

Mock Trial Scrimmage Feedback:

You guys are amazing. Really amazing.

Focus on the Why. How. What.

1. Why

Is it to win state?

Why?

If it is to win state, what is the teams definition of winning?

It is to bring home a trophy, or is to challenge themselves as a team to be excellent in each and every aspect of what do.

Be excellent now.

2. How

How will you win state?

What are you willing to do and commit to in order to win?

Questions:

- Are you willing to practice your scripts so that you can be so relaxed in your speeches that you can think on your feet, be natural in your hand movements, know when to pause.
- If you do need notes, have series of cards with big bold letters so you can easily look down and be reminded without having to read the card.
- Play the role. If you are an attorney, would they show up in court without a tie? In shoes that aren't appropriate for the roll?
- As a witness, each element of your clothing, your mannerisms, and the way you conduct yourself needs to bring credibility to your character.

Ari, in my opinion the lawyer you are playing would wear a tie, sit upright as if paying complete attention to the trial, and stay in character through your cross examination.

Isabella, would your character have a visible braid? Does that bring you credibility.

Zoey, keep your clothing appropriate to your character, but not distracting. I found myself wondering why you were wearing elbow length gloves and didn't hear what you were actually saying.

3. What you can do:

A. Watch your use of language

You want the jury to like you and to be convinced that your character is believable, trustworthy, and completely credible. Consider your choice of language to establish a relationship with the jury. Here are several words/phrases that I heard that do harm to credibility:

- "Well, obviously"
- "As I said"
- "Like I previously said"
- "As I was saying"
- Don't start the beginning of each of your sentences with "well".
- "I'm not going to lie", why would you say that when you are under oath.

B. Watch your body language

Witness, stay erect in your chairs. You are on trial under oath. Stay in character. Practice until you feel natural in your responses to the jury.

Think about how hand movements might help bolster:

- Empathy
- Confidence
- Trust

Action steps:

- Film yourself each day, and watch yourself to catch these little things that are really hard to notice in the moment.
- Film yourself from the distance that you will be from the jury to practice how well your voice carries.
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C. Be attorneys

Own the persona of an attorney from the moment that you walk into the courthouse.

- When you are cross examining the witness, you want to do it in a way that isn't too aggressive or too soft. As a woman, if you are too aggressive, the jury might find you too hard and mentally note that.
- If you are too soft, the jury might not find you to be competent. Too feminine.
- Stay focused and do not get distracted by sounds going on in the room. This breaks your concentration.
- Are the chairs comfortable (Ava?). If not, you need to have extra support on your back so your feet are flat on the ground.
- Work with your own witnesses to get them fluent in staying in character when being cross examined. This will help them to be more prepared, relaxed and believable.

Action steps:

- Think about how an attorney would dress. The shoes that they would wear, how their pair would be styled. You want the jury to believe that you are a top notch attorney and know what you are doing. You are a professional.
- Practice using different voices in front of a mirror. Ask a friend how your voice is being perceived. You want to be powerful and firm, but kind and likable.
- To be a team, you need to think like a team. This isn't about one person winning best witness or best attorney. This is about all of you together winning state. If that is the purpose, then each and everyone of you will be nominated to "best of" in every category

HAVE FUN!!