



Non-Engineering Mentoring  
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FIRST Robotics



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- Providing your club or team with a strong support non-engineering mentor base enables your primary mentors to focus on projects that are of most interest to them. Learn how to recruit and retain parent and professional mentors to help your team with support areas such as administrative, travel, fundraising and public relations.

- Establish goals
- Recruit
- Interview
- Retain

- Set goals for team, define “needs” to accomplish those goals
- Create “wish lists” – one for mentoring assistance needs and one for equipment needs
- Every team member should have copy; distribute at all events/demonstrations/fundraisers

- Recruiting sources:
  - School – teachers, coaches, support personnel
  - Parents – establish communication with them!
  - Local businesses – School/Business partnerships; Career Day/Job Shadowing volunteers; Human Resources departments; Chamber of Commerce; Civic organizations
  - Local chapters of professional societies

- Local colleges and universities
- Volunteer organizations
- AARP
- Advertise in local newspapers – often have weekly column for volunteer opportunities
- Word of mouth – NETWORK!

- Don't hesitate to interview potential mentor
  - Explain expectations, time and financial commitments; goals of organization – mentor must be a good “fit” to be successful partnership
  - Solicit feedback from students and other mentors to head off any problems
  - Address issues promptly; don't hesitate to admit when a mentor “isn't working out”

- Retain mentors by
  - thanking them often
  - Thank the company or organization they are from; let management know about the wonderful job their employee is doing with your team
  - Invite mentor's company/organization to visit to see the program in person; invite mentors' family to visit also
  - Mention mentors in any public relations/media stories you do

- Recognize signs of burnout and try to offload work
- Plan some “fun” activities with team to relieve stress
- Plan some activities just for mentors

- To recap:
  - Define goals, clearly communicate them, define expectations
  - Utilize recruiting resources
  - Make sure potential mentors fit your team
  - Monitor mentor/student partnerships
  - Build in stress relievers
  - Reward mentors and say “Thanks!”