



# TEAM DUCT TAPE

WE STICK TOGETHER!      FTC TEAM 2845



## TDT Keys to Competition Readiness

As competitions heat up all over the country, it's a good time to review some key aspects of competition readiness – and it involves a lot more than what goes on down on the field!

### **FIRST things first**

This one's pretty basic but there are still a surprising number of students who don't what program they're in. FIRST stands for: For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology .

### **Remember your FIRST Values!**

This is really is the whole point of all of this. Judges may ask, in some way, how you think these relate to real world experiences, or how you feel your team exemplifies the Core Values.

- We are a Team.
- We do the work to get the job done with guidance from our coaches and mentors.
- We honor the spirit of friendly competition.
- What we learn is more important than what we win.
- We share our experiences with others.
- We display gracious professionalism in everything we do.
- We have fun!

### **Be Competition Ready!**

It's good to have a good looking, high performing robot. But that's only half the competition, and the most variable half. Lots of things can go wrong on the field, from technical, mechanical and electrical failures to poor strategy to failed alliances. The only thing you have complete control of in a competition (or anywhere) is – YOU! To make sure you're in the best possible shape for the competition:

**1) Look sharp!** Dress as a team. Wear closed toed shoes – and tie them! And don't have any dangling strings or straps that can get caught on things.

**2) Be Gracious Professionals!** Mind your manners, in the pit, on the competition field and everywhere in between. Hold doors for people, help other teams whenever you can, and be good to each other – you're at the competition because of ALL of you, because of the gifts, skills and talents each of you brings to your team. Recognize, respect and celebrate that. You succeed or fail together, but your chances of being successful are far, far higher work as a solid team. Communicate with each other – fully, clearly and consistently. Think and act, instead of reacting without thought.

**3) BE at the competition!** To get the most out of this great opportunity, you have to BE there in body, mind and spirit. Avoid recreational or superfluous cell phone use. Support your team actively and enthusiastically from the stands, and support your alliance team from the field.

**4) Use your pre- and post-match competition lists – Every time!** *(You do have those ,don't you?)*

**5) Stay till the end.** Win or lose, stay for the full competition and cheer on remaining teams, just like you enjoy being cheered on when you're competing. Staying for a full competition, regardless of your own success in it, does several things:

- It establishes you as GP competitors
- It might provide you with an additional opportunity to the next level (sometimes there are extra lottery picks)
- You'll learn a lot and get some new ideas for your own robot watching the finalist matches

### **Be Judge Ready**

- Show the judges you're happy to be there, shake hands, and welcome them to your pit area.
- Arrange yourselves so that your main speakers are scattered throughout your group, rather than grouped on one side.
- Be ready to showcase everything and anything – have your display board area clear for viewing, your community service notebook handy, design sketches at ready
- Be prepared to talk about at least one thing you've worked on or enjoyed with the team.

It can't be emphasized enough that the field matches are only one part of the game. How complete your Engineering notebook is, how well you showcase your achievements and your teamwork during visits from judges, and your conduct and teamwork throughout the day are all major and equal components of the award recognition process.

### **Aim High!**

Here's the criteria for the Inspire Award:

- Team must demonstrate respect and Gracious Professionalism both for team members and fellow teams
- Engineering Notebook must be submitted, and must impress the judges
- Team must work beyond their Robot to help spread awareness of the team within the community
- Team displays good communication and teamwork skills within the team as well as with their alliances
- Team communicates clearly about their Robot design to the judges
- Team presents themselves well in the judges interview
- Robot effectively competes in the game challenge and impresses the judges
- Team and Robot consistently performs well during matches
- Team is a strong contender for all other judged awards

Aim for nothing less!