Getting Familiar with the FLL Challenge

Here are some ideas to help your team get familiar with the Robot Game part of the Challenge soon after it has been released.

1. Have cards with the mission model names printed on them. See if the kids can place them with the correct mission model.

2. Practice setting up the board by putting the pieces in the right location for the start of the match. Time the kids to see how fast they can do it. Have others look to see if it is done correctly.   Make a mistake on purpose and see if the others can find what is wrong with the set up.

3. Put the scoring pieces in the desired locations for the best possible score. Again, time the team members. How fast can a human complete the missions? This helps the team understand the job that the robot needs to do.

4. Take turns putting some or all of the scoring pieces in their places. Have team members practice scoring. Use laminated score sheets and wet erase markers, so you can reuse score sheet. Need a score sheet go to Techbrick.com.

5. Have team members take turns explaining a mission to the group.

6. Have team members analyze the missions. See mission analysis worksheet on our resource page (www.robodesigners.com) . Look for patterns and similarities.

7. Look at each mission model individually and brainstorm ways of manipulating it to score points. Think about how YOU would do it using your hands. Then build attachments and test using your hands to work the attachments. What's the simplest attachment that would do the job?

8. Think about the path your robot should travel. Print out copies of the FLL table from the FLL website or Techbrick.com. Laminate the copies and use wet erase markers to mark the path. Use this path diagram to help you write your program. Another idea might be to place tracing paper or clear transparencies over the picture of the table and draw the robot's path. This way you can save your ideas.

9. Sort the missions by points, difficulty, distance from base, type of mission (delivery, retrieval, manipulation), type of attachment needed.

10. How might you divide up the missions and order them to be most efficient?

11. Go over the rules a few at a time. Assign a few a time for homework. Play a game to see who knows the rules… have team members line up. When they miss a question they have to sit out. The last one standing gets a small prize. Or all those standing when you run out of questions get a prize.