

Mentor Guidelines

Florida Region

Florida FTC - We're in a League of our own!

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Revision History

FLORIDA *FIRST* TECH CHALLENGE

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Version	Date	Description
1.0	November 11, 2012	Initial Release.
1.1	August 31, 2013	Updated for consistency with the 2013 FTC Mentor Guide.

Mentor Guidelines

The following is excerpted from the 2013 FTC® Mentor Guide.

Advice for Mentors

Mentoring an FTC team can be one of the most rewarding experiences in a person's life. Like any great reward, it involves a commitment of time and energy. However, it should not be taken too seriously! It should be enjoyed.

The goal of FTC is to help students have fun with robots while they become comfortable with technology. Whether or not the team is successful at a competition, team members win just by participating.

It is important for every adult to remember that there are responsibilities that come with the adult/student relationship. Young people look up to people they trust and respect, and will look to Mentors as role models. A Mentors' actions will be closely watched and their behavior will be perceived as appropriate.

Prior to meeting with students, have a meeting with all Mentors, to set expectations. This can give adults an opportunity to ask questions they may not want to ask in front of the students, openly discuss topics such as diversity, and discuss ideas and potential problems or concerns about working with young people. If a school district has an individual who works with school or business partnerships, they should be invited to this meeting to help answer questions.

Notes:

- If it is a team's rookie year, make sure that the focus is placed on enjoying the first year of participation as a survey of the program. The objective should be to fully experience FTC. Once a team has a positive experience, based on realistic goals, team members will be brimming with ideas for the next year.
- Some school districts have policies regarding adult and student interaction. The adult team leadership should understand these policies, as well as how to enforce them, and make sure that these policies are communicated to every adult working with the team.

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Takeaways

- The goal of FTC is to help students have fun with robots while they become comfortable with technology. Whether or not the team is successful at a competition, team members win just by participating.

Tips and Tricks

- The complete Mentor Guide is available on the FTC Mentor Resources page on the www.usfirst.org/ftc website.

Mentor Guidelines (Continued)

Twelve Basic Guidelines for Mentors

1. Be a mixture of best friend, honest guide and coolest teacher.
2. Avoid the temptation to do the work or to deprive team members of the chance to discover the right the answer on their own. Mentors should guide a team without directing it. This creates the best learning and growth experiences for team members.
3. A Mentor's behavior and attitude can and will influence how a team chooses to respond to the environment around them throughout the season and at events. Demonstrate and encourage Gracious Professionalism™ at all times.
4. Foster discussions between all team members and groups. Discussions are critical for effective brainstorming and strategy development.
5. Patience is a necessity. Practice it, especially with the most trying of students.
6. Never use sarcasm while teaching or helping someone. A good Mentor never resorts to sarcasm and anger to hasten the process of learning.
7. Mentoring is a two-way street. It is as much a job for a teacher as it is for a learner. Practice both with equal humility.
8. Never let students indulge in fruitless activities during learning hours. Find something to teach in all activities and try to make every activity an educational experience.
9. Infuse enthusiasm in every activity and part of the challenge. To spur creativity, mix humor and a passion for learning and discovery.
10. Get involved in technical and non-technical experiences. Be supportive to students in both regards.
11. Be the team's best cheerleader, enthusiast, leader, and friend. Happy teams win many accolades and learn the most.
12. Forging relationships and gaining friends are far more valuable experiences than participating on an unhappy team and gaining meaningless trophies.