

INSIDE FRC JUDGING

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AZ Senior Judge Advisor

WHY DOES FIRST GIVE AWARDS?

-F.I.R.S.T. IS MORE THAN ROBOTS!

“The FIRST Robotics Competition is about much more than the mechanics of building a robot or winning a competitive event. It is about the partnership among people who are part of the FIRST community and the impact on those who participate in FIRST programs with a united goal of achieving the FIRST mission.”

The FIRST mission is to change the way young people regard science and technology and to inspire appreciation for the real-life rewards and career opportunities in these fields.”

CHANGE THE CULTURE

THE AWARDS

Awards Based on Team Attributes

*Engineering Inspiration Award
Entrepreneurship
Gracious Professionalism Award
Imagery Award
*Rookie All-Star Award
Rookie Inspiration Award
Team Spirit Award

Awards Based on Machine, Creativity, and Innovation

Autonomous Award
Creativity Award
Excellence in Engineering
Industrial Design
Innovation in Control
Quality Award

Submitted Awards

*Chairman's Award, now Impact Award
FIRST Dean's List Award

TIPS FOR JUDGING - OVERALL PROCESS

Train anyone who will be in pit on team history, how robot works; practice answering questions

Keep pit crew small; the rest of the team should be scouting in pits, or cheering/scouting in stands

Don't be afraid to get team members who know particular aspect of team or robot to answer question

Be sure to be courteous to each other while speaking to judges

Let the students do the talking!

- Set up a schedule so all members can see matches
- Judges look at pit information before doors open Fri.
- ALL members are being judged at ALL times!

TIPS FOR TECHNICAL JUDGING

- 🔗 If at all possible have examples of your process: models, diagrams, CAD drawing, engineering notebook etc. Tell us about the process you used to arrive at your final solution, including successes and setbacks.
- 🔗 Be able to point to specific systems or parts that make your robot successful or unique, and have students who can explain how the part/system works.
- 🔗 Each person in the pit should know a short list of basics about the robot; weight, autonomous modes, drive-train style, type of programming language, strategy, strengths and weaknesses, etc. (This also helps for scouting teams!)
- 🔗 Judges will watch matches to see what your robot can really do .

GENERAL TIPS FOR TALKING TO JUDGES

- 🎧 **Smile**, we are here for you. Take a breath if you are nervous. We want to give you awards you have earned.
- 🎧 Enunciate & **talk louder that you think you need to**. Masks, background noise , hearing loss from Rock Concerts can make it difficult for Judges to hear you. If we don't hear what you tell us, we won't know all of your fabulous information to give you the award you may have earned.
- 🎧 Keep stuff out of your mouth! Gum, tools, Robot parts, your fingers, etc. It is distracting and not what the judged what to see.
- 🎧 Practice your "Elevator" Speech. Be concise. Share the important points so judges will want more detail. Differentiate your Team, your Robot, and yourself.

GENERAL TIPS FOR TALKING TO JUDGES

Keep handouts and supports simple

- 🔗 Teams should consider preparing a one-page summary hand-out covering your key machine attributes. Highlight key aspects of your design & build processes, novel components incorporated and/or capabilities, as well as info on your approach to control/programming. Be sure to include a picture of your robot!
- 🔗 Teams should focus on the elements of their team and their robot of which they are most proud. Everyone on the team should know these focused things so they that no matter who the judges speak with they at least hear these consistent items. Remember, all the awards are TEAM awards so everyone should be able to speak about them.
- 🔗 Make a summary sheet of your team's accomplishments for that year.

GENERAL TIPS FOR TALKING TO JUDGES:

PRACTICE

- 🔗 If your team is focusing on a specific award, describe how your team or robot meets that criteria.
- 🔗 Make sure all members understand awards being targeted and can answer questions
- 🔗 It helps to have students practice in front of their teams ahead of time.
- 🔗 Always keep someone in your Pit that can speak to the judges -OR- have some type of sign telling judges where they can find your team (e.g. practice field, match queue, etc.). This will help to ensure the judges can easily find you for interviews.
- 🔗 Remember your Gracious Professionalism and FIRST Core Values! This should be true for every team member and all those associated with the team during the season.
- 🔗 Practice, practice, practice! Have mock judging sessions, build a mock pit, and plan your elevator speeches.

DOCUMENTATION- FOR MORE INFORMATION

- 🔗 Document everything and be able to provide evidence.
- 🔗 If you don't have evidence, it didn't happen.
- 🔗 Provide judges with materials, not only is it a good way to thank them for volunteering, it is also a great way to have them remember you.
- 🔗 You may want to have a robust team book or judges book. This may include examples of evidence, comprehensive lists of activities/events, funding information, robot information etc. Not all judges will see all award submissions, so you may want to include printed copies of submitted judging info and award submissions.
- 🔗 In addition (or instead), think about offering judges a quick reference guide with the most crucial facts about your team. (Think bulleted list of what your team is most proud of.) Judges can not only take this with them as a reference (have several copies), but teams can use it to help guide them in pit interviews.
- 🔗 While you should try to have enough copies for each set of judges that stop by, it is ok to have pit copies that stay in the pit, or to ask that the judges return them at the end of competition.

DO

- 🔗 Welcome all judges, teams, mentors, volunteers warmly to your pits. Arrange your pit so that it is conducive to present your team.
- 🔗 Behave with Gracious Professionalism at ALL times; teams can and will be disqualified from winning awards for poor behavior at events.
- 🔗 Prepare for your judging interview - this is your one and only opportunity to tell us about your team. (You may want to set up a practice pit in your work space during build season, also have team members practice their “elevator speeches”)
- 🔗 Discuss your impact and why what you’ve done is important.
- 🔗 Give the judges as much information as possible - we can only judge you based on what is presented at that event, even if we’ve interviewed your team at previous events (Balance information overload v. team summaries for “take-aways”)
- 🔗 Let us know where you are if you’re not in the pit (queuing, practice field, etc.) *(Try a sign or note!)*

DON'T

- ⌘ Exaggerate or take credit for something you didn't do
Example: don't exaggerate the number of teams you "start"; sending one or two volunteers to an event is not "hosting." (SEE FIRST DEFINITIONS)
- ⌘ Do something just so you can be more competitive for an award.
- ⌘ Try to play the "numbers game" without documentation. If your team is claiming a certain number of hours or another statistic, you better be able to support your claim!
- ⌘ Underestimate the importance of what your team has accomplished. All teams have something to celebrate and be proud of, tell us!
- ⌘ Answer "I don't know" to questions - **make an effort** to find a teammate who does know. Also, don't make it up or guess.
- ⌘ Rest on your laurels; just because your team has won an award in the past is not a guarantee of winning again. You must earn recognition every year.

VICKI'S COFFEE ORDER

Venti Cold Brew with Almond Milk,
4 Pumps of Peppermint.

SCHOLARSHIPS

- 🔗 Start at [Firstinspires.org/scholarships](https://www.firstinspires.org/scholarships)
- 🔗 Most require two years on a team, but not all. Not all are grades based or STEM based.
- 🔗 If finances restrict you from applying, there are resources available. Have your mentor contact Lisa or myself and we can help you. Do not wait until it's too late in your senior year!!!

QUESTIONS? ASK OR HAVE YOUR
MENTOR CALL