

STANDARDS FOR SCORING SUGGESTED CRITERIA FOR SCORING JUDGES

Individual participants will be rated on a scale of 1-10 speaker points, according to their roles in the trial. The Scoring Judge is scoring individual performance in each speaker category and TEAM PERFORMANCE in the Total Points and Tiebreaker boxes. The Scoring Judge is scoring the overall performance of the team. Please do not award fractional points, a range of points, or a score of "0."

Scoring Judges may individually consider penalties for violation of the Rules of the Competition or the Code of Ethical Conduct. Penalties would reduce point awards in the appropriate performance categories below. Penalties will not be indicated separately on the score sheet, but rather, should be reflected in a lower score in the appropriate category.

The team with the higher number of total points on the score sheet shall win the judge's ballot and shall be entered in the "Tiebreaker Box" on the ballot. The team winning the majority of the ballots shall win the round.

Scoring judges are reminded to check that points have been awarded in each category on the score sheet; that they cannot award two teams a tie; and that score sheets must be signed before giving the score sheet to the presiding judge.

POINTS

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

1-2	Unsure, illogical, uninformed, unprepared, speaks incoherently, definitely ineffective in communication, total reliance upon notes, easily distracted.
3-4	Minimally informed and prepared. Performance is passable but lacks depth in terms of knowledge of tasks and materials. Communication lacks clarity and conviction. Relies heavily on notes (if attorney); somewhat distracted.
5-6	Average presentation. Can perform outside the script but less confidently than when using the script. Grasps major aspects of the case, but does not convey mastery of it. Communication is clear and understandable, but could be stronger in fluency and persuasiveness.
7-8	Fluent, persuasive, clear and understandable. Organizes materials and thoughts well, and exhibits mastery of the case and materials. Seldom refers to notes (if attorney); responds to occurrences during trial.
9-10	Superior in qualities listed for 7-8 points. Thinks well on feet, is logical, and keeps poise under duress. Can sort out essential from the nonessential and use time effectively to accomplish major objectives. Demonstrates the unique ability to utilize all resources in order to emphasize vital points of the trial. Attorneys are completely off notes.

CRITERIA FOR SCORING A TRIAL PRESENTATION

The following criteria should be considered during the course of a team's trial presentation. Consider "5" as average. This is designed to serve as a guideline. During the competition rounds, Scoring Judges may award points at their own discretion. All points assessed in a round are subjective. (See **Rules of Competition, Rule 6**, for treatment of rule infractions.)

Opening Statement

- Provided a case overview
- The theme/theory of the case was identified
- Mentioned the key witnesses
- Provided a clear and concise description of their team's side of the case
- Stated the relief requested
- Discussed the burden of proof
- Presentation was non-argumentative
- Did not rely on notes for presentation

Direct Examination

- Properly phrased questions
- Used proper courtroom procedure
- Handled objections appropriately and effectively and did not overuse objections
- Did not ask questions that were beyond the scope of the materials from the witness
- Demonstrated an understanding of the Modified Federal Rules of Evidence
- Handled physical evidence appropriately and effectively (**Rule 4.21**)

Cross Examination

- Properly phrased questions
- Effective Questioning
- Properly impeached witnesses (bring out contradictions in testimony)
- Handled objections appropriately and effectively
- Did not overuse objections
- Used various techniques, as necessary, to handle a non-responsive witness
- Demonstrated an understanding of the Modified Federal Rules of Evidence
- Handled physical evidence appropriately and effectively (**Rule 4.21**)

Witness Performance

- Did not use notes (as required)
- Credible portrayal of character and convincing testimony
- Showed understanding of the facts
- Sounded spontaneous, not memorized
- Demonstrated appropriate courtroom decorum
- Avoided unnecessarily long and/or non-responsive answers on cross-examination
- Did not use facts outside the witness' statement

Closing Statement

- Theme/theory continued in closing argument
- Summarized the evidence
- Emphasized the supporting points of their own case and damaged the opponent's case
- Concentrated on the important facts, not the trivial
- Applied the applicable law

- Discussed Burden of Proof
- Overall, closing statement was persuasive
- Minimal or no reliance on notes during the closing statement
- Did not exceed time limit

Other Factors to Consider in Scoring

- PENALTY DEDUCTION should be used under the direction of the Presiding Judge to deduct points from a team's score if any member(s) of their team fail(s) to adhere to appropriate courtroom decorum (i.e., abuse of procedural rules, inappropriate use of objections, improper participation by coach or gallery, creation of material facts, or other rules infractions as observed or reported and verified).
- The team's presentation should have a balance of six strong participants, strong style (did they use notes or not), present closing statements that reflect what actually happened during the trial.