

An Analysis of the FIRST Robotics Competition Shouting of "ROBOT!"

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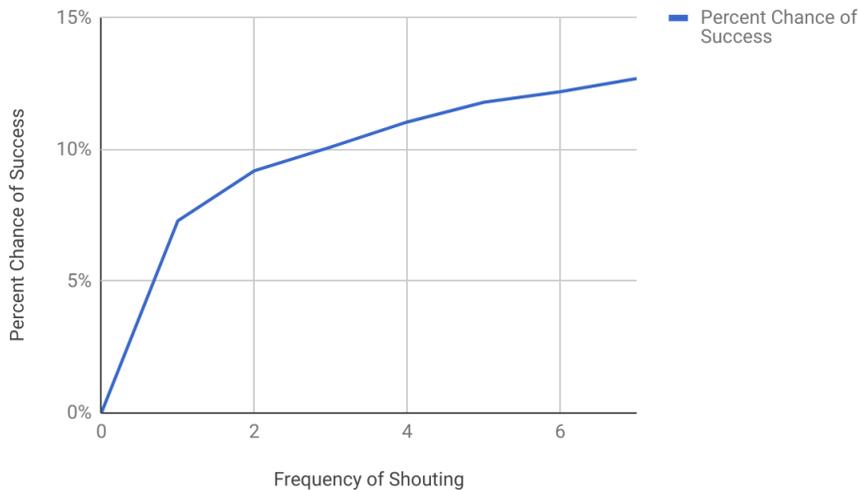
The Problem

The beginning of each new year brings an exciting new challenge to 770,000 students, mentors, judges, and volunteers taking part in the FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC). This initial excitement is almost immediately dampened as participants remember: two months from now, each team at competition will be plagued with the endless and useless shouting of "ROBOT!" to clear a path. The rush to queue creates a need for some method to quickly part the waters of people milling around the pits, but this paper will suggest a new approach to doing so.

Testimonies

While they may only subconsciously realize it, the entire FRC community already knows how futile it is to shout "ROBOT!"; they end up having to repeat themselves multiple times and direct their shouting at specific people in order to pass through. Annie, the official "Cart Wrangler" (also known as "Technician") for Team 900 in North Carolina states: "Team 900 is always in a rush to queue. Trying to yell at people to get out of the way just doesn't help. There's already enough shouting in the pits that people just start to tune it out." According to the almighty pit admin, only 7.3% of people who shout "ROBOT" are successful in clearing a path the first time. This value is positively correlated to the number of times the shouting is repeated, but as a concussed anonymous individual from the NC District stated: "Having a concussion sucks. Listening to people yell 'ROBOT' while having a concussion? Infinitely worse."

Percent Chance of Success vs. Frequency of Shouting



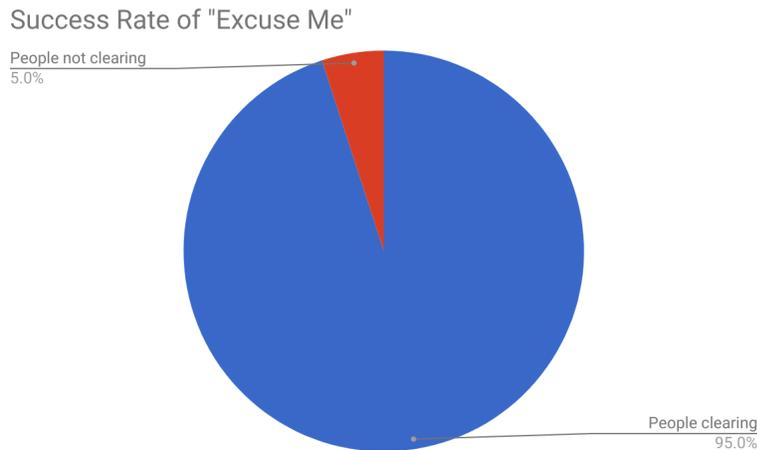
Although the call-and-response method of "ROBOT" and "POLO" does increase one's chance of success by a small amount due to the engagement factor, there is still a better way.

The Solution

Team 900 has developed a new and revolutionary solution to this issue. Honestly, it took us several years of practice and training to finally get it to perfection. While it might be a struggle to adapt, you'll find our best tips listed here.

Since 89% of people instinctively move out of the way to a different phrase, we've decided to try using that instead. It might be hard to wrap your head around this, and it definitely blew our minds as well.

In the past few years at competitions, we've tried politely saying "Excuse Me!" We've found that there is no need to yell loudly. By doing this instead, you can save your voice and be less stressed at the same time! The results speak for themselves.



We've seen a success rate of over 95%, as opposed to the 7.3% from shouting "ROBOT!" Doing this has raised the friendliness levels of our team, as zebra pants can be intimidating to small children. Saying "Excuse Me!" instead of shouting "ROBOT!" in their faces has increased the number of people in our pit by 49%. We heavily believe this is due to our revolutionary politeness when walking around the pits with our robot, and definitely not to the number of stray Zebacorns who wander over when they're not scouting.

Conclusion

Our practices have resulted in our Safety Captain named the Safety Star of the Day during our most recent competition at the Forsyth District event, and our team was a runner up for the UL Safety Award.

Of course, on top of saying "Excuse Me" when walking through the pits with our robot, we also follow multiple other safe practices in the pit, such as refraining from eating, always walking slowly and with care, definitely not enabling the robot on top of people who are working on the robot, and most definitely not letting the robot run over the programmers the practice field.

We encourage you to try this as well, as this practice will benefit the FIRST Community as a whole. Even our most beloved (lord and savior) Dean Kamen has stated: "Everything about the FIRST program is amazing, and I love the work our students have put in. The one thing that annoys me is this incessant shouting of 'ROBOT'". So please, for the love of Dean, use your manners.