



Team Handbook 2009-10

FIRST Tech Challenge Team Duct Tape #2845
www.TeamDuctTape.com

New Member Information and Application
Developed in coordination with Team Members and Mentors – April 2009

ABOUT TEAM DUCT TAPE

Team Duct Tape #2845 is a FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) community based robotics team from Odessa, FL. FIRST Tech Challenge is a mid-level robotics competition for high-school students. The ultimate goal of FTC is to engage youth in discovering the excitement and rewards of science, technology, and engineering.

Team Duct Tape in its community based focus, is an all-inclusive high school level robotics team welcoming private, public, and homeschooled students and their families who are interested in FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition in Science and Technology) robotics volunteer and learning opportunities and experiences.

Team Duct Tape Philosophy

We believe high quality Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education should be accessible to all youth, and that all kids with an interest in math, science, and technology should have an opportunity to express and explore those interests. We seek to bring high school level robotics as within reach as scouting, and to make it as commonplace, accessible and fun as a pick up game of basketball.

ABOUT FIRST

The FIRST (For the Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Tech Challenge Competition is an exciting, nationwide competition for high school students that engages them in solving an engineering design problem in an intense and competitive way.

The program reaches thousands of students from around the country and the world. Each team is comprised of professional mentors and a maximum of 10 high-school-aged students. Teams compete for a series of awards honoring accomplishments in areas including engineering, design excellence, competitive play, sportsmanship, and high-impact partnerships between schools, businesses, and communities.

The program effectively engages students from various backgrounds, instilling new ideas and concepts in more experienced students, while helping to inspire, motivate, and encourage learning basic principles and skills among students with less experience. Through their FIRST involvement, students also learn about important, life-long team skills such as planning, research, collaboration, mentorship, and teamwork.

BENEFITS OF TEAM MEMBERSHIP include:

- **SCHOLARSHIPS** - over \$9,000,000 in scholarships were awarded in 2008.
- **TRAVEL** - to Regional Competitions and possibly to the National Competition.

- **EXPERIENCE** - many corporations across the nation are participating in FIRST and want to hire FIRST students.
- **NEW SKILLS acquisition** and the opportunity to explore careers in business, visual arts, science or technology. Team Duct Tape emphasizes high quality training opportunities in CAD design, programming, building and design, and public speaking.
- **TEAM BUILDING** skills and **PREPARE FOR LEADERSHIP ROLES.**
- **FUN** meeting and networking with students and experts in a variety of fields.

A TYPICAL SEASON

The FTC “season” officially begins in September. Team members have 10-12 weeks to design, build and program a robot to perform that season’s challenge. Teams compete in one to three qualifying competitions, usually starting in November, and culminating with the State Championship in February.

The team meets year round for fundraising, team building, training, and organizational activities. In the off-season, during the spring and summer, we may meet only once or twice a month, and for special team building and training programs.

In-season, we meet at least once a week, and meetings last 4-6 hours. Sometimes there will be take-home work to complete between meetings (i.e. journal entries, programming, team spirit projects, etc.). Meeting schedules and activity plans will be posted to our email work-list and available on our website.

JOINING TEAM DUCT TAPE

Membership is limited to ten students, although we may choose to limit team size to less for logistical or other reasons. If we have membership openings, interested students must complete the application below for consideration. Applicants under consideration will be invited to three team meetings, to determine if the student and team are a good fit for one another. As a community based team, members from public, private and homeschools are welcome to apply to be part of our team.

If the Team and Applicant agree that they would like to continue working together, there is a one time contribution of \$150 per member, which is used to help pay for robot parts, competition fees, and other logistical expenses, and is non-refundable after three months. Student members must also comply with attendance, behavior and grade maintenance requirements to remain part of Team Duct Tape.

TEAM ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES may include, but not be limited to, the following (students may be part of multiple teams, as needed and able):

Project Manager

The team project manager will oversee the mechanical design and engineering of the robot, and will be responsible for organizing and scheduling team meetings, setting team priorities and keeping members focused. It’s a big job, and other team members are expected to cooperate with and assist the team’s project manager for effective team work

and project success. The project manager will be responsible for related Engineering notebook entries.

Building Leads and Team

The lead builders will make decisions about building, and work to achieve consensus among team members on the mechanical design of the robot using guidelines developed by the team. Builders will make related journal entries for robot design and construction. The Build team will include someone responsible for Quality Assurance who will ensure that all wires and critical components of the robot are secure and in compliance with Challenge guideline and requirements. The Build team will also include someone responsible for hardware and tools management, to ensure that all equipment is well cared for and properly stored and inventoried.

Chairman's Award Team

These members will ensure that we're working effectively towards the highest award recognition by being well informed about award requirements and encouraging and guiding team members towards top performance in all areas.

Chief Systems Analyst

This person, in coordination with the coach and adult mentors, is responsible for knowing game rules, robot mission and challenges, and communicating this critical information to team members. The CSA will also verify that programming, mechanical solutions and proposed solutions are addressing needed goals.

Programming Leads and Team

Lead programmers will ensure that programs are completed by appropriate deadlines, and will be responsible for Engineering notebook entries related to programming. Programmers will ensure that programs work 90% of the time or better, and will schedule time with builders and drivers for changes and driving practice.

Safety Captain

The Safety Captain, in coordination with an adult mentor, will help establish safety rules and plans to enforce them. Responsibilities include ensuring that sufficient safety glasses are available and that they are worn by adults and youth at relevant times during practices and competitions, and that clothing and behavior is appropriate with respect to safety of team members and others.

Presentation Manager

The Presentation Manager is responsible for coordinating the look and over all quality of the presentation given to interview judges at competitions. This is a critical role in earning the Inspire Award, the top award given. The Presentation Manager will ensure that the team communicates clearly about their robot design to the judges, and that the team presents themselves well in the interview. To that end, the Presentation Manager will coordinate interview practices and refinement. The Presentation Manager will be responsible for related Engineering notebook entries.

Marketing and Fundraising Manager

This team member, in coordination with adult mentors, will be responsible for helping create a team business plan, coordinate fundraising efforts, assist with community outreach opportunities, and maintain team finance records. The Marketing and Fundraising Manager will also ensure that the team “look” is effective, neat and well presented, and will also help develop and maintain sponsorship and team information packets, and will help with team blog entries.

Photojournalist

This team member will document, via video and photography, the team year, and update the website with photos. The complete build process should be chronicled, as well as tournament activities, with photos for use in marketing and news media.

Team Spirit

This member will help create team cheers, pins, banners, signs, and competition giveaways for fun and PR, and help develop the team’s identity with respect to encouraging spirited support and fun at meetings and events.

Additional roles include

Robot Drivers – typically those members who show an aptitude for remote control finesse, strategy and precision

Public Relations – members who speak with other teams and coordinate Team Duct Tape specialists to help other teams, as well as create connections with tin the community

Website Manager – a member proficient with and comfortable with website maintenance and posting

BUILD SEASON

Team Meetings

Meetings will be held every Saturday, unless otherwise noted, from 1- 6pm, starting at September kick off. Additional meeting dates and times may be added as necessary prior to competitions. **Build season meeting attendance is mandatory** – If you can’t make a meeting, please advise team mates and coach as soon as possible.

Meetings and agendas are announced and archived at our team Yahoo email list at <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/Team2845> Files, programs and other related documents will be available on our Windchill Project site. All members are expected to check their email regularly and to actively communicate with one another and the coach about meetings.

Meeting Agendas

The agenda for each meeting, with specific tasks and goals, is coordinated between the Project Manager and the coach. 15-30 minutes will be allotted at the start of each meeting for general administrative housekeeping. 30 minutes are allotted at the end of each meeting for clean up. Agendas will be provided to members in advance of each meeting.

Expectations at Meetings

Gracious Professionalism and Respect are expected at all times, for each other, for adult coaches and mentors, for anyone with whom you're working, at any time.

Be an Active Participant – If there doesn't seem to be enough for you to do, tell us; work with other team mates; take the initiative when you see something that you can do; don't wait to be asked to help.

Be Informed – All members should be thoroughly familiar with rules of the competition, team goals, arrive ready to work at meetings, and understand individual and group tasks.

Communicate – Ask questions if you need help or don't understand something. Communicate clearly, often and openly with each other, your coach and mentors

Be Responsible – Be conscientious about the use and maintenance of equipment, parts and tools. Put things where they belong so they can be easily located when needed. Get to meetings on time; be sure you know what your role is and carry out your responsibilities at meetings. Clean up after yourself, and help others do the same.

Have Fun!! The more respectful, professional, informed, communicative and responsible you are, the more fun you'll have and the more memorable and enjoyable your experience, and that of your team mates, will be.

Expectations at Competitions

Be Graciously Professional at all times. Help your team mates and other teams as able..

Be Positive! - Team members are expected to participate at all times in a positive and helpful manner, whatever the competition outcome or trend.

Show Spirit! – Support your team by cheering and sign waving. Cheer other teams, too.

Look Good! – Wear your team shirt, tan/khaki pants with a belt, and closed toed shoes. Sport a neat, clean appearance; no baggie pants, or loose items of clothing, for safety reasons as much as appearance.

Be Safe! – Wear safety glasses where required; Look where you're going at all times and pay attention to what you're doing.

Have Fun!

Qualifications for Attending Competitions

School come first! A minimum of a B (3.0 GPA) , or, in the case of homeschooled students, evidence of academic commitment, is required to remain a member of Team Duct Tape.

Appropriate behavior at all times, including at school and in your community, as well as at competitions or events.

Attend 75% of meetings at a minimum, 90% of meetings if you head up a build team

Complete and return all paperwork in a timely manner – Throughout the year, various forms and agreements will be required. Please be responsible about completing and returning them.

Meet Expectations of Behavior and Conduct previously listed.

ADULT TEAM MEMBERS AND PARTICIPANTS

- Adults working with youth on Team Duct Tape may be asked for background checks.
- Adult participants are expected to adhere to the same behavioral guidelines set forth for youth.
- Adult chaperones on team outings are not allowed to consume alcoholic beverages.

Team Duct Tape Application Form

STUDENT NAME

DATE _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE # _____

E- MAIL _____

CURRENT GRADE (circle one) 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

DATE OF BIRTH _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME

PARENT/GUARDIAN OCCUPATION

PARENT/ GUARDIAN HOME & WORK PHONE #s

HEALTH or MEDICAL CONDITIONS of which we should be aware (*this has **nothing** to do with acceptance, but helps us keep team members safe and helps us plan activities!*)

What aspects of the team are you interested in? Check all that apply. This does not lock you into a work area. We are just interested in learning more about you. Experience is not necessary; all students are offered guidance and training.

- Mechanical Engineering
- Electrical Engineering
- Drafting Design
- Publicity / Marketing
- Finances
- Other? _____

Do you have any programming, building, writing or other educational, special interest or hobby experience that you feel would be helpful to the team? If so, please identify and tell us the extent of your experience. (Ex. C++, CAD design, MS Publisher, photography or photo editing, shop classes, hobby electronics, etc.)

Are you involved in other organizations, extra-curricular activities or sports? If "YES", please list them:

Are you able to attend after school meetings? If so, starting at what time?

Are you able to attend evening meetings?

Are you able to attend Saturday meetings?

As a member of the team you are required to attend a minimum of 75% of team meetings / activities, and maintain a minimum B average (or homeschool equivalent) in your studies. Are you able to meet these requirements?

Are you able to travel to competitions?

APPLICANT ESSAY QUESTIONS

Completion of these questions are required

To be considered for membership in Team Duct Tape, please answer the questions below, taking time to consider your answers carefully. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, but through your responses, we hope to learn more about applicants and their interest to assist in future program planning. If an excess of applicants exist, the response to these essay questions may be used in a selection process.

Why do you want to join Team Duct Tape?

What do you expect to gain from this experience?

What qualities/experiences do you bring to Team Duct Tape that you feel will make you a significant contributor to our team?

Are you involved in other organizations, extra-curricular activities or sports? If "YES", please list them and tell us something about your involvement in them.

GRACIOUS PROFESSIONALISM FOR TEAM DUCT TAPE #2845

Your signature is required below, and indicates that you have read and agree to abide by our statement of Gracious Professionalism, which is integral to our success as a team and as individuals, and by our Code of Conduct.

Gracious Professionalism (GP) is the embodiment of the FIRST philosophy. It is how we should strive to act, whether we are being watched or not, and in a way that would make those we admire most proud. Gracious Professionalism demands that we treat others with kindness and respect, communicate with one another clearly and honestly, and resolve conflicts and misunderstandings immediately.

Gracious professionalism encourages us to learn and urges us to compete with heart and spirit, but requires that we treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. Gracious professionalism is part of pursuing a meaningful life. "GP" encourages high quality work, impeccable ethics, respect for yourself and others, and the ability to compete in a gracious manner. "GP" represents everything FIRST stands for and, commensurately, that FIRST Tech Challenge Team Duct Tape stands for, as well.

Team Duct Tape Code of Conduct

Team members will exemplify Gracious Professionalism by:

- Being respectful to one another, to other teams, coaches, mentors, parents and other adults, to team property, and to our meeting places, at all times.
- Refraining from disruptive behavior that affects your own team or others.
- Being helpful to one another and others whenever the opportunity arises.
- Actively participating in meetings, competitions and events with a willing spirit of cooperation.
- Showing class and dignity whether winning or losing.

Consequences of violating our Code of Conduct will include:

1. A written apology to all team members and to anyone else involved that acknowledges and takes responsibility for the specific misconduct and describes how such mistakes will be avoided in the future..
2. Subsequent activity with the team will be on a probationary basis for the remainder of the season or the following build season, whichever comes first, with the understanding that any and all future instances of misconduct will result in the offending parties involved being sent home immediately. Repeated misconduct with no evidence of attempts to learn from previous mistakes will result in removal from the team.

I have read the above statement and will abide by Gracious Professionalism and the Team Duct Tape Code of Conduct:

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(student)

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(parent)

I, hereby verify that the information and statements on this application are true, to the best of my understanding. I also pledge, if chosen as a FIRST team member, to meet all requirements of scholastic standing, fundraising, attendance and participation in order to remain a member in good standing.

Student Signature _____ date _____

I, as parent or legal guardian verify that I have read and understood all of the information contained in this information package.

Parent Signature _____ date _____

Please snail mail your application form signed or give to an existing team member, or send a scanned copy with your signature to us at:

*FTC Team Duct Tape
5910 Hammock Woods Drive
Odessa, FL 33556*

Or Email to info@learningis4everyone.org

You will be notified of consideration within two weeks. Student and parent or legal guardian must attend your first meeting together. Accepted students must complete the Coach/Student/Parent Agreement which follows.

TEAM DUCT TAPE STUDENT/PARENT AGREEMENT

In order to insure that parents and students understand the responsibility and commitment needed by each member of FIRST Tech Challenge Team Duct Tape, and the promise made by the team's coach to you and your child, please take the time to read over, checking each item to indicate you've read and understood each one, and sign this contract together with your child.

COACH AGREEMENT

- I will abide by the same core values* that I expect of you as team members.
- I will start and end meetings on time.
- I will have specific recommended goals, determined in coordination with team members, to achieve at each meeting.
- I will communicate regularly and keep you apprised of important deadlines and opportunities.
- I will always listen to you.
- I will facilitate team meetings and help guide your discovery, but I will not give you answers or make decisions for you. Team 2845 belongs to you.

Signature of coach _____ Date _____

STUDENT AGREEMENT

Please check each item you can honestly agree to

- I realize that no problem has only one solution, and that a successful team is one which cooperates by considering everyone's solution and ideas. I will not criticize anyone's ideas, and will listen to other team members and support and encourage them.
- I agree that my behavior at meetings and tournaments will be constructive and above reproach, and I will abide by FTC Core Values* at all times, especially "Gracious Professionalism".
- I agree that each team meeting is valuable and I will attend each meeting as best as I can. If a conflict arises, I will notify my coach in advance.
- I will be responsive and responsible in communications with the coach and with one other members.
- I agree to cooperate on whatever solution the team chooses, even if it is not my first choice.
- I understand that my position on the team is a privilege and that if I am disruptive or disrespectful to others at meetings or tournaments, I will be asked to leave.

Signature of team member _____ Date _____

PARENT AGREEMENT

- I agree, in the proper spirit of FTC, not to interfere with the team's solutions. All creations, inventions, ideas, must come from the team members.

- I agree to make every effort to have my child attend every team meeting. If there is a conflict, either my child or I will notify the coach as soon as possible.
- I understand that my child has a commitment to his/her team.
- I realize that my child's coach will be contributing a significant amount of time and effort to provide a rewarding experience for the team. I will try to be cooperative and helpful as possible.
- I understand that if there are any problems with my child at meetings or at tournaments, my child may be dismissed from the team but that I will be notified of problems as they arise.
- I have discussed all items listed above with my child

Signature of parent _____ Date _____

***FTC Core Values**

We are a Team.

We do the work to get the job done with guidance from our coaches and mentors.

We honor the spirit of friendly competition.

What we learn is more important than what we win.

We share our experiences with others.

We display gracious professionalism** in everything we do.

We have fun!

**Gracious Professionalism is a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others and respects individuals and the community. According to Dr. Woody Flowers, who coined the term, "Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. They avoid treating anyone like losers. No chest-thumping tough talk, but no sticky-sweet platitudes either. Knowledge, competition and empathy are comfortably blended."