

Where to start?

Begin by reading the rules, not just by watching the unveiling video. Although the video is a good source of information, its' primary purpose is to give a quick overview. Brainstorming from the unveiling is like trying to solve a case without all the data. Make sure at least a few people, preferably the whole team, have looked over the rules before you start coming up with ideas. I'm not saying memorize every definition, just make sure you have a general understanding. Keep a copy handy, if you have a question just look it up!

What is your goal?

Score with impunity. But what about "have fun"? Don't worry the fun just comes along.

Next you figure out how score faster than your opponent. From the rules, figure out how to score points. In this year's game, it is by putting plastic barrels and spheres into a P.V.C. goal or in the corners of the field. Also there is the extra twist of separating the field into different zones. Our team decided we wanted a fast offensive robot that could play all aspects of the game.

On the robot, there are 3 components to achieve this year's goal. Drive train, intake/output, and a lift. Here comes the brainstorming. This is one of my favorite parts! Make sure your entire team knows what is going on. This is the part that defines the rest of your season. Come up with ideas for the components and strategies. Remember, during brainstorming there is never a bad idea. Any crazy idea might spark a world-winning idea in someone else's mind!

Once you come to a consensus on a good designs, you can begin prototyping. Hopefully, you have ordered some pieces by now. If not I would recommend the classroom kit. It has a good variety of pieces and I think it is a bit more "budget friendly". You don't have to prototype with all "VEX approved" parts. Feel free to use LEGO, Erector, scrap parts, etc. For your more finalized ideas it is probably smart to use VEX to make sure your idea really works.

Mentors should assign people to lead different prototyping groups. Make sure your whole team gets a chance to help build, during the build season. Let your team know that there isn't an official "vote" on how to build your finalized robot. The best ideas should generally surface to the top. Try to incorporate some of the designs together. Hopefully your robot is pretty well along by now.

Try to get a good autonomous. The bonus points will work strongly to your advantage at competition.

Try to help other teams with what you know, A.) they might remember in the future and help you, B.) its a good practice and C.) Hopefully they will continue to pass it on.

Remember, "Design is iterative." ~ JVN

Thanks for reading! ~ "810" of team #4000