

San Mateo County Mock Trial



Keys to Team Success

Greg Jouriles

1. Recruit talented, committed students
2. Motivate (talented but busy) students to devote lots of time outside of practice
 - a. Make it fun—get students to organize food, rituals, social activities that foster friendships and sense of belonging.
 - b. Make practices efficient and productive—keep students busy, engaged, and challenged; vary activity and inject fun.
 - c. Give students personal attention—individual or small group practices, individual meetings.
Create positive peer pressure for high expectations.
3. Get students to develop mastery (statements and examinations, casebook, competition rules, rules of evidence). If students know their stuff, they will be more confident and polished, and able to respond spontaneously to unexpected things. This requires a variety of strategies and drill, but more important is motivation.
4. Make students look and sound good—manners, etiquette, dress, introductions, volume, posture.
5. Have students develop theory of case and coordinated presentation, so they convey story and so that the opening, each examination, and closing are all part of one whole. Every student should know they need to get across for their side. This is especially important because of the time constraints.
6. Teach evidence and legal theories so students learn it well enough to teach it. This is an important educationally as it is for success in the competition, probably more so.
7. Work with witnesses so they come across as real, confident, thoughtful, and/or interesting.
8. Focus on students reaching potential and doing good Mock Trial rather than on winning. If they reach their potential and do good Mock Trial, they have a good chance of winning and will reach their goals regardless of the outcome.
9. Allow students to take more responsibility so that they can create the culture of positive peer pressure and high expectations.