**WHAT, HOW, TEACH, WHY, ALLOW, LEAVE, and THANK**

**How to explain your project in 3-5 minutes**

**If you think you must remember everything perfectly** during your interview, you can be guaranteed that **you WON’T.** Practice does not always make perfect, but you should continue to practice with someone who knows nothing about your project. If they understand what you did and could reproduce your project using your interview and your board, you have done a terrific job!

1. **WHAT** did you do? Science fair boards [including virtual boards] can only get you so far. What statistics back up your conclusions? This sounds backwards, but after you wow them with your choice, tell them what you concluded. [1 minute] Be prepared to answer:
   1. What method did you use?
   2. If you completed an experiment, be prepared to define your constant and variables.
   3. Human subjects – what did you do to arrive at your conclusion?
   4. Engineering – What did you do to make the prototypes?
2. **HOW** did you complete your project? Do not go through a step-by-step process [they have your board and they become bored], provide one or two parts of your methodology that might be a different or unexpected way of doing the project. Demonstrate your methodology using something tangible. Show your creativity. [1 minute]
   1. How did you choose your human participants?
   2. How did you make sure the project was functional? If it did not work, how did you adjust?
   3. Engineering – how did you determine your materials?
   4. How did you collect your data and how did you make changes along the way?
3. **TEACH** your judges about one part of your project. It could be your amazing statistics, the wonderful item that you built to accomplish your goals and more. Make sure to make it interesting. [1 ½ minutes] Be prepared to teach about:
   1. Your research
   2. Your choice of approach
   3. Your choice of lab or mentor and why [if you had one] or why you chose not to use a lab or mentor
   4. What you put on your board and why
4. **WHY** should the judge care? Remember that you know more about your project than the judge with the highest degree and accomplishment. Why? It is your project, not theirs. Remember your **WHY**. Why did you do this project in the first place? You may have been told that completing a science fair project was required, but WHY this project? Begin and end your interview with this – tell the judges why you chose this project and show your enthusiasm for your work. [30 seconds] Be prepared to answer:
   1. The importance of your work
   2. How it can be applicable to each judge
   3. Why it was/is important to you or your peers
5. **ALLOW** the judges to interrupt you. Smile and answer the question the best way you can and then return to your presentation steps. Remember:
   1. They are interrupting because their time is limited
   2. They are interrupting because they want to see how you can think “off script.”
   3. They are interrupting because they do not understand something or want more clarification
   4. They may sound rude when they interrupt, but they have given up their time to help you.
6. **LEAVE** them wanting more. LEAVE them with that nagging thought in the back of their mind that your project was so interesting that they cannot stop thinking about it. [1 minute] Ask yourself:
   1. What is one thing that will set my project apart from all the others?
   2. When the judges go to the deliberation room, what do I want them to remember?
7. **THANK THE JUDGES!** When your time is up, thank them for taking the time to speak with you. Tell them that you wish you had more time to speak.

General information:

1. Judges will have read your abstract and looked at your virtual board already. Do not read it for them.
2. Let them know if there is one thing you would have done differently or one thing that you are glad you did in your project.
3. IF the experiment/engineering design did not work, your project did not fail. You learn more by failing and the judges need to know what you learned by failing.
4. Dress neatly and nicely. The judges need to see that you care about what you are doing. You are on Zoom, but pretend you are not. Cameras do move up and down and you do not want to be caught with a nice top and holes in your jeans or in your pajama bottoms and flip flops. 😊
5. After your interview is finished, quickly write down 1-2 things you liked about your interview, and 1-2 things you would do differently if asked to complete another interview. These are your notes and do not have to be in complete sentences.

\*\*Remember that the suggested steps above [including the amount of time for each step] are only **SUGGESTIONS.** You are the expert. You know more about your project than anyone else. Have fun and be proud of yourself. You worked hard!

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