



LONG-TERM PROBLEM

COACHES' TRAINING

REGION 14 – CATOCTIN & REGION 16 - DULLES

OCTOBER 14, 2017



LONG-TERM PROBLEM

- What is it?
- Selecting your problem
- Understanding your problem
- Coaching a GREAT solution
- Countdown to the tournament

WHAT IS A LONG-TERM PROBLEM?

- An 8-minute performance,
- Prepared exclusively by one team,
- In response to a detailed problem description that defines:
 - The problem,
 - Constraints on the solution, and
 - The way the solution will be evaluated.

UNDERSTANDING A LONG-TERM PROBLEM

- Use the Problem Description and Program Guide to understand the problem.
 - These two documents are a must
- Suggestion: Don't try to digest it all in one sitting.

PROBLEM REQUIREMENTS: A GUIDED TOUR

- The problem
 - Spirit of the Problem: the big picture
- Limitations
 - Specific rules that constrain the solution
 - May vs Must
 - Italicized Words: refer to problem glossary or Program Guide glossary
- Site, Setup, and Competition
 - Time limit
 - Time starts in Staging area
 - Hard stop or overtime penalty

PROBLEM REQUIREMENTS: A GUIDED TOUR

- Scoring
 - Objective (“or”) items
 - Subjective (“to”) items
 - Items that can be scored after the performance

PROBLEM REQUIREMENTS: A GUIDED TOUR

- Penalties
 - Spirit of the Problem
 - Unsportsmanlike conduct
 - Membership sign
 - Outside Assistance
 - Cost limit
 - Included and excluded items
 - Over time (if applicable)
 - Other – as specified

PROBLEM REQUIREMENTS: A GUIDED TOUR

- Style
- Tournament Director will provide...
- The Team must provide...
 - Required forms
 - Please bring these in the required quantities
 - Team List
 - Without this, the judges can miss key elements of the team's solution – that cost points
 - Problem glossary

RULES, RULES, RULES

- General Rules – a few highlights
 - No weapons or realistic replicas
 - Safety, batteries and footwear
 - Getting messy? *Be prepared to clean up*
 - Damage issues – especially floor damage

MAKING IT PERFECTLY CLEAR

- Check online for Clarifications
 - These can substantially change the problem!
 - Check regularly
- Request a clarification
 - Can be private or public

DISTINGUISHING GOOD FROM GREAT

- What distinguishes good from great?
 - Creativity!
 - The more off-beat, risky, non-obvious a solution the team can offer, the more it is in the spirit of Odyssey of the Mind.
 - Break the Meme!
 - Tip: Have the team ask parents or others how they have solved hard problems.

COACHING A GREAT SOLUTION

- Whether the team is developing the overall solution, or a specific part, asking simple questions inspires creativity
- Ask – Don't tell!

GENERATING OPTIONS

COULD

- What could you do?
 - Give me three more possibilities
 - What's the craziest thing you could do?
 - Tell me more about that
 - If you could do anything, what would you do?

- Tip: Make a Spontaneous problem out of it if the team is getting stuck!

NARROWING THE OPTIONS

WANT

- Which one do you want to do?
 - What do you like about each possibility?
 - How well does each answer the problem?
 - Do any of them cause problems with the limitations?
 - Which one do you want to do?

GETTING AGREEMENT

WILL

- How will you do it?
 - Be specific.
 - Who will do it?
 - By when?

- Remember: You're just asking questions, the team is providing all the answers and making the decisions!

MOVING FORWARD

- Keep re-reading the problem
 - Also the rules in the Program Guide
- Design/Build/Test/Improve – Fail!
- Practicing the Solution – Build your own practice site

COUNTDOWN TO THE TOURNAMENT

- Register for the Tournament
- Fill out all the forms and bring to the tournament
 - Check the number of required copies!
 - Make a duplicate copy
- Be prepared to transport sets, props and costumes, possibly in bad weather

TOURNAMENT PREP

- Don't forget about the team sign.
 - In some problems this is part of Style requirements, but this is a must for all teams.
- Don't forget about the paperwork:
 - Style
 - Material Values
 - Outside Assistance
 - Required List (if applicable)
 - Problem Clarifications (if applicable)
- Plan B.

