



FLA State Individual Excellence Challenge

Senior High Level

Grades 10, 11 and 12

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 the FLA Individual Excellence Challenge.
- Candidates must participate in the local chapter and its activities.

Reasons for Participating

You are...

- Developing career and personal skills.
- 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 future career 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, 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 and determines expectations for 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.

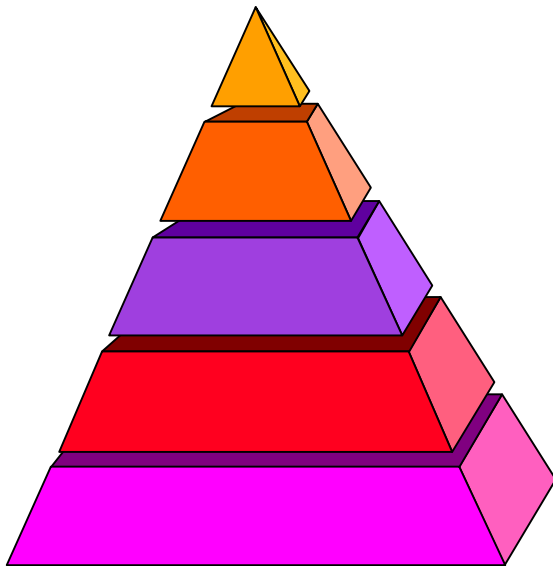
5. **Convey Learning**--Evidence of FLA member's accomplishments are shown based a portfolio and application.
6. **Demonstrate New Skills**—Shares new skills by answering application questions and by participating in the interview process.

Guidelines for the Leadership

What is leadership? This is a question that many people have pondered throughout history. Understanding the principles of leadership has been examined across many academic disciplines, cultures, and institutions. Some say leadership is an art while others define it as a process.

This Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge encourages you to analyze leadership, discuss leadership with others and how you personally define leadership.

By completing the steps in the box, you will qualify to receive a State Award in Leadership. This award is one of the highest achievements a FLA member can seek.



Leadership Proficiency Challenge

Steps to Complete

Plan

1. Develop a work plan.

Learn

1. Complete the Preliminary Questionnaire.
2. Develop a question about leadership and focus on the question as you complete all the steps henceforth.
3. Interview 7 people or shadow someone in a leadership position and relate it to your question in Learn step 2.
4. Write a 2-page report on a famous leader and relate it to your question in Learn step 2.

Take Action

1. Complete Power of One module "Take the Lead" and relate it to your question in Learn step 2.
2. Coordinate a project that would impact your community and demonstrate your leadership skills.

Reflection

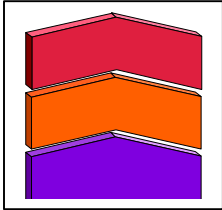
1. Complete the Exit Questionnaire.
2. Write a 4-page reflection paper and relate it to your question in Learn step 2.

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 and EXPECTATIONS

1) Develop a detailed plan that outlines your activities and how and when you are going to complete all tasks in the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge. 2) Create a list of expectations you want to personally accomplish while completing the Individual Excellence Challenge.

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

Task	Completion Date
Learn	
1. <u>Preliminary Questionnaire</u>	
– Rough Draft of answers	_____
– Review and revise draft	_____
– Proofread by 2-3 people	_____
– Revise answers	_____
– Typed final copy	_____
2. <u>Question</u>	
– Brainstorm for ideas	_____
– Ask at least 3 people for feedback	_____
– Revise	_____
3. <u>Job interviews or shadowing</u>	
– Identify people to interview and shadow	_____
– Write or call asking permission	_____
– Start job interviews or shadowing	_____
– Finish job interview or shadowing	_____
4. <u>Paper</u>	
– Brainstorm list of famous people	_____
– Research people that interest me	_____
– Narrow down brainstorm list	_____
– Read three sources	_____
– Create outline of paper	_____
– Write draft	_____
– Have 5 people read draft and give feedback	_____
– Make revisions to draft	_____
– Complete final copy	_____

Task	Completion Date
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Take Action

- 1. Power of One
 - Start Power of One Take the Lead _____
 - Find team to evaluate my work by _____
 - Fill out Power of One form _____
 - Send form into National Office _____

- 2. Project

Show evidence of planning process use in the following:

 - Have log ready to count hours _____
 - Write survey _____
 - Have 2-3 people give feedback _____
 - Finalize survey _____
 - Survey 30 people _____
 - Tabulate results _____
 - Identify project idea _____
 - Plan project by _____
 - Identify an outside agency _____
 - Find volunteers to help _____
 - Implement project _____
 - Evaluate project _____
 - Write Press Release _____
 - Have log form sign and complete _____

Reflection

- 1. Exit Questionnaire
 - Write draft of answers _____
 - Have 2-3 people give feedback _____
 - Revise answers _____
 - Type final copy _____

- 2. Paper
 - Write outline of reflection _____
 - Write draft _____
 - Have 2-3 people give feedback _____
 - Revise paper _____
 - Final copy _____

Task	Completion Date
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Convey Learning

- 1. Portfolio
 - Complete final copies of all documents _____
 - Have photos of project _____
 - Make sure all logs are signed _____

Demonstrate New Skills

- 1. Application
 - Write draft of application & resume _____
 - Have 2-3 people give feedback _____
 - Revise answers & resume _____
 - Final copy _____
 - Ask two people to write letters of recommendation _____
 - Collect letters of recommendation _____
 - Mail to state office by _____

- 2. Interview
 - Organize practice interview 1 _____
 - Organize practice interview 2 _____
 - Review portfolio to make sure it follows guidelines _____
 - Be interviewed at State Meeting _____

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

2c. What obstacles did you face as a leader?

3. Identify somebody who is an outstanding family leader. Describe below what characteristics make that person a strong leader.

2. Develop a question relating to leadership and focus on the question as you complete all the remaining steps. Using the Preliminary Questionnaire from Learn 1, briefly answer the following questions. This will help you to compose a focus question for your project.

- Of the three leaders (family, community, career) that you identified, whom do you find most interesting? Why?

- Think about the successes and challenges this leader has faced. How are they similar to what you have experienced as a leader?

- What leadership qualities would you like to further develop in yourself?

Creating a Focus Question

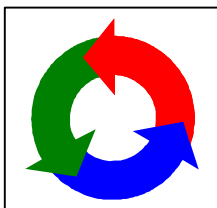
Look back on your answers to the last three questions, as well as the Preliminary Questionnaire. From these answers, formulate a focus question that is broad enough to serve as the focus of all of the components of the Individual Excellence.

Example Questions:

- How do leaders overcome obstacles?
- What makes a leader effective in his/her family? Career? Community?
- How important is morality/honesty in a leader?
- How do leaders represent a diverse constituency/population?
- Is leadership related to a power function/job?
- What are the different styles of leadership? (i.e. participatory, authoritarian etc.)
- How does collaboration tie into leadership?
- How do leaders make good decisions? What are the different decision making styles?

My focus question is:

Use this question to tie together the work you will do to complete the Individual Excellence Challenge.



Learn-3

INTERVIEWS OR SHADOWING

In Learn 3, you have the option to interview seven people in established leadership positions or shadow someone for 20 hours. Develop questions that relate to your overarching leadership question (Learn-2). This is an opportunity for you to gain insight on your question and how others respond to it.

Guidelines for Interviewing and Shadowing

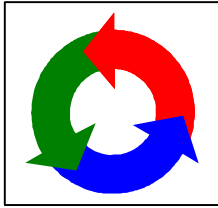
- The people you interview or shadow should be in a leadership position that is recognized by your school, community, county or state. Some examples would be your State House of Representative or Senator, County Judge, Mayor, school administrator and so forth. Choose someone you are curious about or 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.
Shadowing--Use the Shadowing Log Form to keep track of you time. You will shadow one person for 20 hours. You need the individual to sign it after each day you shadow.
- Interviews-- Develop at least 5 questions that relate to your overarching question. You should ask each individual you interview the same five questions. Type up questions and answers to include in your portfolio.
Shadowing—Develop at least 5 questions that you will ask during your 20 hours of shadowing that relates to your overarching question. Type up questions and answers to include in your portfolio.
- Write a one-page overview the interviews or shadowing experience.
Interviews—Look at the answers to the questions you asked, explain if you see any similarities or differences.
Shadowing—Describe your experience and what you learned through shadowing the person you did.

Example Questions

- What is your personal definition of leadership?
- What characteristics do you look for in a leader?
- What steps did you take to get where you are today?
- Can you tell me about a time in your life that your leadership principles were challenged and explain what you did?
- 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 or shadowing them.
- Have clear, concise questions to ask.
- Dress nicely.
- Have a handout on FLA to give to them.



Learn-3

Leadership Individual Excellence Interviews

Date	Signature of Person Interviewed	Phone number

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

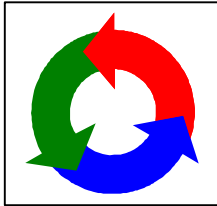
By signing this form, I verify that the 7 interviews for the MN FLA Leadership Excellence Challenge are completed.

FLA Member Signature

Date

FLA Advisor Signature

Date



Learn-3

Leadership Individual Excellence Shadow Log

Date	Hours	Signature of Person Shadowed	Phone number
TOTAL HRS-			

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

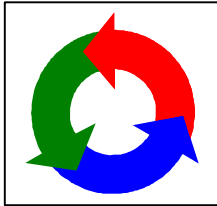
By signing this form, I verify that 20 hours that the shadowing experience for the MN FLA Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge are completed.

FLA Member Signature

Date

FLA Advisor Signature

Date



Learn-4

FAMOUS LEADER REPORT

Write a two-page report on a famous leader and relate it to your focus question that you developed in Learn 2. Include a bibliography of all sources used in your report. You must use at least 3 sources.

Step One: Brainstorm

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

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Step Two: Focus

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

How do the actions and qualities of this leader help to answer your focus question (Learn 2)?

Step Three: Research

Once you have selected a leader, begin your research to learn more about this person's life and leadership qualities. Remember to use the information you find to help answer your focus question (Example: How does your leader overcome obstacles?). Use at least three sources for your research.

Possible sources you could use are:

- Internet
- Auto/biographies
- Documentaries

Step Four: Outline

Before you begin writing, you should create an outline of what you want to write in your paper. A good outline makes it easier to write your paper. For this part of your project, we suggest writing a standard 5-paragraph paper. This includes an introduction (with a thesis statement that answers the question from Step Three), three supporting points, and a conclusion. Your outline should contain the major points from each of these paragraphs.

Step Five: Draft

Once you have completed your outline, begin writing your paper. Include the points you listed in your outline, and support your thesis statement.

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.

Step Seven: Final Draft

When you have finished your revisions, create a bibliography of all of the sources used. You can find examples in writing guides and dictionaries. Have someone check your bibliography once you have finished.

Bibliography Examples

How to site the books you use:

One Author

Spigel, John P. Leadership in the 1960's. Danville: Interstate, 1981

Two or Three Authors

Hart, Tina and Linda Brew. Leadership and Styles. New York: Delacorte, 1979.

No Author

The World Almanac and Book of Facts. New York: Newspaper Enterprises Assoc., 1985.

One Volume of Multivolume Work

Ziegler, Alan. The Writing Workshop. Vol. 2. New York: Teachers and Writers, 1984.

An Article in a Reference Book

"Ethnocentrism." Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1983.

Signed Article in a Magazine

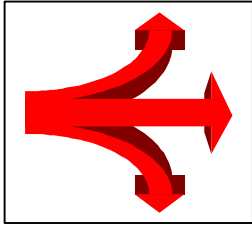
Mathews, Tom. "What can I do?" Newsweek 21 April: 58-60.

Films

Rebel without a Cause. Dir. Nicholas Ray. With James Dean, Natalie Wood, Sal Mineo, and Dennis Hopper. Warner, 1955.

Newspaper

Lee, Jessica. "Bush Plans 'to build on' Budget." USA Today 10 Jan. 1989: 4A. (4A refers to page four, section A of the paper.)

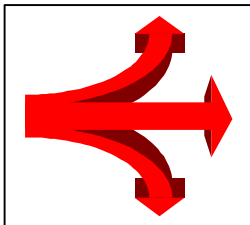


Take Action-1

POWER OF ONE

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

- Think about what leadership skills you want to strengthen. After identifying a skill or two, complete the Power of One Module—“Take the Lead.”
- Include your paper work in your portfolio (Convey Learning-1).



Take Action-2

PROJECT

The Take Action section provides you with an opportunity for you analyze leadership through doing a project that will directly impact yourself, school and community.

Guidelines for Completing Your Project

Utilize the planning process to develop your project. Include proof of this in your portfolio. Brainstorm for project ideas. Ask yourself the following questions:

1. What areas need improvement in my school and community?
 2. What do I hear people talking about?
 3. What articles have I read in the newspaper or heard on the local radio that discuss a concern in the community?
- Survey at least 30 people in your school/community before beginning your project. Tabulate the results and utilize them help you create a project that addresses a community need.
 - Relate your project to a Minnesota Future Leaders of America program. For example, if the survey results show that a big concern in your community is speeding through town, you would want to relate your project to the Families Acting for Community Traffic Safety (FACTS) program.
 - Log at least 30 hours of work for your project. Your hours logged includes the entire process-- planning, implementing and evaluating.
 - Work cooperatively with at least one community agency on your project. Ways that you could work with them are to share resources (handouts etc.), ask for volunteer support, do a workshops or receive a donation. Be creative, ask the agency for suggestions of how they could help you.
 - Recruit a group of at least 4 or more volunteers to help you implement your project.
 - Include an educational component to your project to increase public awareness. Inform your peers and community about the benefits of the project. Do this are by developing a community newsletter, flyers, fact sheets, displays, a video for local cable channel or power point presentation. You are not limited to the ideas listed above.
 - Write a press release or public service announcement about your project and submit it to the local media. Include it in your portfolio.

Survey Tips

Surveying is important because it is hard to say what is best for your community/school without finding out how people in your school or community feel. By surveying, you also begin to build support for your project.

Why should you survey? Here is an example to explain: maybe you think that all the cross walks in your neighborhood should be painted bright green so drivers see them better. However, after surveying your neighborhood you find out that they don't see that as a problem and don't like the color green. Your project probably is not a good idea.

Surveying Tips:

- You can do your survey in person, over the phone, or by mail.
- Always get permission first.
- Make sure someone knows where you are surveying and for how long. Try not to survey alone, ask a friend, parent or adult to go with you.
- Your survey should be at least 3 questions long, no more than 6 questions.
- When asking someone to fill out the survey, tell him or her who you are and why you are doing the survey.
- When you are finished, thank them for completing the survey.
- Tabulate your results afterwards.

Example

You have decided that you want to improve your school. The three areas you identified that need improvement in your school are 1) the computer lab; 2) the school grounds; and 3) the student lounge. Below is an example survey.

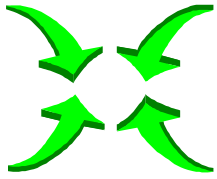
1. Out of three areas listed below, rank them on a scale one to three according to the hours you use them during a one week period—one you use the most often and three you use the least.

- _____ School's computer lab.
- _____ School's outside grounds.
- _____ Student lounge.

2. Out of three areas listed below, rank them on a scale one to three based on area you think needs the most improvement. One meaning that you think it needs little improvement and three meaning you think it needs a lot of improvement.

- _____ School's computer lab's computers and programs.
- _____ School's outside beautification areas (trees and gardens).
- _____ Student lounge's atmosphere.

3. Above you ranked _____ as three. Can you list one project or activity that could be done to help improve that area? _____



Reflection-2

REFLECTION PAPER

In Reflect 2, you will write a 4-page reflection paper and relate it to the focus question that you developed in Learn 2. A reflection paper is about what you learned and your thoughts. This paper is about how applied and will apply what you learned about leadership to your current and future goals. Use your answers from Reflect 1, Exit Questionnaire, to guide you through your reflection paper.

Step One: Brainstorm

Look over your answers in Reflect 1. Also review the work you have done for the Leadership Individual Excellence project. Think about the following questions:

- ?? What did you learn about your focus question you designed in Learn 2?
- ?? How can you apply this information to your own leadership abilities?
- ?? If you could do this project again, what would you do differently?
- ?? What did you like most about the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge?

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

Step Two: Outline

Write an outline for your reflection paper. Because this is a reflection of the work you have done on your Individual Excellence Challenge, it does not have to be as structured as the report on a famous leader in Learn 4.

Step Three: Draft

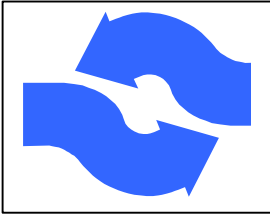
Compose a draft of your reflection paper. Remember to use your outline. When you are done, have at least 2-3 people read your draft and make suggestions.

Step Four: Revise

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

Step Five: Final Draft

Finish the paper and include a bibliography of all sources, if applicable.

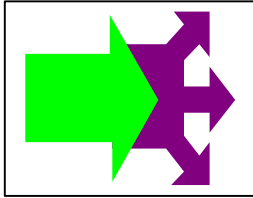


Convey Learning-1

Portfolio

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

- The portfolio should consist of 35 pages or less. The 35 pages do not include the cover and back of your portfolio (37 total with cover and back).
- Include the following items:
 - Copy of your work plan for the Leadership Individual Excellence Challenge.
 - 1 sheet on the sources you identified in Learn 2 and the philosophy of leadership identified.
 - 1 page on the question you developed and explanation of why you choose that question.
 - Copy of the Preliminary Questionnaire.
 - Overview of interviews or shadowing experience and a list of questions asked and summary of answers of people interviewed/shadowed.
 - 2-page report on a famous person recognized for taking leadership.
 - Copy of Power of One paper work.
 - Photos, survey, proof of planning process use, 1 page written summary of your action project and copy of press release or public service announcement.
 - Exit Questionnaire
 - A copy of your 4- 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

Individual Excellence Application

A. General Information

Name:

Address:

Home Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Name of Parents/Guardians:

Complete FLA Chapter Name:

Advisor:

Principal:

School Address:

School Phone and Fax:

Year FLA Membership began:

State and National Dues paid:

Yes

No

Individual Excellence Challenge Award Applying for (circle one)

Leadership

Pilot 2000-01

Mentoring

*Not Available
until after 2001*

Careers

*Not Available
until after 2001*

Service

*Not Available
until after 2001*

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

Candidate's Signature

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Chapter Advisor's Signature

Superintendent or Principal's signature

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

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

- Describe any special advantages or disadvantages that had a major impact on your achievements.

2. Plan

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

3. Take Action

- Describe the “action” you took and what you learned from this experience.

4. Demonstrate New Skills

- Describe two or three major skills you have learned that have a major impact on your achievements.

- Describe two or three major skills, competencies or knowledge you have acquired that will contribute toward the achievement of future goals.

5. Reflect

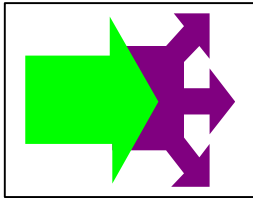
- Describe personal, educational and career goals you would like to achieve in the future.

6. Convey Learning

- Describe the progress you made throughout the year towards achieving your goals.

C. Supporting Documents:

1. Resume includes the following:
 - Name/address/phone
 - Career objective
 - Education
 - FLA activities/awards
 - School leadership activities/awards
 - Community leadership activities/awards
 - Work experiences
 - Other accomplishments
2. Two Letters of Recommendations
3. Send 5 copies of your application and portfolio



Demonstrate New Skills-2

Interview

All applicants will be interview by a committee. The interview will take place the FLA State Leadership Conference in April.