



Parent and Non-Engineer Involvement

Parent involvement is important in the FIRST organization. There are many roles a parent can volunteer for and help to make the FIRST Team more successful and a better experience for the students.

The team, like a business, may be divided into different sub-divisions breaking the job tasks into more specific sub-team functions.

If you are a Parent or Non-Engineer that wants to get more involved in the FIRST Team, please contact a Team Leader for more information.

Some examples of areas where parents, or other non-engineer, volunteers can help the team are:

Administrative:

- Organize paperwork - make a folder for each team member with appropriate forms in it - school permission slips, medical insurance/emergency info, *FIRST* release forms; make duplicate copies and take one set when traveling.
- Help with the team budget; teach a student to be business manager of team and maintain a spreadsheet
- Organize a telephone tree and e-mail list
- Write and mail thank you notes
- Make business cards for the team (like John Doe, Team President-the students love having these)
- Help team create Mission Statement
- Organize a team Thank Your Mentor event
- Create or organize team Archive
- Take team photo and frame copies for each member and sponsor as a memento of a wonderful year!
- Act as liaison with school system
- Act as liaison with sponsors, particularly where no other Sponsor Representation is on the team.
- Take minutes of team meetings or mentor team secretary
- Donate office supplies.

Mentoring:

- Mentor a committee – Finance, PR, Community Outreach, Website, CA, Animation, Spirit, etc. You may not need to have a background in that area; just be able to keep committee focused and meeting deadlines
- Help with the engineering, design, build of the robot
- Help with the fabrication of parts (milling, lathe work, welding, etc.)
- Facilitate teambuilding exercises at each meeting until build season begins

Travel:

- Help with travel arrangements. Getting estimates for Travel, Hotels, Food, etc. Help arrange personal vehicle transportation when used.
- Chaperone
- Carpool students to kick-off, presentations, or even team meetings
- If staying overnight at competition, investigate hotels, develop rooming list, investigate meal options.

Social:

- Organize a team social event like a bowling night after the build season ends
- Plan an end-of-year team banquet

Communications:

- Publish a team newsletter, written or email. Work with journalism students if your school has them.
- Maintain Game Manual and Updates
- Write press releases
- Contact local TV media to cover the team

Food:

- Coordinate dinners and/or lunches during the build season. Have each family provide one dinner for the team, including mentors and teachers during the build cycle.
- If team ethnicity is diverse, organize dinners featuring different ethnic foods to build understanding of cultures
- Pack a cooler of bagged breakfast items for early morning bus trips
- Make breakfast for the team for early Saturday mornings during build season
- Buy wholesale size box of team's favorite candy and bring to competitions!

Sponsorship:

- Compile team "Wish List" for materials and services they would like to obtain
- Help team design a sponsorship packet.
- Solicit donations from small and large companies
- Solicit in-kind donations. Know any companies that would donate food, safety goggles, tools, paper plates, a paint job for the robot, t-shirts, computers?
- Write a grant proposal
- Organize a fundraiser

Outreach

- Coordinate community service projects. Many teams work at *FIRST* LEGO League tournaments, participate in clean-ups
- Take photos/videos for publicity and for the scrapbook
- Extend invitations to VIPs to attend your competitions.
- Organize an Open House for interested students and school administrators
- Organize an Open House for local politicians
- Organize an Open House for potential engineers and other would-be mentors
- Produce a PowerPoint presentation or video about *FIRST* and the team
- Create team presentation book to help the judges
- Create robot pit sheet that can be handed out to judges and other teams at competition
- Arrange with school to present awards to team members at their end-of-year awards ceremony
- Help recruit new team members
- Staff table at 8th grade orientation meeting and explain program to parents
- Create awards to hand out at that ceremony

Spirit/Image

- Help team create logo
- Set up the cheering section at the regional competitions
- Help with team spirit items such as signs
- Help design team buttons (giveaways)
- Help design team t-shirts-involve art dept.
- Paint faces at competitions with team logo, colors, etc.
- Obtain/sew team mascot costume
- Watch for post-Halloween sales on face paints, hair dyes, etc. in team colors

Construction

- Help with building the practice field
- Help build a cart for the robot
- Help paint/lay carpet/clean your facility
- Organize a toolbox