



SkillsUSA Program of Work

ADVISOR GUIDE



What is the SkillsUSA Program of Work (POW)?

The Program of Work (PoW) is the foundation for managing a SkillsUSA chapter. It is both a chapter management tool and a student development framework. The PoW organizes your chapter's yearly calendar of events/activities into six categories, each designed to help students grow in career readiness by developing the Essential Elements of the SkillsUSA Framework.

Why we use the POW

SkillsUSA uses the Program of Work because we believe every student has value and purpose. The PoW helps students discover and develop that value through meaningful, student-led activities and events. It connects students to career pathways, reinforces classroom learning, builds transferable skills, and creates a culture of leadership, service, and accountability.

Six Categories of the POW

The PoW is structured around six categories. Each category is managed by a student committee and aligned with one or more of the 17 Essential Elements from the SkillsUSA Framework.

Advocacy and Marketing	Focuses on promoting SkillsUSA and CTE Programs
Community Engagement	Involves serving and connecting with the local community.
Financial Management	Includes budgeting, fundraising, and entrepreneurship.
Leadership Development	Builds leadership and interpersonal skills.
Partner and Alumni Engagement	Connects stakeholders and builds networks.
Workplace Experiences	Provides career exploration and skill development.

Each activity or event planned within these categories should intentionally target one Essential Element from the SkillsUSA Framework. The Framework is organized into three skill areas: personal skills, workplace skills, and technical skills grounded in academics.

Implementing the POW

The following are key steps to implementing the Program of Work.

Committees

At the start of the school year, chapter officers should appoint six committees, one for each category of the Program of Work. The officers can appoint a chair for each committee or the committee can select its own chair from the committee members.

Committees ensure that effective communication, decision-making and planning take place among teams of students. For that reason, these committees provide amazing opportunities for students to practice needed skills as they receive feedback from you, other trusted adults and their peers. Along with learning the technical skills needed for career success in your career and technical education program, students will also develop the personal and workplace skills necessary to succeed.

Chapter Finances

Each chapter should establish a budget for the year, following school guidelines. A clear budget helps avoid confusion and supports decision-making. The Chapter Budget Worksheet should be completed by officers and the advisor, using input from each committee.

Check out the Sample Budget sheet located in the SkillsUSA Back to School Resources, Checkpoint 5.

Activities

SkillsUSA offers three Program of Work Activity Guides to support learning how to design and implement Program of Work activities. Each activity should include the following steps:



Step 1 - Planning

Prepare for the activity by setting SMART goals, creating a timeline, identifying materials, and building partnerships.

Step 2 - Implementation

Carry out the plan, ensuring all necessary steps are followed for success.

Step 3 - Evaluation

After the activity, evaluate outcomes, reflect on the targeted Essential Element, and document recommendations for future committees.

Step 4 - Celebration

Recognize member contributions and the impact of the activity on the chapter, school, and community.

The **Chapter Excellence Program (CEP)** is the final step, where chapters submit the activity for recognition. It is important to understand that each Program of Work activity supports the Chapter Excellence Program (CEP). Planning, documentation, and evaluation are key components that align with CEP application requirements and help chapters demonstrate growth and achievement.

Chapter Program of Work Calendar

POW Category	Essential Element	Activity	Suggested Month	Page
Advocacy & Marketing	Professionalism	SkillsUSA Week Celebration	January/February	Activity Guide 1 Page 40
Advocacy & Marketing	Integrity	Citizenship Day - Letter Writing	February/March	Activity Guide 2 Page 7
Advocacy & Marketing	Computer & Technology	SkillsUSA Social Media Calendar	September (All Year)	Activity Guide 3 Page 13
Community Engagement	Work Ethic	Canned Food Drive	March	Activity Guide 1 Page 45
Community Engagement	Teamwork	Cosmetology Activity	April/May	Activity Guide 2 Page 19
Community Engagement	Planning, Organization, & Management	Alumni Recognition	October/November	Activity Guide 2 Page 27
Financial Management	Service Orientation	Flower Box Fundraiser	November/December	Activity Guide 1 Page 32
Financial Management	Decision Making	Developing Chapter Budget	September (All year)	Activity Guide 2 Page 33
Financial Management	Self-Motivation	Learning How to Budget	November/December	Activity Guide 2 Page 42
Leadership Development	Communication	Leadership Retreat	August/September	Activity Guide 1 Page 10
Leadership Development	Responsibility	Community Breakfast	April/May	Activity Guide 2 Page 55
Leadership Development	Multi-Cultural Sensitivity	Games Around the World	January/February	Activity Guide 2 Page 61
Partner & Alumni Engagement	Adaptability and Flexibility	Local Business Goodwill Tour	October	Activity Guide 1 Page 22
Partner & Alumni Engagement	Leadership	Volunteer Sign-up	September/October	Activity Guide 2 Page 69
Partner & Alumni Engagement	Planning, Organizing and Management	Elementary Wellness Program	October/November	Activity Guide 2 Page 78
Workplace Experiences	Professional Development	Mock Interview	April/May	Activity Guide 1 Page 52
Workplace Experiences	Job Specific Skills	Career Fair	February/March	Activity Guide 2 Page 86
Workplace Experiences	Safety	Local Championships	November/January	Activity Guide 2 Page 95

The Activity Guides

SkillsUSA provides a range of tools to support PoW implementation. These include the Framework Integration Toolkit, templates for planning and evaluation, digital platforms like SkillsUSA Pathful, and advisory support through professional development and Customer Care. Customer Care Team available via:

Email: customercare@skillsusa.org

Phone: (toll free) 844.875.4557



Click each title to view the online resource



Program of Work: Activity Guide 1

- Activity Guide 1 offers foundational context for the Program of Work, including sample activities for each category, SMART goal setting, budgeting tools, and experiential learning strategies. It introduces the activity cycle and provides detailed task lists for implementation.

Program of Work: Activity Guide 2

- Activity Guide 2 expands the activity library with additional examples for each category. It emphasizes committee collaboration and includes experiential activities, planning tools, and evaluation strategies. It also reinforces the connection between PoW activities and the SkillsUSA Framework.

Program of Work: Activity Guide 3

- Activity Guide 3 provides editable planning templates for each activity. It focuses on aligning activities with the Chapter Excellence Program (CEP), selecting targeted Essential Elements, and documenting member growth. It includes evaluation methods, celebration ideas, and links to supporting resources.

Program of Work: Par 3 Golf Activity

- This guide offers a hands-on, committee-based project that simulates real-world collaboration. Each PoW committee has a defined role in designing and building a themed miniature golf hole. The activity integrates budgeting, Essential Element instruction, teamwork, and public presentation. It's a model for experiential learning and CEP alignment.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of activities, it is important to celebrate the success of the members. This celebration should recognize the work of the members in accomplishing the activity and the demonstration of the targeted Essential Element. Here are some celebration ideas:

- Host an appreciation circle. Individually each participant takes a turn and the other participants acknowledge that person's contributions to the project. Encourage the participants to use Framework language to describe each other.
- Host a fun activity at a local bowling alley, miniature golf or swimming pool.
- Post photographs and names of participants on a bulletin board in your classroom or around campus.
- Put an announcement in the school newsletter, on social media or your training program webpage.
- Recognize participants at a chapter meeting, school assembly, faculty meeting or school board meeting.
- Have a jar or bulletin board in each classroom where students can write and leave notes of appreciation to each other.
- Create and post a progress chart in the classrooms for each project.
- Write thank-you notes to each participant.
- Conduct a raffle with cool prizes for the participants.
- Hold an awards ceremony to recognize member achievement at the end of the year.
- Celebrate the achievements of your digital natives and create a one or two-minute video highlighting pictures of past projects and classroom happenings. Don't forget to add music! Create certificates of achievement to distribute. These can be fillable PDFs or printed with the names added. Include a team photo on the certificate.
- Use "Wordles" (wordle.net) to create affirmative descriptors of helpers.

Finally, remember the Program of Work is not just about running a chapter. It is about developing people. When implemented with intention, it becomes the engine for student transformation. It is how SkillsUSA chapters become communities of practice and how students become leaders ready to thrive in life and work.

