

Practice #11

Preparation

- Find the materials for the Encouraging Yarn Activity (should be in practice room)
- Become familiar with the Encouraging Yarn Activity
- If necessary, you might need to pick up a few materials for the project presentation depending on what your team decided to do.
- Find the YouTube video on “Gracious Professionalism©” to help your team to understand what it is <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2e6gxczMxc>

Beginning

5 min - Go over the plan for today’s practice with the team

Explain that the team will learn what Gracious Professionalism and Coopertition are, will throw a yarn ball, continue programming robot and practicing their individual part of the research presentation, and run through the presentation as a team.

10 min – Review Core Value #7 - We display Gracious Professionalism© and Coopertition in everything we do

According to FIRST© *“Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of FIRST. It's a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions.”*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2e6gxczMxc> – video statement from the founder of FIRST, Woodie Flowers, on what Gracious Professionalism is (little over 1 minute long)

According to FIRST© “Coopertition is displaying unqualified kindness and respect in the face of fierce competition. Coopertition is founded on the concept and a philosophy that teams can and should help and cooperate with each other even as they compete. Coopertition involves learning from teammates. It is teaching teammates”

What does this look like? It is basically instead of competing to beat all of the other teams at the tournaments, look around and see how you can lift another team up. How can you help new teams?

Team Building Activity

20 min – Encouraging Yarn

<http://www.thesource4ym.com/TeamBuilders/Detail.aspx?id=42>

Materials Needed: Ball of yarn – provided in practice room

Seat the entire group in a circle facing one another. (Adult leaders can, and should, be included in this!)

Hand one person a ball of yarn and tell him to throw/roll it to someone else. When the other person catches it, the “thrower” says something to that person that is encouraging in nature. (“You are a loyal friend.” “You give grace to others.” “You are a helpful person.” Etc.)

Afterwards, the person who was just encouraged grabs the yarn in one hand and tosses the ball of yarn to another person with the other hand. She then tells that person an encouraging point about his/her nature.

This process repeats until a “spider web” has been created between the students in the circle. (By the way, the same person can be encouraged more than once by more than one person.)

The group needs to be real and genuine with each other. They can have fun while doing this, but they need to be serious when they pass on encouragement to others.

Don’t let the “encouragements” boil down to simple compliments (“I like the way you dress.”) Force them to reach for deeper meaning behind a person, their nature, or their actions. For instance, “I appreciate the fact that you do not dress in a provocative way.” Or “I am glad you no longer wear shirts with mean or ungodly messages on them.”

When everyone has had at least one turn, you can have a discussion about this while everyone holds onto their string (maintaining the “spider web”).

Possible Questions Following the Activity:

What does this tell us about our team?

How did this make you feel?

Do you feel that the people around you spoke the truth about you?

How important are we to one another?

Did you learn something about someone else? If so, what?

Main Part of Practice

60 min – Programming Robot Missions and Research Project

(30 min) Group 1 – Program Robot Mission

(30 min) Group 2 – Research Project - work in individual roles in presentation
You don't have to do it this way, but I have found it helpful to divide the group in half for this next part of the practice. One group will pick a mission to work on and continue programming. The other group will work on their research project. Half-way through the main part of the practice, switch groups.

Break – Since your groups are now spending longer periods of time on the research project and the presentation, it might be a good idea to play an active game between switching groups for 10 or so minutes.

Wrap Up

20 min – Presentation Rehearsal

The presentation should be mostly finished at this point, and the team should be going through it multiple times to determine the finishing touches. Try to run through the presentation at least 2 times as a team.

Coach's Follow Up

The coaches will need to finalize plans on what group(s) they will be presenting their research projects to.