



**Criteria for Scoring a Trial Round\*** The following criteria should be considered by scoring evaluators during the course of a team's trial presentation. All points assessed in a trial round are **subjective and should be awarded independent of consultation among judging panel members.**

#### Opening Statement

- Provided a case overview
- The theme/theory of the case was identified
- Mentioned the key witnesses
- Provided a clear and concise description of their team's side of the case
- Discussed the burden of proof
- Presentation was non-argumentative
- Points may be deducted for use of notes, at the evaluators discretion
- Stated the relief requested

#### Direct Examination

- Properly phrased questions – non-leading
- Used proper courtroom procedure
- Demonstrated understanding of facts, issues, & law
- Used case theme/theory appropriately/effectively during line of questioning
- Handled objections appropriately and effectively and did not overuse objections
- Did not ask questions that called for an unfair extrapolation from the witness
- Demonstrated an understanding of the Modified Federal Rules of Evidence
- Handled physical evidence appropriately and effectively

#### Cross Examination

- Properly phrased questions – leading
- Effective questioning
- Properly impeached witness
- Handled objections appropriately and effectively
- Did not overuse objections
- Used various techniques, if necessary, to handle a non-responsive witness
- Demonstrated an understanding of the Modified Federal Rules of Evidence
- Handled physical evidence appropriately and Effectively

#### Witness Performance

- Credible portrayal of character
- Showed understanding of the facts of the case
- Sounded spontaneous, not memorized
- Poised and observed appropriate courtroom decorum
- Avoided unnecessarily long and/or non-responsive answers on cross examination
- Points should be deducted for the use of unfair extrapolations

#### Closing Argument

- Theme/theory continued in closing argument
- Summarized the evidence
- Emphasized the supporting points of their own case and damaged the opponent's case
- Applied applicable law
- Overall, the closing argument was persuasive
- There should be only a minimal reliance on notes during the closing argument
- Concentrated on the important, not the trivial
- Discussed burden of proof

#### Courtroom Decorum

- Respond to any questions from the judge with poise (if applicable)
- Stand when judges enter and leave the room
- During recesses prior to the end of the trial do not discuss the trial, your team or the opposing team in a loud voice.
- No eye rolling or laughing at opponent
- Avoid repeated entrances and departures
- Respect the dignity of the court at all times