Corporate Strategy Challenge Guidelines

Competition handbook • Substantive rules preserved from version 1.1

1 COMPETITION OVERVIEW

Act as a company's executive team. Commit to a strategy within the scenario's budget and constraints, present the decision and defend it before judges acting as the board of directors. Optional CEO, CFO or COO roles are not scored.

This guide summarizes the binding Event Rulebook and General Rules. It creates no additional requirements or penalties; the Event Rulebook controls over the General Rules, which control over guidance.

2 EVENT OVERVIEW

Saturday, May 29, 2027 • 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ET • Maryland venue and address to be announced. Lunch is served; no breakfast. Contact mcba@mc-ba.com for questions, forms and entry instructions.

Event detail	Requirement
Team	1–3 students
Entries open	January 1, 2027
Registration and roster deadline	May 15, 2027; cutoff time/time zone not specified
Preparation	30 minutes, supervised, in each round
Presentation and defense	7–10 minutes presenting; 3–5 minutes of board questions
Rounds	Preliminary heats; top 3 advance to a new final scenario and curveball

WHO MAY COMPETE. Each competitor must be an active MCBA member on the registration deadline and Summit day; be enrolled in high school (grades 9–12) or a recognized equivalent; and be at least 13. A member under 18 needs a parent or legal guardian who has agreed to the MCBA Terms and signed the competition consent form.

ENTRY AND TEAM LIMITS. Each student may join only one team in one Summit competition. Cross-school and cross-chapter teams are permitted. Name one captain as MCBA's contact. Solo entrants and teams use the same rubric without adjustment for team size.

EXCLUDED PARTICIPANTS. Case/scenario writers, reviewers and anyone with advance access; judges and investor-panel members; and MCBA officers involved in running the competition they would enter may not compete. MCBA may request eligibility proof; an ineligible member may cause disqualification.

REGISTRATION. The captain registers through an MCBA account. Entry is complete only when MCBA confirms it by email. Provide the full roster, each member's school and grade, signed consent and media forms for members under 18, and all event materials. MCBA may cap entries; the event's selection method applies, or first-come registration if none is stated.

Final roster/substitutions: May 15, 2027. Each competitor also needs a Summit ticket; there is no separate competition entry fee.

3 COMPETITION GUIDELINES

ROUNDS AND ADVANCEMENT. Preliminary heats are randomly drawn, with a separate panel per heat; every team receives Scenario A, without a curveball. The top three preliminary scores across heats advance. MCBA may adjust scores if panels score noticeably higher/lower. Finalists receive new Scenario B, a fresh 30-minute prep period and a final panel. There is no audience. Preliminary scores do not carry over; final placings use final-round scores only.

SCENARIO AND PREPARATION. MCBA writes scenarios based on real businesses, named with permission or anonymized. The packet includes company/competitive position, financials and market data, the strategic decision and fixed constraints such as budget, timeline, staffing or investor commitments. No outside knowledge is needed; judges score the scenario, not outside facts. Prep starts at packet handover. No contact outside the team is allowed. Ask the proctor rules/packet questions; no hints are given. Stop writing at 30 minutes and proceed directly with the escort to the presentation room.

FINAL-ROUND CURVEBALL. Only in the final, each team receives the same one-page update with 15 minutes of preparation remaining. Time is not extended. The presentation must address the update by adjusting the strategy or explaining why it still holds.

4 PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

REQUIRED CONTENT. State all four: the one strategy the company will pursue; what it will stop doing or not do; allocation of budget/resources within constraints; and an execution plan with milestones and success measures.

PERMITTED MATERIALS. The scenario packet and final curveball; MCBA-provided blank paper, pens/pencils, flip-chart paper and markers; one basic/scientific calculator per member, not graphing, programmable or internet-connected. Use only handwritten flip charts and paper notes made during prep; no page limit applies.

RESTRICTIONS. No phones, laptops, tablets, smartwatches, earbuds or other electronic devices; internet or AI; advance notes, templates/frameworks; slides, printed handouts, props or pre-made materials. Devices are handed to the proctor or sealed before packet handover and returned after presenting.

TIMING AND BOARD DEFENSE. Present as the executive team for 7–10 minutes. Timing begins at first speech; signals come at 3 and 1 minute remaining; stop at 10:00. Any/all members may speak; one presenter incurs no penalty. Judges act as the board and challenge assumptions, numbers and trade-offs for 3–5 minutes. Only judges ask; any member may answer. Presentations are judges-only.

INTEGRITY AND CONFIDENTIALITY. All work must be the team's own. General coaching before the Summit is allowed; outsiders may not write, build or present any part of the entry. Do not share, discuss or post case/scenario content outside the team until MCBA announces results. Misrepresentation, plagiarism and prohibited help are academic dishonesty.

CONDUCT. Treat everyone respectfully. Harassment, discrimination, bullying, intimidation and threats are prohibited. Spectators must be silent and may not record without MCBA permission; event-specific judges-only presentation rules still apply. Silence and put away devices in competition rooms unless the Event Rulebook permits them. Depending on severity, MCBA may warn, deduct points, disqualify or remove a person. Removal and account action follow MCBA Terms sections 4 and 17.

5 JUDGING AND EVALUATION

Each judge independently scores the seven rubric categories out of 100. A team's score is the judges' average. Ties first use Trade-offs and Resource Allocation, then a head-judges vote. Each of the four required presentation items omitted costs 5 points. Judges' scores/opinions are final; procedural appeals remain available under the common rules.

MCBA recruits qualified judges and briefs them on the rubric. A judge may not score a relative, current student, employee or someone with a financial relationship; MCBA reassigns that team. Written feedback follows the Summit.

The three finalists receive 1st-, 2nd- and 3rd-place trophies and a certificate for each member. Every competitor receives a participation certificate and written judging feedback after the Summit. Cash prizes are not guaranteed; any added amounts are announced before the Summit. Cash follows the General Rules' award conditions.

6 PENALTIES AND DISQUALIFICATION

Violation or condition	Consequence
Presentation under 7:00	5 points
Each missing required presentation item	5 points per item
Check-in/prep arrival up to 5 minutes late	Prep reduced by time missed
More than 5 minutes late	Forfeit unless MCBA can reschedule
Prohibited device during prep/presentation	Disqualification
Pre-made notes, slides, handouts or props	Disqualification
Discussing the scenario before results	Disqualification of teams involved

PARTICIPATION AND ADMINISTRATION

TICKETS. Every competitor needs a valid Summit ticket. Competition entry has no separate fee. A ticket does not guarantee Startup acceptance. Published prices: $32 through December 31, 2026, 11:59 p.m. ET; $124 from January 1, 2027, 12:00 a.m. ET. Sales opening date is unannounced as of November 2, 2026.

PURCHASING. Published route: free MCBA account → Academy → My MCBA → Summit → Stripe checkout when sales open. One ticket per account admits one person. The code is shown on the ticket page and emailed after payment. Earned referral credit reduces the checkout price.

ROSTER CHANGES. Email MCBA for substitutions by May 15, 2027. After that date, members may be dropped but not added; at least one original member must remain. Notify MCBA promptly of withdrawal. Withdrawing does not refund the Summit ticket.

CHECK-IN AND ACCESS. Check in at the competition desk by your assigned time. Each member shows a ticket code and photo ID or school ID. Schedules, room assignments and heat draws published before or on Summit morning are final. Dress: business professional or business casual. Request accommodations at registration; MCBA makes reasonable accommodations and shares only necessary details with judges.

AUTHORITY AND CHANGES. The Event Rulebook controls over the General Rules; General Rules control over Guidelines, which are advice and create no requirement or penalty. MCBA Terms control on eligibility, conduct, payments, privacy and awards to minors. Rules are published before entries open. Later rule changes carry a new version and date, are posted and emailed to registered teams. MCBA may change format, schedule or venue, or cancel; registered teams are notified by email. Public Rules Q&A answers affecting all teams are binding.

PROCEDURAL APPEALS. Only procedural errors may be appealed, including timing, arithmetic or incorrect rule application; judges' scores and opinions may not. The captain submits a written appeal to the Competition Director within 30 minutes of the round ending or before results are announced, whichever is earlier. The Director and one MCBA officer uninvolved in the round decide; their decision is final.

PARTICIPANT TERMS AND ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

AWARDS. Awards may be below the advertised maximum or withheld if no entry earns them. Awards to members under 18 are paid through a parent/guardian; required tax information may be requested. Team cash is split equally unless all members and guardians of minors agree in writing otherwise. Required prize paperwork must be completed within 60 days of notice or the prize is forfeited. Event-specific Startup grant terms also apply.

OWNERSHIP AND MEDIA. Teams own their ideas, plans and materials; MCBA takes no ownership. Entry permits MCBA to store submissions, share them with judges and announce team/venture names and a short description in results. Judges/panelists are asked to keep entries confidential but do not sign NDAs; do not disclose trade secrets you are unwilling to show. MCBA may photograph/record sessions for educational, promotional and marketing use. Send media opt-out requests in writing in advance; reasonable accommodation is attempted. A minor's guardian may request an opt-out or removal of a published image at any time.

TICKET TERMS AND PRIVACY. Tickets are nonrefundable and nontransferable. Cancellation by MCBA earns a full refund; rescheduling carries the ticket forward. Spent referral credit returns on a refunded ticket. The early-bird checkout closes at the price switch or 31 minutes after opening, whichever is later. Stripe handles payment; MCBA does not receive card numbers. MCBA collects limited program/account/progress/payment information to operate and improve services and communicate. The Terms state that only MCBA administrators see member data and student data is not sold. Contact MCBA for privacy/data requests. Participation is voluntary and attendees assume normal event risks.

TENTATIVE SUMMIT PROGRAM

Tentative program (ET): 9:00–9:45 registration/expo; 9:45–10:15 expo/networking; 10:15–11:30 round 1/workshops; 11:30–12:30 lunch/networking; 12:30–1:45 round 2/workshops; 1:45–2:30 speaker panel; 2:30–3:30 expo/finals; 3:30–4:15 keynote/panel; 4:15–5:00 awards. Sessions may overlap. Startup has one pitch round, not a final. Assigned competition times govern participation; the agenda remains subject to change.

INFORMATION AWAITING CONFIRMATION

Awaiting MCBA confirmation: venue/address and travel/access arrangements; final agenda and team times/rooms; named Competition Director and day-of contact; registration/upload destination, file-size limits and consent/media forms; May 15 cutoff time/time zone; meal/allergen and chaperone details; active-membership interpretation if needed; later binding Q&A or awards updates. Ask MCBA directly. Guest checkout, email-account linking, judge-contact collection and a $50 judge no-show fee are not confirmed in the current published attendee rules/terms and are not imposed here.

Rule source: MCBA Summit official General Rules and applicable Event Rulebook, version 1.1, November 2026. Logistics/Terms snapshot: November 2, 2026. Source links are for updates; essential instructions are included here. mc-ba.com/competitions/summit • mc-ba.com/terms • mcba@mc-ba.com

PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM

Corporate Strategy Challenge

Team or venture _____ Round _____

Judge _____ Date _____

Score each category within its maximum. Criteria and point allocations are unchanged. No performance-level bands are defined in the source rules. Record only authorized penalties; the team score is the average of independent judges' scores.

Evaluation category	What the judge assesses	Max.	Judge score
Clarity and decisiveness of strategy	One clear choice, stated early; the team commits rather than hedges	20	
Use of data and competitive insight	Uses the scenario's financials and market data accurately; understands rivals and the company's advantage	20	
Trade-offs and resource allocation	Works within the budget and constraints; explains what is given up and why	20	
Risks, contingencies and adaptability	Names the main risks with backup plans; in the final, responds well to the curveball	10	
Execution roadmap and measures	Realistic milestones, owners and measures of success	10	
Delivery and executive presence	Confident, organized and persuasive; speaks like leadership	10	
Board defense	Holds a sound position under pressure; adjusts sensibly when a challenge is fair	10	

Score record	Points
Category total	____ / 100
Authorized penalty deductions	____
Recorded score	____

Ties: Trade-offs and resource allocation first, then a head-judges vote.

JUDGE COMMENTS

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