

Introducing Junkyard Challenge

Junkyard Challenge is a new engineering event focusing on quick-witted, out of the box thinking. The best way to understand Junkyard Challenge is to understand what it is not. Junkyard Challenge is not Mission Possible light. Junkyard Challenge is not the opposite of Mission Possible either. In fact, the best description for Junkyard Challenge is as the spiritual successor to Mystery Architecture with a twist. In Mystery Architecture, students did not know the task to be completed or the materials they would use. In Junkyard Challenge they do. Using this knowledge they must assemble the perfect set of materials and tools to solve the given problem on site in the allotted amount of time.

Mission Possible rewards students who push towards a single, optimal solution presented by a rigid and extremely structured rule set. As a result, the best performing machines tend to look the same from year to year. Junkyard Challenge, on the other hand, rewards students for innovative, out of the box solutions to the challenge task by creating an open ended framework of rules. By sticking to a simple formula and allowing any idea not expressly banned by the challenge and safety rules as fair game, Junkyard Challenge gives students the opportunity to express themselves through a uniquely open-ended engineering event. If Mission Possible is the event that rewards students for staying in the middle of the box, Junkyard Challenge is the event that rewards students for leaving the box behind.