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| Slide 1 |  | Welcome to the third part of FLL Judge training: Interacting with FLL Teams |
| Slide 2 |  | This part of the training will review the best practices for interacting with FLL teams during judging sessions. |
| Slide 3 |  | So what do youth gain from participating in judging?  *FIRST* LEGO League judging is founded in positive youth development, which includes the 5 C’s: competence and skills in the content, confidence in their knowledge and sharing their experiences, connections with their peers and with adult judges, demonstration of character, and caring about their communities. |
| Slide 4 |  | In addition to general positive youth development, youth participating in *FIRST* LEGO League judging also get to practice their presentation skills and interacting with adults, which will prepare them for success in high school, college, and their future careers. Youth benefit from the celebration of their work at a tournament as a culminating experience at the end of the FLL season. FLL judging also reinforces that success in science and engineering is not only about performance or earning a particular score. The thought processes, development, and reasoning that go into producing a product are also important. |
| Slide 5 |  | *FIRST* LEGO League judging can be scary for some children. They may perceive the process to be like a test at school. They may have a lot of pressure to do well from Parents, Coaches, teammates and themselves.    As Judges, one of your roles will be to create an environment where the children have fun and feel comfortable.  You can start the judging session on a positive note by smiling, welcoming the team to the judging session, and introducing yourself. Always be polite and respectful. Remember, judging can be a stressful and nervous experience. To help teams feel comfortable, be ready to get up from the table to welcome teams or to move closer to observe their work. Most importantly, even if a team has struggled, try to make sure they leave the judging session feeling positive about their performance and that you value all they have accomplished. |
| Slide 6 |  | Whether you’re judging Core Values, Project, or Robot Design, you’ll want to ask questions to learn more about the team’s work. Thoughtful questions will allow students to demonstrate their individual contributions to the team and mastery of their area of expertise. Whenever possible, try to engage all members of the team with questions. For distracted, disinterested, or shy youth, try asking that child a broader question such as “What was your role on the team” or “how does this work?” Teams will appreciate your demonstrated interest in what they are saying. If appropriate within the culture, making and maintaining eye contact is a great way to engage them. |
| Slide 7 |  | The way you ask questions makes a big difference in the answers you receive.  When you’re thinking of questions, keep them simple and include only one thought at a time. Word your questions to lead students to provide the information you’re looking to get. Try to ask open ended questions that require teams to give more than a yes or no answer. The trainings for each judging area include additional tips for asking questions, and refer to your Judging Prep Pack for a list of samples. |
| Slide 8 |  | When you’re asking questions, avoid technical jargon and instead allow the youth to demonstrate their knowledge in your judging area. Children may not understand your question, may misinterpret what you are asking or take a question too literally. If you don’t understand their answer, or if the answer doesn’t seem connected to the question, ask the child to explain. Be ready to reword the question or ask follow up questions. “Please explain what you meant by… “ or “tell us more about…” are great ways to ask for additional information. |
| Slide 9 |  | As role models, teams will look up to you. They are thrilled to share the work they have completed. Let them go into detail whenever possible and be patient when they don’t get right to the point.  During judging presentations or while answering questions, some team members will be overly enthusiastic, have a tendency to talk over their teammates, and may not notice non-verbal cues from team members or judges. To make sure you get to hear from all youth on a team, thank the child for his contribution and kindly, yet firmly, let him know you’d like to hear from another member of the team.  From time to time you may encounter an overinvolved coach. When necessary, please remind coaches that the children need to answer questions. A child may know the answer but is nervous so will look to the coach for the answer. Give the child a minute and try to put them at ease before asking the question again. |
| Slide 10 |  | Each child is unique and special with different strengths, challenges, social skills, and learning abilities. |
| Slide 11 |  | Some differences may be misinterpreted so be mindful that your initial perception may be off. For example, a child who is quiet or has limited social skills may have extensive knowledge to share. Sometimes, you may notice cultural differences. Keep in mind that some cultures expect eye contact, while others find eye contact to be disrespectful. Always remember to remain positive and patient. |
| Slide 12 |  | A few particular differences that you may encounter include children with limited social skills, who have difficulty expressing thoughts verbally, who shout out blunt or inappropriate comments or may distance themselves physically from the team. Some of these challenges may be neurological in nature. Differences between a child who **can’t** do something as compared to **won’t** do something can present in a manner to which you may not be accustomed.  A child may have an intense interest in a specific topic or area. For example, she may not be able to see the big robot picture but may have an extensive knowledge about programming or how the gears work. |
| Slide 13 |  | As a judge, you’ll need to adjust your expectations! Many children with high abilities may take longer to process and answer questions; many may get left behind compared to a child who reacts more quickly.  When evaluating teams who seem “too rehearsed,” think about how an adult might prepare for a big presentation at work. Some team members may memorize facts and examples. Since teams work for weeks or months to get ready for FLL tournaments, the teams often practice until it’s perfect. Seeming very rehearsed is not necessarily an indication of an over-involved adult. If you’re not sure of the team’s true level of understanding, ask follow up questions for explanation of their thought processes or go into more detail. |
| Slide 14 |  | As an FLL Judge, you should be aware that youth on the autism spectrum frequently participate in *FIRST* LEGO League.  Autism spectrum disorders relate to communication, social interaction, and restrictive or repetitive behaviors and interests.  People with autism may have:  •Difficulty understanding language, gestures or social cues  •Difficulty participating in back-and-forth conversations or interactions  •Intense interest in unusual topics or objects and intense concentration on favorite activities  •Good rote learning and long-term memory skills and desire to adhere to the rules  •Ability to understand and retain concrete concepts and patterns, often with a strong interest or ability in math and technology  •Difficulty managing transitions, changes in routine, stress and frustration  • on the more severe end of the spectrum, people with autism may have Limited to no speech or limited to no eye contact |
| Slide 15 |  | As a judge, be prepared to include kids with many types of special needs, including those who are on the autism spectrum. You may find you need to use direct concrete phrases and break down questions or instructions into fewer steps. Give the child extra time to respond and be aware that youth who have autism sometimes have outbursts or unexplained behavior, which could be directed at judges or even teammates.  Coaches are encouraged to share any team members’ special needs with Tournament Directors. You may get instructions in advance from the Judge Advisor on how to accommodate them. |
| Slide 16 |  | That’s a lot to remember! Take a few minutes to make a list of the top 5 things you want to keep in mind while interacting with FLL teams. Bring the list with you to the tournament for a reminder. |
| Slide 17 |  | Now is a great time to share, too. Tell a friend or family member about what kids get out of the FLL judging process. What are you looking forward to hearing or seeing from teams during FLL judging sessions? |
| Slide 18 |  | Thank you for completing the third part of the FLL Judge Training! Now that you’re ready to interact with FLL teams, the next part of the training will dive into the FLL Awards. |
| Slide 19 |  |  |