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Team Organization



3 Team Organization

3.1 Getting Started: Guides, Handbooks, and Other Helpful Resources

Read and print the following documents at:

<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=5504>

- "Starting an FRC Team"
- "FRC Handbook"
- "*FIRST* Mentoring Guide"
- Community sponsored resources

Each of these documents provides information and suggestions for organizing your team. For help with other practical aspects of the competition, refer to the “Resources” fly-out on the left hand side of the FRC Home page at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc>. Here you will find sponsorship links, tutorials, technical links for programming and pneumatics, ideas for team sustainability, mentoring resources and other assets.

Tip! Safety is an integral part of the *FIRST* programs. Be sure to read the safety page at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=470> where you will find the link for the “*FIRST* Robotics Competition Team Safety Manual.”

Start your season off by assigning a Safety Captain, creating safe work places, and establishing a safe work ethic.

3.2 Suggested Leadership Roles

Developing a team leadership structure that assigns clear roles and responsibilities is the first step to organizing your team. Once complete, it will be much easier to prepare for the season, unify and manage the team, keep current with important information and meet season deadlines. Your team is encouraged to align its leadership structure with the contact requirements of the TIMS as outlined on the tables below, but team structure is the team’s prerogative and the following are only suggestions.

Examine the roles, and compare recommended qualities and abilities with your mentors from a *FIRST* perspective. Please remember it is essential that team members and mentors share the workload!

3.2.1 Main Contact Responsibilities

The Main Contact is the primary contact who provides team information to *FIRST* and undertakes key actions on behalf of the team via the TIMS. It is recommended this role is filled by the lead mentor of the team. This person may choose to delegate some of the responsibilities listed below, but should still be up to date with their progress and ensure their completion. **This position must be held by one over the age of 18.**

- **Award Submissions:** Assign student submitters in TIMS. Ensure submissions of Woodie Flowers, Website, Chairman’s, and other Awards by the respective deadlines. Find details in the “Awards” section of the FRC Manual. Review <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=440>

- **Bill's Blog:** Monitor FRC Director, Bill Miller's blog for additional news and updates.
<http://frcdirector.blogspot.com/>
- **Calendar of Important Deadline Dates:** Monitor the *FIRST* website calendar for changes, additions at:
<http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=454>
- **Communications:** Receive *FIRST* communications, read Team Updates, Bill's Blog, etc. (see below). Ensures team is educated on important information. Contacts *FIRST* Team Support with any questions.
- **Consent and Release Forms:** Ensure all team Consent and Release Forms are submitted. Please refer to Chapter 4- At the Events Section 4.8.1 of the Team Manual for more information regarding the Consent and Release form. Review <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=8128>
- **Contact Information:** Keep all contact information up to date in the TIMS Team Profile Section. Provides his/her accurate email address, mailing address, and phone number to allow timely communication with *FIRST*, especially for use during vacations or team travel.
- **Email Blasts:** Receive, read and share with team e-mail blasts. Email blast and News Archive Page located at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/emailblastarchive.aspx>
- **Event Information:** Register team for Events in TIMS.
- **Judges' Information:** Enter the submission into the TIMS by the deadline.
- **Kit and Kickoff Information:** Submit selections in TIMS by deadline.
- **Robot Transportation:** Invite Shipping Contact to team, or assume role. Ensure the Shipping Contact is actively learning the rules and making plans to transport your team's robot. Also ensure that they are meeting all deadlines.
- **Safety:** Work with team's Safety Captain to ensure team member safety. Review *FIRST* Safety Policies/Procedures.
- **Scholarship Opportunities:** Invite team Scholarship Contact in TIMS.
- **Team Profile:** Maintain and update Team Profile Information in TIMS to reflect correct team contacts, partner organization, team demographic information
- **Team Updates:** Reads Team Updates posted at:
<http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=450>
- **TIMS (Team Info System):** Maintain and update ALL team's TIMS record at
<https://my.usfirst.org/frc/tims/site.lasso>
- **Track Twitter Feed:** Monitor the FRC Twitter Feed for announcements about updates, news and important information. <http://twitter.com/FRCTeams>

3.2.2 Alternate Contact Responsibilities

This person is the Main Contact's "right hand" and shares in providing and maintaining accurate information in TIMS, as well as providing leadership to the team. The Alternate Contact should read and share in the responsibilities of the

Main Contact as outlined above. Generally the Alternate Contact assumes the Main Contact role should the Main Contact not be able to fulfill his/her duties. **This position must be held by one over the age of 18.** Key duties include:

- **Calendar of Important Deadline Dates:** Monitor the Calendar of Important Deadline dates for changes, additions at: <http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=454>
- **Communications:** Receive and send relevant *FIRST* communications
- **Chairman's Award (CA):** Collect information about, and document, the successes and accomplishments of the team. Organize the CA submission for the team and help prepare the CA presentation to be given to the judges at the event. Please refer to Team Manual, [Chapter 6– The Awards](#) for more information about the Chairman's Award.
- **Contact Information:** Provide current contact information for the TIMS, including an alternate phone number and address in case *FIRST* has to make contact during vacation or while the team is traveling.
- **Public Relations:** Confer with Main Contact. Notify Public Relations (PR) Contact of any upcoming team fundraising or events.
- **Robot Transportation:** Be familiar with the robot transportation responsibilities and deadlines in case the Shipping Contact needs help. Can also assume role of Shipping Contact.
- **Safety:** Work with team's Safety Captain to ensure safety while working and traveling.
- **Support:** Provide any support the Main Contact or team may need.
- **School Vacation Coverage:** Assist Main Contact with receiving communications and handling team issues during vacation periods.
- **TIMS (Team Info System):** Assist Main Contact with maintaining and updating team's TIMS record at <https://my.usfirst.org/frc/tims/site.lasso>

3.2.3 Shipping Contact Responsibilities

This is a critical position on the team as this contact is responsible for handling robot transportation and receiving any items shipped from *FIRST* to the team (e.g., a replacement part).

- **Communications:** Receive and read *FIRST* email blasts, read Bill's Blog and the Team Updates. Communicate with *FIRST* on any robot transportation related questions.
- **Contact Information:** Provide the Main or Alternate Contact with current contact information for the TIMS, including a valid phone number to enable *FIRST* contact during vacation times or when the team is traveling.
- **FedEx Donation:**

Receive and safeguard any shipping paperwork the team is given because of travel to Championship or

because you have been granted a Bag and Tag Exemption. The FedEx donation can save your team hundreds of dollars on shipping your robot. Carefully guard the shipping documents. Use the shipping paperwork as specified in manual *Chapter 5 Robot Transportation*.

NEITHER *FIRST* NOR FEDEX WILL REPLACE LOST SHIPPING DOCUMENTS!!!

- **Kit of Parts:** If your team opted to pay for your Kit of Parts shipment (i.e. elected the “Team Pays” choice in the TIMS), confer with Main/Alternate Contact to ensure that the shipping address in the TIMS is correct.

If your team wants to pick up the kit, make sure the Main Contact meets the deadline for this TIMS entry.

Designate an adult mentor to pick up the kit at a Kickoff.

If your team wants to designate another team to pick up the kit, make sure the appropriate Surrogate Kit Pickup paperwork is delivered to *FIRST* by the deadline as indicated on Calendar of Important Deadline Dates at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=454>

- **Robot Transportation:** Read *Chapter 5 - Robot Transportation* in the FRC Team Competition Manual as well as review supplemental instructions as directed in that chapter.

Be familiar with the following:

- Bag and Tag requirements and procedures.
- Deadlines and requirements for shipping your robot crate, if you are travelling to Championship or have been granted an Exemption.
- Customs requirements if you travel over a border.
- Other requirements that pertain to your particular team situation.

- **TIMS Team's FedEx, UPS, or USPS Account Number:** Provide the Main or Alternate Contact with a shipping account number for the TIMS. This could directly impact the missing, defective, or broken parts replacement system for your team.

Sponsor/school may let team use its shipping account, or obtain a number from the companies' websites.

3.3 Recommended Additional Contacts

3.3.1 Corporate / University Contact Responsibilities

This contact provides information about the team to the University or Corporation sponsoring the team. Keeping the sponsor/partner informed of team progress and achievements throughout the season is a great way to ensure their support.

- **Communications:** Receive related team e-mails. Provide information if necessary.
- **Contact Information:** Provide up to date contact information for the Main Contact for the TIMS. Provide an alternate phone number and address in case *FIRST* needs to make contact during vacation or while the team is traveling.
- **Public Relations:** Notify university/sponsor contacts of any upcoming team fundraising or events. Confer with Main Contact. Let supporters know about trials and successes regarding the robot design and build. Get them excited right through the process and continue providing information throughout the year. Invite them to an event.
- **Scholarships:** Know the website area concerning scholarships and inform students about the opportunities and deadlines. Encourage and assist students interested in applying for them.

3.3.2 Public Relations Contact Responsibilities

This person's role in advertising the team's goals and accomplishments is critical. Work with the team contacts to ensure the partners are apprised of the team's progress and accomplishments.

- **Communications:** Receive relevant *FIRST* communications and reply when necessary.
- **Contact Info:** Provide up to date contact information to the Main Contact for the TIMS.
- **Fundraising:** The team would be wise to advise this person of any fundraising activity or team appearances at least two weeks before the date so that advance notification of the event can be prepared and sent to media contacts.
- **Public Relations Updates:** Responsible for receiving and disseminating any PR updates issued by *FIRST*, and using them to the team's advantage in local newspapers, as well as TV/radio stations.
- **Sponsors:** Send any PR information to current sponsors all during the year, and prepare "marketing" materials to attract potential new sponsors.

3.3.3 Scholarship Contact Responsibilities

This team contact is responsible for disseminating information about *FIRST* Scholarships to the student FRC team members and their parents. It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** a Scholarship Contact is assigned to team and entered in TIMS!

- **Communications:** Receives key Scholarship Information from *FIRST* and shares with team students and parents. Communicates with *FIRST* on any Scholarship related questions.
- **Contact Information:** Provide up to date contact information for the TIMS. Provide an alternate phone number and address in case *FIRST* needs to make contact during vacation or while the team is traveling.

3.3.4 School Contact Responsibilities

This adult representative is responsible for knowing and enforcing all school rules regarding team participation. A teacher or principal may be best qualified for this role to facilitate the team's progress and meeting deadlines.

- **Communications:** Receive school related team e-mails. Provide information/reply if necessary.

If no one is specified to work on the following projects, work with Main Contact to make sure students get them done. Refer to the web *Calendar of Important Deadlines*.

<http://usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=454>

Monitor Award due dates. Please refer to the Team Manual - *Chapter 6 - The Awards*.

- **Contact Info:** Provide up-to-date contact information for the Main Contact in TIMS
- **Public Relations:** Notify Public Relations contact of any upcoming team fundraising or events.
- **Safety:** Stress safety whenever possible.
- **Scholarships:** Inform students early about scholarship opportunities and deadlines and encourage/assist those interested in applying for them.

3.3.5 Technical Contact Responsibilities

This person will assist the team with technical issues and problems related to engineering.

- **Communications:** Receive team e-mails. Provide information/reply if necessary. Keep the rest of the team apprised on your technical successes/issues. Ask for help/ideas.
- **Contact Information:** Provide up to date contact information for the TIMS. Provide an alternate phone number and address in case *FIRST* needs to make contact during vacation or while the team is traveling.
- **Pre-Ship Inspection:** Work with the team members to perform a robot inspection before your robot ships. Use the Inspection Sheet that will be listed in the *FRC Game Manual – Section 4* after Kickoff. This inspection will show where problems are so you can correct them before transporting your robot. . It will also provide the students with information they will need to know during the on-site, pre-competition inspection since the inspectors will be asking the students questions.
- **Public Relations:** Notify Public Relations Contact when your robot nears completion or when you have an opportunity to show off your robot.

If the PR contact is not available, notify local media of any upcoming team fundraising or events. Plan these opportunities with your Main Contact.

- **Safety:** Stress safety and ensure safe working conditions, safety glasses use, etc.

3.3.6 Travel Contact Responsibilities

This person will make event(s) travel and hotel arrangements for the team members and mentors. Tackle this task early to ensure there is room on preferred flights and in preferred hotels.

- **Communications:** Receive relevant *FIRST* communications and communicate with *FIRST* and team as necessary.
- **Contact Information:** Provide up to date contact information for the TIMS. Provide an alternate phone number and address in case *FIRST* needs to make contact during vacation or while the team is traveling.
- **Hotel Reservations:** Regionals and Championship: Refer to *Chapter 2 - Communications* section of the Manual for hints and good advice on choosing team hotels.
- **Manual and Website:** Refer to the “Site Info” on the website for special travel/parking instructions. Bring the directions for the venue.
- **Stores/Suppliers:** Refer to the *Chapter 4 - At the Events* portion of the Manual to find links to various types of stores, such as printing, supplies, hardware. Find stores near your chosen event and print out the directions to them.
- **Travel Pricing:** Obtain, consider, and compare travel costs prior to registering for an event(s). The web has many opportunities to compare airfares. Ask for group rates to see if that is a good option. Is bussing an option?

3.4 Other Important Team Positions

Your team may want to consider appointing one or several Rules Monitors and Safety Captains. Students are welcome to fill these positions if the team members and mentors agree and find responsible candidates. *FIRST* does not need their contact information in the TIMS.

Please read below for some job-related roles these students or adults may want to fill.

3.4.1 Game Rules Monitor Responsibilities

- **Know Point System:** Be sure the team understands the system; implement the best strategy.
- **Know Penalties:** Be sure all mentors and operators know and understand all penalties.

- **Learn Game Rules:** Read and understand the rules of the game and communicate them to the team members so they know the ins and outs of the game.
- **Learn Web System:** Check the online Manual for rules, changes, and web-based question and answer system.

Online manual is at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/content.aspx?id=452>

Q&A is at <http://www.usfirst.org/frc/qanda>

- **Monitor Team Updates:** Communicate any changes, written in the updates, to the team.

Team Updates are at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/team-updates>

News and Email Blasts are at <http://www.usfirst.org/roboticsprograms/frc/emailblastarchive.aspx>

3.4.2 Safety Captain Responsibilities

- **At the Events:** Bring enough safety glasses for the team and all guests. Make sure persons who will unpack your robot crate will have glasses to wear as they arrive at the Pit, and make sure all persons wear safety glasses/goggles properly.

Be sure your team transports and lifts the robot safely.

Know where the EMT area is, and report any injuries to the Pit Supervisor at the time of injury or treatment.

Discourage running in the Pit or Competition Arena, and work with the green-shirted Safety Advisors to keep things safe and the Pit aisles clear.

Bring any serious safety infractions, such as metal grinding or open flames to the attention of the Pit Supervisor, as well as any blatant discourtesies.

- **Home Work Site:** Obtain enough safety glasses for the team. Ensure all persons wear them over their eyes when working on the robot or in the "work" vicinity. People who wear glasses must have regulation safety glasses with side shields or wear safety goggles over their glasses.

?Make sure the work area is safe and the floor is clear at the team's workplace and at the events.

- **Read FRC Competition Manual:** Read "Courtesies and Rules" section in *Chapter 4 -At the Events* section of the Manual. Meet with team members and decide what the team deems important in the safety area. Diplomatically enforce their findings.
- **Read FRC Team Safety Manual:** Print and read the "*FIRST* Robotics Competition Team Safety Manual." Meet with the team and go over the manual with everyone.
- **Safety Policies:** Review Safety Policies and Procedures in the "*FIRST* Robotics Competition Team Safety Manual." and inform the team of the mandates and suggestions. Encourage all team members and mentors to read the document, follow the suggestions, and become familiar with the safety awards.

Suggest that the team build a robot cart if it doesn't have one.

- **Use Courtesy:** At all times, think with a *Gracious Professionalism*® attitude.

This position is one that should make teams aware of safety issues and make team members want to improve conditions, not balk at the methods *FIRST* uses to ensure a safe environment. Use common sense and good judgment when bringing an infraction to someone's attention. Please be kind and positive because the Safety Captain is an ambassador for your team.