Student-Friendly Team Interview Rubric

Note: This is the Student-Friendly edition of the Team Interview Rubric. *It is a teaching tool designed to help students prepare for interviews with judges. It is* ***not*** *the official rubric that judges will use when scoring a team interview.*

What is a team interview?

A team interview is a friendly, short conversation with two judges. The judges are not trying to trick you — they just want to hear the story of your team in your own words.

Good things to know:

- This is a conversation, not a test. There are no trick questions.
- If you have your Engineering Notebook, you can use it to help you look things up.
- No one person has to explain everything. Answer the parts you know best, and teammates can add on.
- Stories about things that did NOT work are great answers. Judges love hearing what you learned from a flop.
- Be respectful. Listen when a teammate is talking, make sure everyone gets a turn, and support your teammates.

What the Stars Mean:

● Heard, with Specifics	★★	We can tell this story with details or examples.
● Heard	★	We can talk about this a little, but we don't have examples yet.
● Not yet	☆	We can’t talk about this yet, but we can work on it.

Tips for Practicing:

- Take turns being the judge! One of you asks a question from this sheet, and the rest answer. Then switch.
- Talk to people outside of your team about your robot. Practicing talking about what you learned can help you build confidence for your interview.
- Pro Tip: if your answer has a name, a number, or a moment in it — like “our claw dropped the block four times before we added rubber bands” — you're telling a ★★ story. You don't need fancy words. You just need YOUR story.

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Can we explain our learning? (6 points)

Ask yourself:

- *Can each of us pick one part of our robot or code and talk about where we started and how it changed?*
- *Can we talk about something that didn't work?*
- *How do we KNOW our robot works?*

Look For	★★	★	Not yet ☆
Explaining our own work	We can each pick a part of our robot, code, or game plan and explain how it works, why we built it that way, and what we picked it over.	We can say what our robot does, but it's hard to explain why we made our choices.	We're not sure how to talk about our robot yet. *Try this: everyone picks one favorite part and practices telling its story.*
Telling the story of how we got here	We can tell what we tried first, what didn't work, and what we did next. We can share a moment that changed our thinking, like a test, a mistake, or a conversation.	We can name some things we tried, but our story skips around and leaves out the mistakes.	We only talk about the finished robot, not the journey. *Try this: make a list together of everything you tried, in order.*
Showing how we know it works	We can describe the tests we ran and share real results (counts, times, or measurements) and how those results changed our plan or told us we had a good plan.	We can say we tested our robot, but not what we measured or what we learned.	We haven't tested yet, or we can't remember what happened. *Try this: use your Engineering Notebook to help you remember your tests.*

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How did we work with others? (6 points)

Ask yourself:

- *What has a teammate helped you with? What did you learn from them?*
- *How does our team choose ideas? What do we do when we disagree?*
- *Where did our ideas come from? What did we do with those ideas to make them our own?*

Look For	★★	★	Not yet ☆
Learning from and with each other	We can each name something we learned from a teammate. We can tell about a time we figured something out together.	We say we helped and learned from each other, but we don't have examples.	We haven't thought about what we've learned from each other. *Try this: go around the team and have everyone say one thing a teammate taught them.*
Making decisions together	We can tell about a decision we made as a team and how we made that choice. We can say how we settled a disagreement by ourselves.	We can say what we decided, but not how we chose it. We can remember a disagreement, but can't explain how we settled it.	We're not sure how our decisions got made. *Try this: talk about your last big robot change — who suggested it? How did you agree?*
Making outside ideas our own	When we borrow an idea from another team, a video, or a coach, we can say: ● Where it came from ● What we changed to fit our robot ● How we tested it ● Why it works	We can say where an idea came from, but not what we changed, how we tested it, or why it works.	We use ideas without knowing where they came from. *Try this: pick one borrowed idea and find out its story together.*

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