

HINTS FOR SUCCESS

IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES – STEP ONE

** HINT – Remind your students to reread the last paragraph(s) very carefully since this gives the teams the focus of the scenario. I tell my students to highlight their charge as they read the scenario and to return to the future scene as they begin to write challenges and the underlying problem to make certain they are on task.

** HINT – Sometimes the teams begin to play the what-if game. While elaborating the challenges, students begin to hypothesize if this happens (A) then this could happen (B). If this happens (B), then this could happen (C). The elaborated challenges may become so far-fetched; they are scored as PERHAPS. Challenges must have a strong PROBABILITY of occurring to be counted as relevant.

** HINT – Students may want to use stickie notes while brainstorming. Use a “categories tablecloth” to place brainstormed challenges into categories.

THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM – STEP TWO

**HINT – The Underlying Problem is the most important of all the steps. Review the coaches’ notes to make certain the teams know the necessary elements.

**HINT – Use the scoring guide from the Missouri Future Problem Solving website www.mofps.org

Remember trying to solve **ALL** the aspects of the future scene is scored as a RESTATEMENT and trying to solve a problem outside of the future scene parameters is a BROADENING of the future scene.

**HINT – Teach students to avoid absolute verbs. These verbs indicate the key verb phrase mandate will be done with no possibility of failure. Placing the verb HELP before any of these verbs does not make a difference. Help is not a helping verb and should not be used as such. The most common absolute verbs found in student booklets are GUARANTEE, ELIMINATE, INSURE, ENSURE, KEEP, STOP, PREVENT AND PROHIBIT.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS -- STEP THREE

**HINT – Solutions must directly address the condition phrase, the key verb phrase, and the purpose of the team’s underlying problem to be counted as a relevant solution. As long as a solution idea addresses the condition phrase, solves the key verb phrase, accomplishes the purpose of the underlying problem and stays within the future scene parameters, it is scored relevant. Some key verb phrases lead to variations on a theme. Fundraising is a common one. These lead to duplicate solutions.

An elaborated solution idea explains how it solves the UP. An elaborated solution idea is any relevant solution idea that includes at least three of the who, what, why and how elements. Relevant solution ideas are not automatically elaborated. Solution ideas elaborated by simply tacking on the key verb phrase and/or purpose are not considered for elaboration.

One of the goals of Future Problem Solving is to provide students with the skills to think critically and to identify positive, proactive solutions to a given situation.

CRITERIA – STEP FOUR

****HINT** – Review the difference between generic, modified and advanced criteria with your teams. Generic criteria are those that can be applied to almost any situation. Examples of generic criteria– Which solution is the most acceptable? Which solution is the easiest to implement? Modified criteria are stock criteria with the addition of stakeholders from the future scene. Examples of modified criteria – Which solution is most acceptable for the users of pharmacogenomic medicine? Which solution is most easily implemented for governmental agencies in Brazil? Advance criteria should relate to the topic and future scene. Examples of target criteria: Which solution best provides for increased social interaction at the University of Missouri? Which solution best provides for monitoring the use of ECHO? Which solution best enhances security of the cyber infrastructure of Great Britain?

APPLY CRITERIA – STEP FIVE

****HINT** -- Please check addition and that the numbers 1 through 8 are used only once in a column. This is the most frequent mistake teams make. Encourage students to identify the best solution for the criteria (8); then identify the worst for the same criteria (1). Look for the best of the solutions left (8); the worst of the solutions left (2). Working toward the middle often speeds up this step. 8 – 1 – 7 – 2 – 6 – 3 – 5 – 4

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN – STEP SIX

****HINT** – Try to get the teams to fully elaborate their best solution. In writing the best solution, the team should identify short-term, middle-range, and long-term goals. What groups will assist them in this endeavor? A good idea is to create a timeline of what should happen. **Indicate how the solution addresses the criteria used.** Use each criterion as a topic sentence for a paragraph. Also, teams should consider their purpose as they elaborate. How will their solution accomplish the purpose?

Action Plan – The Action Plan should be well-written in paragraph form. These may be used as a guide.

- Paragraph 1 – Introduction to Solution
- Paragraph 2 – Details (What – Who – Why – When – Where - How) (Identify assistors / resisters)
- Paragraph 3 – Explain the relationship of the Action Plan to the Underlying Problem.
- Paragraph 4 – Explain the relationship of the Action Plan to the Future Scene.
- Paragraph 5 – Conclusion (How does this solution meet at least **3** of the criteria in Step 4?)
- Add a timeline to show short term – middle range – long-term goals.
- A diagram of the solution, a commercial, flow chart, or slogan can be helpful too.

Remember that elaboration is important for clarity (and points!) Encourage students to use facts and vocabulary found during research. Watch programs that show futuristic technology and trends. Learn interesting facts. Become critical thinkers. Become proactive rather than reactive. Have fun!