

# Best Practices for *FIRST* Robotics Competition Judged Awards

Awards generate interest and awareness for your team and *FIRST*. They also help engage potential sponsors and help expand *FIRST* in your community. Awards help inspire students and help your team set goals to improve.

## General Tips for talking to Judges:

- Judges interview teams during the official competition (generally this means no judges on practice day at a Regional or load in night at a District – unless announced otherwise)
- Judges will talk to the students, not to the mentors from the team.
- Speak firmly and clearly.
- This is YOUR opportunity to tell the judges YOUR STORY about your team and/or your robot.
- Relax and HAVE FUN – judges love talking to you.
- Keep handouts and supporting documents simple
  - Consider preparing a one-page summary covering your key machine attributes or team attributes.
    - Highlight key aspects of your design & build processes, novel components incorporated and/or capabilities, as well as info on your approach to control/programming. Be sure to include a picture of your robot!
    - Highlight outreach your team does (including key statistics), team's accomplishments, sustainability, and more. Be sure to incorporate branding and logos!
- All awards are earned by the team so everyone should be able to describe and answer questions.
- If your team is focusing on a specific award, describe how your team meets the guidelines.
  - Make sure all members understand awards being targeted and can answer questions
- Have students practice in front of their teams, family, and/or friends ahead of time.
- Always keep someone in your Pit that can speak to the judges -OR- have some type of sign telling judges where they can find your team (e.g. practice field, match queue, etc.). This will help to ensure the judges can easily find you for interviews.
- Remember your [Gracious Professionalism and FIRST Core Values](#)! This should be true for every team member and all those associated with the team during the season.

## FIRST Impact Award

- Gather data (photos and statistics) relevant to your key points to quantify your team's impact
- Utilize the [FIRST Impact Award Definitions](#) & [FIRST Impact Award Documentation Form \(editable word file\)](#) in your submission.
- The *FIRST* Impact Award is not simply a list of things you've done in your community. Remember to tie in all the great things you've done with WHY you're doing them.
- Focus on recent activities (past 3 years) as well as long term achievements.
- Utilize these [FIRST Impact Award Resources](#) to see examples and FAQ.

## Dean's List

- Utilize the [Dean's List Award Guide](#) to see additional tips.
- Dean's List nominees should be familiar with the essay that was submitted about them.
- Judges want to know all of the amazing stuff you have done – be sure to share anything not covered in the essays – brag about yourself.

For full descriptions of the awards, visit the [FIRST Robotics Competition Awards Page](#)

