Requirements are important to the project team. They clearly define what the project needs to do and also what each part of the project needs to do. The project compares and verifies compliance progress made during implementation to the original intent. So, requirements define the project and serve as a “checklist” to ensure success.

Requirements statements are active, direct, and positive, *“Shall”* statements are very important.

i.e. The xyz element *shall* provide nnn minutes of coverage per day. (Italics added for emphasis).

“Should” or “May” statements are weak and are difficult to verify and demonstrate compliance and progress.

i.e. The xyz element *should* provide nnn minutes of coverage per day. (Italics added for emphasis).

This is an open-ended statement and is not good practice.

Having a strong set of requirements will put your project on firm footing and the judges will appreciate this inclusion. At the initial submittal, the requirements shall be “top level”, defining the basic project function and the operation of the major systems. As the project develops, the requirements shall be developed at lower levels and finer levels of detail. Nothing really gets built or coded until the requirements are fully developed, reviewed, and approved.