

2024 FFA DEMONSTRATION CONTEST: JUDGES' COMMENTS

DURING THE PLANNING STAGE:

- Assume that the audience knows nothing about the topic being presented.
- Be sure the topic chosen is not too narrow or too broad.
- Keep info relevant to the topic.

PRIOR TO THE CONTEST:

- Practice, practice, practice then practice some more.

DURING THE INTRODUCTION:

- Remember to introduce each team member and the chapter/school name of the presenting team.
- Suggest using a hook statement to grab the audience's attention.
- State the purpose of the demonstration.
- Include background knowledge of the topic that will aid the audience in following the demonstration.

BODY LANGUAGE:

- Refrain from swaying back and forth or swinging arms while on stage.

SPEAKING:

- Do not chew gum while on stage. Suggest not even having it in mouth.
- Use tonal variation of voice when speaking; avoid a monologue tone.
- Sound enthusiastic.
- Use academic language: correct grammar, i.e., "my team and I", not, "me and my team" or "better" instead of "more better".
- Use complete sentences.
- Use transition words/phrases throughout the demonstration. Also, vary the use of the transition words/phrases.
- Use a variation of sequence words as each step of the demonstration is presented.

SPEAKING: (CONT.)

- Avoid repeating the same verb/verb phrase or adjective over and over again.
- As the assumption is that the audience knows nothing about the topic, avoid the use of words like “obviously”.
- Avoid the use of “empty” words/phrases such as stuff, something, stuff like that, and everything, and what not.
- Abstain from using slang words: i.e. gonna, you guys.
- Use imperative sentences (command, directional, instructional).
 - **Example:** “Align the corners of the two boards” instead of “You align the corners of the two boards”. Avoid speaking in 2nd person voice.
- Avoid using the pronoun “it”. Say what “it” is in the sentence.
 - **Example:** It needs to be... . Instead say, The safety harness needs to be...
- Use industry terminology; avoid layman terms.

WHEN PRESENTING/DEMONSTRATING:

- Consider using the overhead mirror for better audience viewing. If using the overhead mirror, it is advisable to use one when practicing prior to contest day.
- As materials being used are presented, hold them high and slowly span from left to right for better audience viewing.
- Avoid standing with one’s back to the audience at any time during the presentation, especially when demonstrating one of the procedure steps.
- If a procedure step has intricate details, consider repeating the step a second time for the audience.
- Avoid talking amongst teammates while presenting.
- As a more efficient/clarifying method of demonstration consider showing the product in partial stages of completion; i.e. floral arrangement demonstrations.
- Make sure that all team members are given equal speaking time.

WHEN PRESENTING/DEMONSTRATING: (CONT.)

- Avoid times of silence during the demonstration. Be sure that one team member is speaking while others are assembling a procedural step.
- If using a video and it does not have dialogue, such as camera footage, be sure to add a detailed verbal description of what is being viewed.
- Summarize! A strong summary was missing in many presentations. Restate the purpose and review each step of the demonstration portion.

VISUAL AIDS:

- Be sure these are an appropriate size for easy viewing by the audience.
- Use technology as visual aids to present background knowledge of the topic to the audience and/or to emphasize the steps in the demonstration part of the presentation. We live in the technology age. Use it to your advantage. Many demonstrations lacked this component. It is helpful for your audience to hear and see particularly during the summary of the presentation.

SAFETY PROCEDURES/PPE:

- Be sure to include them when and where applicable in the demonstration steps of the presentation and explain why they are necessary.

DRESS:

- Be sure skirts worn are compliant with uniform dress code.
- Since you are working on a stage and pants are acceptable official dress, pants are recommended.
- Although being a Fair winner is honorable, refrain from wearing Fair sashes during the Demonstration Contest.