

Core Values Judging Primer

Core Values may initially seem more difficult to judge than Robot Design or Project. There is a tendency by some to consider Core Values judging to be inherently more subjective than the other two areas because “data” for criteria such as Discovery, Inclusion and Coopertition are perceived to be difficult to obtain or use to differentiate teams. While Core Values elements may be less tangible, a number of tools and techniques exist to help judges gain insight about teams, and reinforce for all why Core Values and Core Values judging is such an important component of FLL.

As a judge, here are some overall things to consider:

- There is tendency for teams that “practice” Core Values “speeches” to be looked upon unfavorably by some judges. The premise is that these teams are just acting to score well with the judges. However, teams **should** practice talking about Core Values just like they practice their Project presentations and Robot mission runs. The more they practice Teamwork activities and talk about Core Values, the more they internalize these abstract ideas.
- Remember that you are evaluating how a team approaches Core Values throughout the season in addition to what they do at the tournament. The journey of the team and how much they learn and grow are important.
- Teams (including coaches, mentors, parents and others associated with the team) must uphold and display FLL Core Values at all times, not just during Core Values judging sessions.
- Information about Core Values criteria can be obtained in several ways. Many Core Values judging sessions will include a Teamwork Activity and/or Core Values Poster to help judges observe and learn about specific behaviors, as well as focus and guide the discussion and interview time more effectively.

Rubric Criteria	Primary Method of Observation	Core Values Represented
Discovery	Core Values Poster	What we discover is more important than what we win.
Team Spirit	Observation	We share our experiences with others.
Integration	Core Values Poster	We have fun!
Effectiveness	Teamwork Activity	We are a team.
Efficiency	Teamwork Activity	We do the work to find solutions with guidance from our coaches and mentors.
Kids Do the Work	Teamwork Activity	We honor the spirit of friendly competition.
Inclusion	Core Values Poster	We display Gracious Professionalism™ in everything we do.
Respect	Observation	
Coopertition	Core Values Poster	

- For instances where the whole judging session is a presentation/interview/Q&A, all the information must be gathered through conversations with the team.
- When Core Values judging includes a Teamwork Activity, a great deal of information can be learned from direct observation of the team working through the activity. It is important to remember that the purpose of the activity is to observe the team working on the problem, and not to focus on the result of their work.
- When a Core Values Poster is required, it should be used as a tool to jumpstart a conversation between the team and the judges. It is designed to help teams focus their thoughts and examples in advance of the judging session so that they may be conveyed more easily and effectively to the judges.
- In addition to the judging sessions, many Core Values judges like to observe the teams in their natural environment, the pits and competition area to gather additional data about all aspects of Core Values.

Now let's take a closer look at the rubric criteria and provide some guidance about what to look for and consider:

Inspiration

These three criteria measure how effective a team is at getting teams and others excited about science and technology while gaining awareness and understanding about the world and themselves.

Discovery – Teams must be able to describe how they balance all three aspects of FLL, especially if they really wanted to focus on only one sometimes. They should provide examples from the season about things their team discovered that were more about gaining knowledge than about gaining an advantage in the competition or winning an award.

Team Spirit – The important thing to look for here are teams that are enthusiastic and spirited about their team and FLL. It's not about yelling the loudest, but rather about establishing a cohesive team identity, having a good time with your team and showing a great FLL spirit to people outside the team.

Integration – Look for concrete examples of how a team applies Core Values and other things learned through FLL, to situations outside of FLL. Listen for stories about how teams integrate new knowledge, skills and abilities into everyday life.

Teamwork

All teams operate differently, and teams can be successful with different styles. Some teams have a strong leader, some have a democratic approach, some have specialized roles, some share responsibilities for all aspects. Sometimes teams that predominately use one approach will even adapt their style depending on the problem. When evaluating teamwork, it is important to know that one "type" of team is not better than another. What matters is whether the team is aware of the approach they use (and its risks), and how successful they are at getting things done.

Effectiveness – No matter the approach used, a team should have a clear process to make decisions and resolve problems appropriately. Additionally, goal setting and realizing progress towards goals helps teams take ownership of their experience in FLL.

Efficiency – Judges need to assess whether teams used their time, energy and other resources wisely. Accomplished teams know how to manage roles and their time to ensure most goals are achieved --and they know how to self-correct if they veer off course. .

Kids Do the Work – This is hopefully fairly self-explanatory. It is all about how much direct involvement there is by the coach. It is allowable (actually encouraged!) for coaches to be involved. We just don't want them programming robots, performing research, dictating ideas and making decisions that the team should be making about what they are doing.

Gracious Professionalism™

Inclusion – Look for how well a team incorporates ideas from everyone and makes each team member feel like a valued part of the team. Determine how well the team understands that working together allows them to accomplish more than they could by working alone. An Accomplished team will exhibit balanced involvement, with most team members actively contributing ideas.

Respect – Judges must look beyond teams that show good manners and are a "nice group of kids". We expect decent behavior to be the norm. Accomplished teams act and speak with integrity; they understand that what they say and do has the power to impact others and situations.

Coopertition™ – Look for ways that a team honors the spirit of friendly competition, including any assistance provided or received from other teams. Determine how team members help each other and other teams, prepare for and approach potentially stressful competition experiences throughout the season.