



Sample Proficiency and Star Finalist Interview questions

Created: 10/2017

The purpose of the interview is to validate the SAE information provided in the application. Below are a few sample questions to assist you in preparing for the convention interview.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP APPLICATIONS

1. How did you choose which females/males to keep for breeding and which to sell?
2. How did you decide which animals to purchase to add to the herd?
3. How did you finance the purchase of your new mower/tractor/etc.?
4. What is the difference between current and non-current inventory.
5. Ask the student to explain the basic feeding, growth rates, feed per pound of gain, fertilizer program for crops, marketing program for crops/market animals, birth weights, adjusted weaning weight, EDP information for their SAE.
6. How did you arrive at the numbers you show as the bartered value of inputs and expenses in the application?
7. How did you determine the value on the purchased breeding livestock and your raised breeding livestock?
8. How did you determine the starting value on the machinery and equipment when you began your SAE?
9. How do you measure progress in your efficiency factors? How do you use those factors to make management decisions in your SAE?
10. When should raised breeding livestock be classified as a current asset?
11. How did you determine your production costs?
12. Depreciation – what items in your SAE are eligible to be depreciated? What is the benefit(s) of depreciating an item?
13. If the student had a really good (or bad) year ask: What contributed to the exceptionally good/bad year and what did they do to take advantage (or overcome hardships, production loss, and/or financial loss) the following year?
14. What is their greatest accomplishment?
15. Why did you select the particular breed/variety/specie, etc., that you did?
16. In what part of your program do you believe you have improved the most?
 - Nutritional program
 - Herd health program
 - Fertilizer program
 - Pest management program
 - Marketing and advertising
 - Efficiencies relating to reproduction, pounds / bushels per acre, EPD
 - Breeding program
17. Why do you believe that and how do you plan to improve the other parts of your program?

PLACEMENT APPLICATIONS

1. How has your work/involvement made the place you work (nursery/farm/store/etc.) more profitable or better?

2. Briefly explain your current duties/responsibilities and explain how those duties have changed since you started your SAE.
3. How has this position influenced your career goals?
4. What is the greatest skill you have gained or learned as a result of the position?
5. What has been the greatest challenge you encountered in this SAE?
6. If you were the employer (not the employee) at this business, what is the first change you would make in the business and why would you make that change?
7. Ask specific questions about the worksite and duties - For example, if a student worked on a beef ranch he/she should know information about and skills required to raise beef. Same for a dairy or a cropping operation, or a lumber yard, etc. If a student works in a service industry they could be asked about customer satisfaction and working or communicating with customers?

AGRISCIENCE RESEARCH

1. How did you get started in this research area?
2. How will this research affect the agricultural industry?
3. How have you applied or could this research be applied in other areas of agriculture?
4. How has this position influenced your career goals?
5. What is the greatest skill you have gained or learned as a result of the conducting this project?
6. What has been the greatest challenge you encountered in this SAE?
7. How did you acquire the necessary samples and equipment to conduct this research?

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. How did you get started in this SAE?
 - a. What advice would you give to others to get started?
 - b. What would you do differently if starting over?
2. What is the most important thing you have gained from conducting this proficiency?
3. How does your college/school/work tie in with this SAE?
4. What are your future plans in this area?
5. What has changed in this SAE since last December 31?
6. How has your SAE impacted your future educational and career goals?
7. What business agreements and/or partnership agreements do you have for this SAE?
8. How have you maintained your SAE with all of your extra-curricular, community and educational activities?
9. Who has had the greatest influence on you and your SAE?
10. Is there anything else about your SAE you would like to tell the committee?
11. Skills – It is important to have questions that challenge the student to discuss the skills they report having learned/developed in the application. Please go to the Skills page and/or photo pages and select a couple of skills or tasks that the students reports doing, ask them to discuss how they use that skill, what they've learned, etc.

QUESTIONS TO AVOID

Please do not ask questions about the following subjects:

- Family unit or support from the family unit
- Family situation
- Personal appearances
- Records- student record books are private information and are not required for the interview. Do not ask to see the records, unless the student provides the information.
- Political views
- Government policy- unless the policy is directly related to the student's program

Please ask clarification questions but refrain from sternly focusing on the same subject for an extended period of time.

Please refrain from sharing personal and political comments/views with the finalists.