VEX Robotics Has Helped Me Grow

By: Matthew Watson

Participating in VEX Robotics for the last 3.5 years I have learned many skills that I expect to use for my lifetime. Three stand out; problem solving, building and communications.

Beginning with my first VEX Competition, we faced many problems. As a team working together, we turned our problems into learning moments and began to use problem solving techniques. Over time these turned into a process which I have documented in my engineering log books. I use these skills in our meetings and in opportunities in the world around me.

Building robots to play games has been fun and educational. My understanding of structures, electrical and pneumatics continues to grow and has helped our team build more durable and functional robots. Build time for this year’s robot was reduced and reliability has improved.

Third, I have learned communication takes practice. Beginning with our team, differences with strategies and ideas requires lots of talking to get agreement. At tournaments I talk with other teams about strengths and strategies leading to stronger alliances. Talking with judges has taught me confidence to speak with adults on a technical basis. Working as a team we have learned to communicate face to face, and with technology including Skype group meetings, Facebook and texting.

Participating in VEX has improved my ability to solve problems, understand the engineering and building of structures and improve my communication skills. As a result I would like to become an engineer.