



# FLA INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE CHALLENGE

Junior High Level

Grades 7, 8 and 9

2000-2001

## Overview

The Minnesota FLA Individual Excellence Challenge recognizes talent in FLA participants that complete an in-depth individual project. The program rewards FLA members at the state level for exceptional accomplishments in progress towards developing specific skills in areas related to leadership, careers, mentoring and community service.

It is a one-year program that challenges FLA members to research, take action and reflect on one of the following areas—

- Leadership—Pilot Year 2000-01
- Careers—*To be developed*
- Mentoring—*To be developed*
- Service—*To be developed*

## Steps of Participation

1. Determine the Individual Excellence Challenge area you want to focus on throughout the year.
2. Review the required guidelines to complete your Individual Excellence Challenge.
3. Review the FLA state application before beginning.
4. Develop a detailed plan. Set personal goals that you want to achieve through completing this project.
5. Complete the required steps for your area.

6. Submit the State Application by March 2, 2000 to be interviewed and to receive recognition.

## Eligibility

- FLA Individual Excellence Challenge is available to all FLA members in integrated and after school chapters.
- Candidates must be an FLA member for the year that they are completing a FLA Individual Excellence Challenge.
- Candidates must participate in the local chapter and its activities.

## Reasons for Participating

### *You are...*

- Obtaining a better understanding of yourself and your abilities.
- Taking action to learn about leadership, careers, mentoring and service.
- Connecting the Individual Excellence area to your personal goals.

## Individual Excellence Challenge Areas

Areas of recognition are leadership, careers, mentoring and community service.

Successful Individual Excellence Challenge applicants set their goals and develop plans before the school year begins. An outstanding participant will demonstrate growth in the focus area by completing a series of steps. As the FLA member works

towards finishing the program, the skills, competencies and abilities of the FLA member will grow.

Here are some suggestions to prepare for the Individual Excellence Challenge award:

- The FLA member, parents, guardians and advisor may wish to review the guidelines and application, and discuss the challenge before beginning a project.
- The FLA member should seek an advisor to consult with throughout the year on the project and progress.
- The FLA member, parents, guardians and advisor evaluate the application to give feedback.
- The FLA member, parents/guardians and advisor may wish to conduct mock interviews to prepare the applicant for the interview at the State Level.

## **Process of the Individual Excellence Challenge**

Individual Excellence Challenge is judged through a formal application and interview process based on the following steps:

1. **Plan**—Develops a work plan the Individual Excellence Challenge.
2. **Learn**--Skills and competencies are learned as the FLA member relates to the chosen Individual Excellence Area— leadership, mentoring, careers and community service.
3. **Take Action**—Applies learning by completing projects in the Individual Excellence Area—leadership, mentoring, careers and community service
4. **Reflection**—Demonstrates personal growth and development through completing an Individual Excellence Challenge project.
5. **Convey Learning**--Evidence of FLA member's accomplishments are shown based a portfolio and application.
6. **Demonstrate New Skills**—Shares new skills by answering application questions and by participating in the interview process.

# Guidelines for the Jr. High Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge

**B**ecoming a leader can be challenging. The Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge for Junior High members is a step in the right direction towards becoming a dynamic leader.

The Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge encourages you to set goals, talk to others about leadership and write about a famous leader.

By completing the steps in the box to the right and the Jr. High Individual Excellence Challenge Application, you will qualify to receive a State Award in Leadership. This award is one of the highest accomplishments a FLA member can seek.

## Leadership Proficiency Challenge

### Steps to Complete

#### Plan

1. Develop a work plan.

#### Learn

1. Complete the Leadership Questionnaire.
2. Interview two people in leadership positions. Ask at least 4 questions.
3. Create a one-page fact sheet or a 2 minutes video on a leader.

#### Take Action

1. Complete the Power of One module "A Better You."

#### Reflection

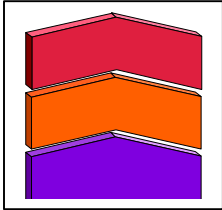
1. Write a 2-page reflection paper.

#### Convey Learning

1. Organize a portfolio.

#### Demonstrate New Skills

1. Complete an application.
2. Be interviewed by a panel of judges that will evaluate your work.



# Plan-1

## WORK PLAN

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Develop a detailed plan that outlines how and when you are going to complete all tasks in the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge.

*The format below is an example of a work plan for the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge.*

Task	Completion Date
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### Learn

1. Leadership Questionnaire

- Rough Draft of answers
- Review and revise draft
- Proofread by 2-3 people
- Revise answers
- Type final copy

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2. Interviews

- Identify people to interview
- Write or call to ask for permission
- Think of at least 4 questions to ask
- Start interviews
- Finish interviews

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3. Fact Sheet

- Brainstorm list of leaders
- Research people that interest me
- Narrow down brainstorm list
- Read at least one source
- Write draft
- Have 2 people read draft and give feedback
- Make revisions to draft
- Complete final copy

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### Take Action



# Leadership Questionnaire

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Answer the questions below to prepare you for the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge. This questionnaire is an opportunity for you to explain what your thoughts are on leadership before completing the remaining steps. Type or recreate this form for your portfolio.

1. What leadership skills do you want to develop? Explain why.

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2. What do you think it takes to become a successful leader?

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3. Identify somebody who is an outstanding family leader. Why do you think that person is a good family leader?

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4. Identify somebody who is an outstanding community leader. Why do you think that person is a good community leader?

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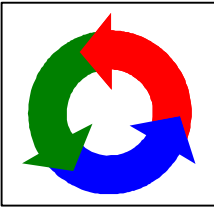
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## Learn-2

### INTERVIEWS

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In Learn 2, you will interview two people in established leadership positions.

#### **Guidelines for Interviewing and Shadowing**

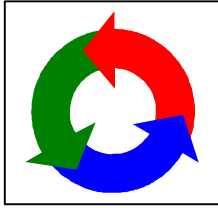
- The people you interview should be in a leadership position that is recognized by your school or community. Some examples are a teacher, Mayor, school administrator and religious leader. Choose someone you are curious about or want to know about, someone who could be a role model for you. It could be someone famous in Minnesota or your region too!
- *Interviews*—All interviews should be face-to-face, not over the telephone unless travel is difficult. Complete the Interview Form and have the individuals sign the form.
- *Interviews*-- Develop at least 4 questions. You should ask each individual you interview the same four questions. Type up questions and answers to include in your portfolio.

#### **Example Questions**

- How do you define leadership?
- What characteristics do you look for in a leader?
- What steps did you take to get where you are today?
- Please name one person you admire for his/her leadership and why?
- How does leadership tie into what you do with your family, community and career?

#### **Tips**

- Be familiar with the questions you plan to ask.
- Smile and shake his/her hand!
- Thank him/her for meeting with you.
- Briefly explain why you are interviewing him/her.
- Have clear, concise questions to ask.
- Dress nicely.
- Have a handout on FLA to give to them.



# Learn-2

## Leadership Individual Excellence Interviews

Date	Signature of Person Interviewed	Phone #

Write a summary of the main points you have learned about leadership through this experience:

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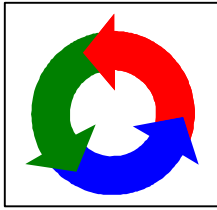
**By signing this form, I verify that the 2 interviews for the MN FLA Leadership Excellence Challenge are completed.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*FLA Member Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*FLA Advisor Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*



## Learn-3

### **FAMOUS LEADER FACT SHEET OR VIDEO**

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Create a one-page fact sheet or a 2-minute video on a famous leader. You must use at least 2 sources.

#### **Step One: Brainstorm**

Make a list of five to ten leaders, past or present, that you are interested in learning more about.

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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

#### **Step Two: Focus**

Of these leaders, who shows the qualities that you value in a good leader most?

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#### **Step Three: Research**

Once you have selected a leader, begin your research to learn more about this person's life and leadership qualities. Use at least two sources for your research.

Possible sources you could use are:

- Internet
- Autobiographies
- Documentaries

#### **Step Four: Area**

Your fact sheet or video should cover the following areas about your leader:

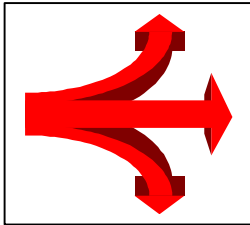
- Brief overview of the leader's life
- Contributions that person made to his/her family and community.
- Characteristics of the person that makes him/her a good leader

#### **Step Five: Draft**

Once you have completed your research, begin writing your fact-sheet or creating your video.

#### **Step Six: Revise**

When your draft is completed, have at least 2-3 people read it and offer suggestions. Then proofread it yourself and make the necessary changes.



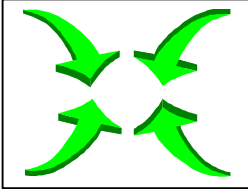
## Take Action-1

### **POWER OF ONE**

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Apply your leadership skills to actions. You will do this by completing the Power of One module “A Better You.”

- Think about what areas in your life you want to strengthen. After identifying an area or two, complete the Power of One Module—“A Better You.”
- Include your paper work in your portfolio (Convey Learning-1).



# Reflection-1

## **REFLECTION PAPER**

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Write a 2-page reflection paper. A reflection paper is about what you have learned and your thoughts about doing this project.

### **Step One: Brainstorm**

Review the work you have done for the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge. Think about the following questions:

- What did you learn about leadership?
- What activity did you like best and why?
- How can you apply this information to your family and school life?
- If you could do this project again, what would you do differently?

Answering these questions will help you to write your reflection paper.

### **Step Two: Outline**

Write an outline for your reflection paper. Include an introduction, body and conclusion.

### **Step Three: Draft**

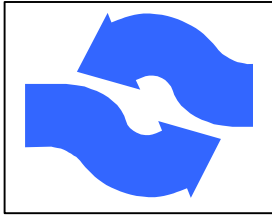
Compose a draft of your reflection paper. Remember to use your outline. When you are done, have at least 2-3 people read your draft and make suggestions.

### **Step Four: Revise**

Using the suggestions you received, re-read your paper and make revisions.

### **Step Five: Final Draft**

Finish the paper.



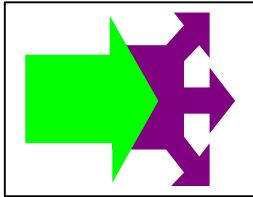
# Convey Learning-1

## Portfolio

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Develop a portfolio that you will present during your interview. The portfolio should show the work you have completed during the Junior High Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge.

- The portfolio should consist of 25 pages or less. The 25 pages do not include the cover and back of your portfolio (27 total with cover and back).
- Include the following items:
  - Copy of your work plan for the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge.
  - Copy of the Leadership Questionnaire.
  - Interview log, list of questions asked and the answers the people interviewed gave.
  - 1-page fact sheet on a leader or an outlined of your video.
  - Copy of Power of One paper work.
  - A copy of your 2- page reflection paper.
  - Other
- All sheets should be on paper that is 8 ½ inches x 11 inches.
- Your copies should be one-sided. No double-sided copies.
- Send five copies of your portfolio with your application to the State FLA office.



# Demonstrate New Skills-1

## Jr. High Individual Excellence Challenge Application

### A. General Information

Name:

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Address:

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Home Telephone Number:

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Email Address:

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Name of Parents/Guardians:

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Complete FLA Chapter Name:

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Advisor:

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Principal:

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School Address:

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School Phone and Fax:

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Year FLA Membership began:

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State and National Dues paid:

Yes

No

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Individual Excellence Challenge Challenge Award Applying for (circle one)

**Leadership**

**Mentoring**

**Careers**

**Service**

*Pilot 2000-01*

*Not Available*

*Not Available*

*Not Available*

*until after 2001*

*until after 2001*

*until after 2001*

We have examined the information and support the FLA member in applying for the State FLA Individual Excellence Challenge Challenge Award.

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Candidate's Signature

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Parent or Guardian's Signature

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Chapter Advisor's Signature

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Superintendent or Principal's signature

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**B. Questions to complete****1. Learn**

- Describe how and why you became interested in this Individual Excellence Challenge area.

**2. Plan**

- When you first started this Individual Excellence Challenge area, what goals did you plan to achieve.

**3. Take Action**

- Describe the “action” you took when completing the Power of One “A Better You” module.

**4. Demonstrate New Skills**

- Describe two skills you have learned.

**5. Reflect**

- Describe a goal on leadership that you would like to achieve in the future.

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**C. Supporting Documents:**

1. Two Letters of Recommendations
2. Five copies of your Portfolio