ethical principles such as integrity and honesty. They may not realize it in the moment, but these everyday actions can have a profound impact on their life and future.

High School Scenario

Valerie works in the purchasing department for Longcloth Merchandising, a nationwide chain of clothing and department stores. As an associate procurement specialist, Valerie is responsible for building relationships with suppliers and securing the materials needed for Longcloth’s products.

The company’s fiscal year just finished, and Valerie has been given a special assignment by her manager, the purchasing director. They request that Valerie compose the purchasing department’s annual report, to be submitted to Longcloth’s executives for review. The report will review relationships with key suppliers, including the types of goods and services rendered, purchase order cycle times, delivery information, and sales data. This is an important assignment, especially because this is Valerie’s first job out of college, so the purchasing director gives her three weeks to complete the report.

However, the weeks go by and Valerie still hasn’t started the report. At first, she didn’t see this as a big deal, especially amidst all the other projects she’s working on. After all, she kept telling herself, in school, I always waited until the last minute to start an assignment—and I always got a good grade. I can always get started on it tomorrow. But too many tomorrows have passed, and now the report’s deadline is only a few days away. To make matters worse, her manager wants to check in with her today to discuss her progress on the report.

Valerie must now decide what to do next. One option is to proceed as normal and tell the purchasing director that the report is going well and will be submitted on time. Her manager would obviously be thrilled to hear this, but now Valerie must deliver on that theoretical promise. She knows she probably can’t create a quality report in just a few days, so whatever she submits to leadership will be unsatisfactory.

The other option is to admit to her boss that she procrastinated doing the report and she won’t be able to get it done on time. In response, her manager would likely enlist others in the department to help get the report done on time, which would throw off their schedules and might even cause them to work overtime. However, admitting this would damage the trust between them. Valerie worries that in the future, the purchasing director won’t select her for special assignments—or maybe even promotions—because they think she can’t handle increased responsibility.

What do you think Valerie should do? Should she hide her procrastination from her manager and proceed as planned, even if there’s a high risk that the report will be lousy? Or should she admit her mistake so that the report can get finished—even if doing so leads to her manager not trusting her in the future?

Suggested Questions to Cover in the Event

- What ethical principles (e.g., respect, transparency, integrity, trust, fairness, accountability) play a role in this dilemma? Does one play a larger role than others? Which one—and why is that the case?
- Who are the parties that stand to be impacted by Valerie’s actions (or lack thereof) in this dilemma? Is one stakeholder more important than another?
- Is Valerie’s work on other projects a legitimate reason for her procrastination on the report? Would this scenario be different if Valerie had not been working on other projects? Why or why not?
- Do you consider Valerie’s work habits to be unethical? Why or why not?
- What are the short- and long-term consequences of Valerie’s actions? How will these consequences shift depending on how Valerie chooses to proceed?
- Is there a course of action not described in the scenario that Valerie should pursue? What is it, and why?

2024–25 Competitive Events

High School Topics

Coding & Programming

Create a program that helps students manage their personal finances by tracking account balances, income and expenses. The program should allow users to input details about their income sources and expenses, including the amount, category, and date of each transaction. It should provide features to view the current balance, generate summaries of income and expenses over specified periods (e.g., weekly, monthly), and categorize expenses to show spending patterns. Additionally, the program should include functionality to update or delete existing entries and offer search and filter options to easily find specific transactions.

Computer Game & Simulation Programming

Create a game that encourages critical thinking and decision-making.

Include:

- Scenarios with ethical challenges
- Multiple outcomes based on player decisions
- Scoring (examples include points system, leaderboards, etc.)

The game must:

- Be playable on the student device using Windows 10, Mac OS, a modern web browser, or a mobile platform
- Be secure
- Have no game-breaking bugs

Games should consider accessibility features to accommodate players with disabilities.

Data Analysis

In 2023, major wildfires in Canada caused unprecedented air quality issues in the United States, especially in New York City. HealthyCleanAir4All, a fictitious nonprofit based in New York City, was founded to improve the air quality in the city. They have asked you, a data analyst, to analyze data regarding air quality, find trends, and make recommendations about improving the air quality in New York City. Using the provided data and your own research, identify trends and make recommendations based on the data and external factors.

Datasets provided by Data.gov:

- Air Quality (<https://catalog.data.gov/dataset/air-quality>)

Dataset contains information on New York City air quality surveillance data. Air pollution is one of the most important environmental threats to urban populations and while all people are exposed, pollutant emissions, levels of exposure, and population vulnerability vary across neighborhoods. Exposures to common air pollutants have been linked to respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and premature deaths. These indicators provide a perspective across time and NYC geographies to better characterize air quality and health in NYC. Data can also be explored online at the Environment and Health Data Portal: <http://nyc.gov/health/environmentdata>.

Note: Some information provided may not necessarily be useful in your analysis; you do not need to use all the information provided.

Digital Animation

“Welcome to Our School”: Create an animation that teaches a new student or teacher about your school.

Digital Video Production

Importance of Tourism: *Create a video that highlights the importance of tourism in your community or state.*

2024–25 Competitive Events

High School Topics



Future Business Educator

Competitors can choose a business-related topic from one of the following subject areas: Accounting, Economics, Entrepreneurship, Marketing, or Technology.

Graphic Design

Your graphic design firm has been asked to create a branding package for a fictitious sports team. The package needs to showcase your creativity and highlight your skills in today's design industry.

Branding package should include:

- Team and logo design
- One uniform or jersey for the team
- Design a hat or other item to sell in the team store
- One giveaway item for a team to hand out at a game to fans
- One social media post advertising the team
- One social media post advertising a special event at a game

Introduction to Business Presentation

You have been asked to give a presentation at the high school career fair. The topic for the presentation is *Smart Money Management Tips for High School Students*.

Introduction to Emerging Business Issues

Artificial intelligence is a driver of business efficiency. With a staggering 12.79% trend growth over the last five years, artificial intelligence startups are reshaping how businesses operate. Its integration into business processes is enhancing productivity and innovation and has become essential for making informed, data-driven decisions. What positive and negative effects does artificial intelligence have on businesses, management, and employees?

Introduction to Programming

Write an interactive story that occasionally asks the user what they'd like to do, and changes where the story goes based on user input. Allow the user to stop interacting with the story by saying "stop."

Introduction to Public Speaking

Develop and deliver a speech based on the following topic: *How volunteerism and community service can shape your future as a leader.*

Introduction to Social Media Strategy

Develop one social media strategy aimed at increasing donations and support for a local non-profit organization in your community. Highlight specific projects, success stories, and behind-the-scenes content to build a connection with the audience.

Do not create live accounts without the permission from the non-profit organization.

Mobile Application Development

Design a mobile application that gamifies learning for subjects like math, science, history, or language arts, offering interactive quizzes, puzzles, and progress tracking.

The following skills are emphasized: Game development, educational content creation, interactive design, and user feedback mechanisms.

Public Service Announcement

Produce a 30-second public service announcement about *Healthy Habits in the Workplace*.

2024-25 Competitive Events

High School Topics

Public Speaking

Develop and deliver a speech based on the following topic: *The Power of Networking: Building Professional Relationships for Future Success*

Social Media Strategies

Develop social media strategies for a new eco-friendly clothing brand. Emphasize storytelling, influencer partnerships, and user-generated content to create buzz and drive sales.

Do not create live accounts.

Visual Design

Your design firm has been asked to design a booth for one stand at a Local Farmers Market.

- The booth should highlight the products being sold
- The booth should show the company or farmer name and pricing of the products

Note: The booth/stand can be for a real or fictitious business.

Website Coding & Development

Create a website for your school's guidance department so students can easily search job postings and employers can easily submit them.

Your website must include the following functionalities:

- A page for employers to submit postings
- A backend panel to approve or delete postings
- A page displaying the approved postings
- A page for students to apply for the posting

Note: Website does not have to be live. If partnering with an actual business, permission must be received from the business to make the website public.

Website Design

Your school has opened a large gymnasium that can also be used as a 3,500-seat arena for events in the community. The community could rent the gymnasium for local sporting events, live concerts, trade shows, and other community events. You must create a website to promote this arena.

The website should include the following elements:

- A calendar of events
- A box office area to purchase tickets
- An information area that includes directions, seating charts, policies, and amenities
- A planner page that includes information on arena rental, contacts, etc.

Note: Website does not have to be live. If partnering with an actual non-profit organization, permission must be received from the non-profit organization to make the website public.