

CUSTOMER SERVICE



PURPOSE

To evaluate each contestant's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the field of customer service.

First, download and review the General Regulations at: updates.skillsusa.org.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all active SkillsUSA members.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENT

For men: Official red blazer, windbreaker-style jacket or sweater; black dress slacks; white dress shirt; plain black tie with no pattern or SkillsUSA black tie; black socks and black shoes.

For women: Official red blazer or jacket; black dress skirt (knee-length) or slacks with businesslike white, collarless blouse or white blouse with small, plain collar that may not extend onto the lapels of the blazer; black sheer or skin-tone seamless hose and black dress shoes.

These regulations refer to clothing items that are pictured and described at: www.skillsusastore.org. If you have questions about clothing or other logo items, call 800-401-1560 or 703-956-3723.

Note: Contestants must wear their official contest clothing to the contest orientation meeting.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

1. Supplied by the technical committee:
 - a. Workspace with table, chair, computer, telephone and customer reception area
 - b. Flip chart and markers
 - c. Telephone log, telephone directory
2. Supplied by the contestant:
 - a. Pencil and ballpoint pen
 - b. Paper (legal pad or spiral notebook)

- c. Calculator (nonprogrammable)
- d. All competitors must create a one-page résumé and submit a hard copy to the technical committee chair at orientation. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point penalty.

Note: Your contest may also require a hard copy of your résumé as part of the actual contest. Check the Contest Guidelines and/or the updates page on the SkillsUSA website at updates.skillsusa.org.

SCOPE OF THE CONTEST

Knowledge Performance

The contest involves a written knowledge test. Knowledge of the competencies outlined below will be assessed during the written knowledge test. Written assessments may also be given during the skill performance portion of the contest.

Skill Performance

The contest involves live, role-playing situations that demonstrate the ability to perform customer service skills selected from the following list of competencies as determined by the SkillsUSA Championships technical committee.

CONTEST GUIDELINES

1. Each contestant will be given the same scenario(s) and the same amount of time. Total time will be 15 to 20 minutes.
2. Contestants will be required to attend an orientation meeting where a written test will be given. At this meeting, contestants will draw for reporting times.
3. Contestants must report to the contest area 30 minutes prior to their scheduled reporting time to check in with contest officials and receive final instructions.
4. Contestants should expect to use all aspects of the skills listed in Standards and Competencies. A scenario will likely involve multiple situations occurring simultaneously (e.g., one customer may be engaged in a telephone conversation with the contestant while another customer is walking through the door for face-to-face interaction).

5. Judges will serve in the role of the customer(s).

Standards and Competencies

CUS 1.0 — Demonstrate ability to communicate effectively

- 1.1 Display effective written communication
- 1.2 Demonstrate effective verbal communication
- 1.3 Employ basic computer keyboarding and computer skills in Microsoft Word
- 1.4 Exhibit good listening skills and show sincere interest
- 1.5 Speak in a clear, understandable manner

CUS 2.0 — Exhibit professional demeanor and business etiquette in customer service scenarios

- 2.1 Display a confident handshake, proper greeting, and personal introductions
- 2.2 Show confidence and a positive personal image
- 2.3 Show good grooming in dress and personal hygiene
- 2.4 Make a formal introduction
- 2.5 Use proper diction, grammar and pronunciation
- 2.6 Maintain politeness at all times
- 2.7 Exhibit poise, eye contact and professional mannerisms
- 2.8 Show enthusiasm in meeting customer needs
- 2.9 Display self-confidence and persuasiveness
- 2.10 Answer questions maturely

CUS 3.0 — Solve problems common in customer service work

- 3.1 Demonstrate brainstorming techniques
- 3.2 Discuss implementation of solutions and costs involved with choosing a solution
- 3.3 Explain the need for follow-up and modification
- 3.4 Apply conflict resolution skills

CUS 4.0 — Act out proper telephone operating techniques in roleplay scenarios

- 4.1 Demonstrate ability to receive incoming calls
- 4.2 Handle basic customer service functions
- 4.3 Use basic phone functions
 - 4.3.1 Answer telephone properly
 - 4.3.2 Transfer calls successfully

- 4.3.3 Participate in a conference call
- 4.3.4 Place callers on hold
- 4.3.5 Terminate calls professionally
- 4.3.6 Complete login and logout procedures accurately

- 4.4 Apply skills to role-play service applications
 - 4.4.1 Respond to a request for information
 - 4.4.2 Manage a customer complaint
 - 4.4.3 Schedule appointments
 - 4.4.4 Respond to account inquires and problems
 - 4.4.5 Respond to product/service information requests
 - 4.4.6 Address any customer issues or concerns

Committee Identified Academic Skills

The technical committee has identified that the following academic skills are embedded in this contest.

Math Skills

None Identified

Science Skills

None Identified

Language Arts Skills

- Provide information in conversations and in group discussions
- Demonstrate use of such verbal communication skills as word choice, pitch, feeling, tone and voice
- Demonstrate use of such nonverbal communication skills as eye contact, posture and gestures using interviewing techniques to gain information
- Understand source, viewpoint and purpose of texts
- Organize and synthesize information for use in written and oral presentations
- Use print, electronic databases and online resources to access information in books and articles
- Demonstrate informational writing
- Edit writing for correct grammar, capitalization, punctuation, spelling, sentence structure and paragraphing

Connections to National Standards

State-level academic curriculum specialists identified the following connections to national academic standards.

Math Standards

None Identified

Source: NCTM Principles and Standards for School Mathematics. For more information, visit: <http://www.nctm.org>.

Science Standards

- Understands the nature of scientific inquiry

Source: McREL compendium of national science standards. To view and search the compendium, visit: <http://www2.mcrel.org/compendium/browse.asp>.

Language Arts Standards

- Students adjust their use of spoken, written and visual language (e.g., conventions, style, vocabulary) to communicate effectively with a variety of audiences and for different purposes
- Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes
- Students apply knowledge of language structure, language conventions (e.g., spelling and punctuation), media techniques, figurative language and genre to create, critique and discuss print and nonprint texts
- Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative and critical members of a variety of literacy communities
- Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion and the exchange of information)

Source: IRA/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts. To view the standards, visit: www.ncte.org/standards.