

# Formula Student Advice on Presentation Event

## Judging

Note it is the quality of the presentation which is being judged, not the technical qualities of the car or other aspects of the entry. This is primarily a business presentation, an act or a performance, on which you are being judged.

Judges are instructed to award up to 10 points for 5 clear categories. A Zero score is 'inadequate or no attempt at presentation' a maximum score of 10 points is 'excellent, perfectly meets intent'. Judging Sheets are available within the rules documentation on the Formula Student web site. Each category can score a maximum of 10 points. You will be judged on:

## Content

- Can you explain adequately and appropriately how the car meets the requirements of the imaginary customer (Design, Marketability, Manufacturing Feasibility, Profit potential)?
- Did you present technical details and topics in an orderly manner but without becoming boring and over technical?
- Did you cover the full scope of topics which would allow the imaginary customer to make a decision, be that in the presentation or in any accompanying data?

## Organisation

- Did the presentation follow a logical order starting from the customer's (manufacturing firm) basic concept and showing how you have completed the concept and met their goals?
- Did you give at the start a clear introduction and overview of the project and presentation and a summary and conclusion at the end?
- Make the closing comments memorable and relevant to the imaginary customer.

## Visual Aids

- Were you using high quality visual aids and were there clear visual references to the car and the points you were trying to make?
- Was the maximum use made of up to date visual aid techniques?

## Delivery

- Was the delivery made clearly and in a strong, confident manner?
- Did the presenters show enthusiasm and promote confidence in the product, was eye contact maintained with the judges. Was it well paced and convincing?

## Questions

- Did the answers show that the team understood the question as asked? Did they really understand the answer and did their answers inspire confidence?

It is easy to score high points in one area and lose them completely in another by, for example, having no visual aids available or presenting in a disorganised manner.

## **General Advice**

One of the keys to a good presentation is to be prepared.

- Think about what you want to get out of this presentation and what your goals are – namely persuading the customer that they should commit some more time and effort into progressing your product and the business relationship.
- Think about what level of detail you want to present and what scope you want to cover and have more detailed back up available in case your audience wants a further level of detail – which they will on some aspects.

To avoid packing too much information onto visual aids consider handing out more detailed information in separate packages to the judges. This shows you have addressed the project in more detail but that you are not going to take up the precious ten minutes by going into that detail. Consider handing out samples of any special technical achievements you have made/unique selling points. This all keeps the judges interested and informed.

There will not be provision to bring your entire car to the presentation (there is no space).

Do the basic things well. Be ready to start in good time; check if there are any time table changes; allow time to set up your presentation, the onus is on you. This is a business presentation so dress smartly; some wear business suits, some wear smart team apparel.

Identify early on in your project who will be making your presentation so that they can acquire the skills and help they need. Decide how many will be in your presentation team, this can be one to the full team, the best maxim is probably 3, most choosing 2.

Always check thoroughly through your entire presentation for spelling/layout errors. Always carry a back up to computers, carry OHP slides and be ready to use them if the computer lets you down. There is some set up time but you only have 10 minutes for the presentation, with or without difficulties and no allowance will be made for the fact that your equipment is not thoroughly checked. This is the only way to be fair to all competitors.

We urge you to link up with a marketing team either within your university or outside to take advice.

Work with them, rehearse with them. Let them show you how to improve your presentation skills – indeed other students outside the engineering building can make the presentation for you so long as they are part of your team.

The question section will not be complicated so it is possible to 'second guess' some that the judges may ask.

- Be prepared by getting your own team to set some questions so that you have good answers ready.
- If you do not have a convincing answer to a question remember, this is like a role play exercise. What would you do in the real world?

Finally, we know this is not the most glamorous part of the competition and, is more like 'real work' than the fun involved designing/ building and preparing the car but that IS the point – the best engineers in the world will never realise a single design if they cannot convince someone else who will be holding the money that it makes sense to build it!

This will be one of your 'life-skills' in industry. A future presentation may be formal, to outside investors, finance groups, senior management or even just informally in order to get the right decision taken in a weekly meeting. It is very important engineers learn how to present their ideas in a clear concise manner – where money is involved people only take decisions once they are confident they understand the full picture and the risks involved.

**Richard Brown,  
Chief Presentation Judge**