

TIPS FOR FUTURE CARGOMASTERS

General tips:

1. Lists are your friend. Checklists are maybe even better. Remember to back up your lists and/or checklists on google drive or something like that. Remember that you won't have internet at the venue though, so it's best to also have hard copies of the lists and checklists.

2. Organize. Organize as much as you can beforehand, during, and probably after. You will be dependent on other people who also have to organize. If they don't organize themselves to your liking, force them to. If they don't like it, too bad, because if stuff gets left behind it's your fault; it doesn't matter that they didn't organize it in the first place. Make sure they organize.

3. Keep track of the places things are. This is directly related to the above point, but it's an important concept. If you don't know where something is, know exactly who does know. (Ex: pit chief)

4. Interact a lot with your pit chief. If you are the pit chief as well as the cargo master, know when you're the pit chief and when you're the cargo master. You can be both at the same time sometimes. You cannot be both all the time; because a) it's generally not needed to have both all the time, and b) you will short-circuit your brain after a little while.

5. Judge your peers (I'm aware you've been told at school for the last however many years to "not judge". In this case, you're going to have to, this is pretty close to the real world and some people are just more responsible than others). Assign important cargo to those you think will take best care of it and have the best chance of getting through security without any hiccups. For example, don't assign a bunch of batteries that look like sticks of dynamite to someone with a foreign passport.

6. Prepare as much as you can for the busy times beforehand, but also know that "the best laid plans oft go awry", so you know, realize that you're also going to have to think on your feet. Feet-thinking is best achieved if you have data (lists!!) to go off of and you're good at communicating to your helpers. Communicate to your helpers. They are there to help you.

7. You are the organizer, not the worker (you can work a bit). You need to have the bigger picture and issue direct commands to people so they understand what's happening. This is impossible if you're also attempting to carry 4 different objects at the same time and use your brainpower to balance them so they don't fall on your feet. Direct others (when you have the help).

FIRST specific

I made lists of everything that was in each carrying object and then had a list in my head of the carrying objects. Make lots of lists. You'll be able to leave everything in the pit at the end of the day, so you're really going to be busy on the lead-up to the competition, at the very beginning, and then again at the end. I think that it's also best if the cargo master can be in charge of making sure everyone has what they need (ex. water bottles). Refer especially to point no.6, you're going to be extremely busy and then not busy and then extremely busy again. Try to print your hard copies of lists at home, the hotel printers are sometimes hard to access. WRITE on your lists, write notes, lots of them.

VEX specific

With the vex stuff, you really have two jobs. The first is to be the interaction between the individual teams; the second is to take the general tools and objects. Decide what the individual teams are responsible for and then TELL THEM what they are responsible for. I suggest you call a meeting with a representative from each team and discuss what the individual teams should be responsible for, but remember, in the end, you have veto power. In taking the general tools and objects, you are responsible for them from when you take them out of the robotics room until you transfer control to pit chief. Discuss beforehand with the pit chief when the control transfer occurs, and how you want to go about that.

Specifics

- packing motors and batteries (so they don't break)

- distribution of weight in suitcases (make sure everyone knows that for the worlds they're expected to take a carry on AND a checked bag)