



Judging Hints at the Regionals

- Judges wear blue polo shirts. There are different teams of judges looking at different aspects of your team. They may return more than once on Friday/Saturday. If one of the technical judging teams comes around, and the person in the pit is not experienced at explaining the robot, ask the judges if they can return in 5 minutes and find the person who is good at explaining. Judges will not expect everyone to know everything, so you might have designated people on the team to talk about the specific judging areas.
- Try to always have someone available on Friday/Saturday in your pit area. If there is no one in the pit (because your team is on the field, for example) post a sign saying when you will be back. Judges work under a very tight time schedule.
- 2006-See Section 9 in the Manual for a description of all the awards.
- The judges will want to talk to the students. They may engage the mentors/parents after they talk to the students. The mentors/parents need to hang back unless invited to join the discussion.
- The pits are loud. There will be music and machine noises. Students need to speak up, and there may only be enough room to have 2 students talk to 2 judges at a time.
- First impressions count. How your pit looks does matter. Try to be organized.
- Judging for the Entrepreneurship award will occur on Friday. Make sure you have an example of your business plan to share with the judges on Friday. If your team does not have a documented business plan there are many resources available from NEMO and the ChiefDelphi forums.
- Rookies: Assume judges will not have seen copies of your Chairman's Award entry, if you submitted one. Feel free to hand them a copy in the pits.

- Some teams prepare short handouts/brochures about their team for the judges to take away, highlighting what your team does well. These highlights could include specifics about teamwork, technical or business. These handouts can then be used for recruiting sponsors and publicizing your team.
- Some teams give the judges binders and scrapbooks, and other documentation to take back with them to the deliberation room. This is especially true for the Chairman's Award presentations. These items will be returned to your pit area on Saturday.
- Often the judges will only have 5 minutes to spend in the pit with your team. Jump in and sell the team. Have students practice their "elevator" speech: about *FIRST*, their role, the drive system, the control system, their community, their partners, their appreciation for engineering, why they designed something the way they did, their biggest challenge this year, their fundraising strategies. It is the same process used for college interviews, or job interviews. Show your passion.
- Judges are taking time off from work to spend time with you because they are genuinely interested in what you are doing and believe in what *FIRST* is doing. There are judges that return each year and look forward to participating in your Regional. Be sure to thank them.
- Being a judge is hard work, and there are many difficult decisions that have to be made. There are many more deserving teams than awards given. Regardless of which teams take home a trophy, be proud of what you have accomplished.
- Judges will be observing your team throughout the competition, even if they aren't interviewing you. What your teammates say in the halls, stands, and bathrooms will reflect back on your team. Judges will also ask the other volunteers, such as the referees and field crew for their input. "Gracious Professionalism" means all the time.
- Good luck and have fun!