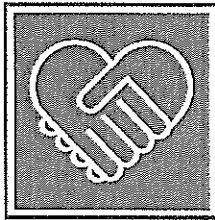


# 4 The Core Values

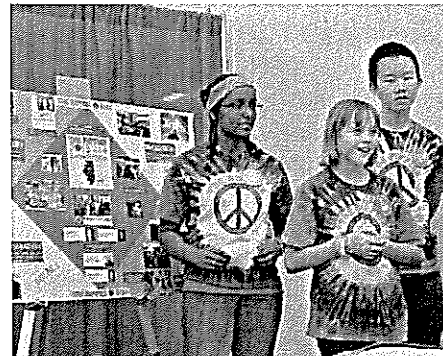


CORE VALUES

You may have noticed that the Core Values are the first thing you see when you open this handbook (on the inside of the front cover). This is because the Core Values are central to everything we do in *FIRST*® LEGO® League. They help to make this program a fun and rewarding experience for everyone involved. Team members, parents, Coaches, Mentors, Volunteers, and staff are all expected to uphold the Core Values whenever they participate in *FIRST* LEGO League activities.

The Core Values describe a way of working together and respecting each other that helps to define the *FIRST* LEGO League experience. We hear stories every year about a team that drops their robot at a tournament and watches the pieces scatter in every direction. Team members from other teams rush in to help them put their robot back together before their next match. This is because *FIRST* LEGO League teams want to compete fairly and have fun together.

Keep in mind that the Core Values apply to everyone involved with your team. Please talk to parents, Mentors, and other Volunteers about what the Core Values are and why they are so important. By embracing the Core Values, anyone involved in *FIRST* LEGO League may find that they begin to treat people more fairly and respectfully in other areas of their lives.



## OUR CORE VALUES

- ▲ We are a team.
- ▲ We do the work to find solutions with guidance from our Coaches and Mentors.
- ▲ We know our Coaches and Mentors don't have all the answers; we learn together.
- ▲ We honor the spirit of friendly competition.
- ▲ What we discover is more important than what we win.
- ▲ We share our experiences with others.
- ▲ We display *Gracious Professionalism*<sup>®</sup> and *Coopertition*<sup>®</sup> in everything we do.
- ▲ We have fun.



### *Gracious Professionalism*

*Gracious Professionalism* means teams compete like crazy against challenges but appreciate and treat each other with respect. Your real opponent is the problem you're trying to solve — not any other team or person. Gracious professionals lend a helping hand to an opponent when needed because they want everyone to have a chance to compete. Even when a team wins the competition, they avoid treating anyone like losers.

In the long run, *Gracious Professionalism* is part of pursuing a meaningful life. You can enjoy personal success while also making a contribution to society. *FIRST* LEGO League team members will learn that they can succeed while still acting with integrity.

### *Coopertition*<sup>®</sup>

*Coopertition*<sup>®</sup> combines the concepts of cooperation and competition. *Coopertition* is founded on the philosophy that teams can (and should!) cooperate with each other even as they compete.

Once you have mastered a skill, you teach it to someone else so that everyone can do better next time. It will make the competition more meaningful by pushing everyone to excel. Sometimes it even means sharing a spare part or battery charger with another team so they have a chance to compete. You still do your best to win, just not at the other team's expense.



#### TRY IT

Ask your team members what each Core Value means to them. Can they think of any situations when this behavior might help in their lives outside of the team?

# Top 10 Tips for Rookie Teams

*From The Inventioners, MIT, U.S.*

1. Remember, you don't have to be an engineer to be a great Coach.
2. Work with team members to come up with rules for your team at the first meeting.  
A few examples:
  - ↳ Respect others' ideas.
  - ↳ Help others. If a team member is an expert in robot-building, she should be willing to help teach others this skill.
  - ↳ Identify ways to encourage each other.
  - ↳ It's everybody's job to make sure the whole team participates.
3. Let the kids and parents know that the kids do the work.
4. Practice asking questions to guide the kids to their own answers instead of telling them your ideas. Ask probing questions such as:
  - ↳ What's another way to do that?
  - ↳ Everyone watch the robot this time – what do you see?
  - ↳ Where can you find more feedback to increase reliability?
5. Don't try to do everything alone:
  - ↳ Contact veteran teams and Coaches for support and ideas. The Inventioners are committed to providing training, Project feedback, and guidance to new teams.
  - ↳ Enlist parents as assistant Coaches.
  - ↳ Use the online resources provided at [www.firstlegoleague.org](http://www.firstlegoleague.org).
6. Figure out your funding:
  - ↳ Will you need to charge dues to cover startup costs?
  - ↳ Can the parents' employers or other local businesses provide funding?
7. Get the team committed to a meeting schedule before the season starts.  
Members who can't attend meetings make it hard for the whole team.
8. Make sure all parents have roles – even rotating ones (Assistant Coach, snack provider, fundraising lead, photographer) so that they become invested in the progress of your team.

