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Animations

One of the most important things to create before build season is a safety animation. Safety animations set the rules for the workshop and other areas in order to avoid injuries and accidents from happening and helps people remember the importance of being safe in the workshop, even if being in there for a small amount of time. This is how to create a meaningful and important safety video for the team to watch.

Step 1: Planning

The first step to making any animation is to first come up with ideas. What are you trying to convey to your audience? What is the message? Write down the ideas that are most important to convey to your audience. It's not too bad to have too many ideas, but you also don't want your animation to be too long because there is a time limit to the safety animation that needs to be met. Pick and choose which ones would be most important to bring attention to. For example, it is important to make sure that everyone in the workshop has closed toed shoes, limits on jewelry, and no hooded jackets or sweatshirts while working in the workshop.

Step 2: Planning drawing

After coming up with your main ideas, it is also important to make the animation visually appealing. A common theme in creating a safety animation is to make it relate to the theme of FIRST for the year. For example, the 2019 FIRST theme was Destination: Deep Space, so the safety animation included themed items such as a rocket ship, a rover, and an astronaut as the main character. These little things make it fun for the team to watch, so it is important to have a theme in your drawing. Make sure to have a good plan for how the animation will look before sketching anything.

Step 3: Storyboarding

Now that you have your ideas organized, it is time to start storyboarding. Start with a blank piece of paper, and put big boxes on it, as if you were creating a comic. These boxes do not have to be perfect, but make sure that they are a decent size to fit multiple onto the page but not too small that you are unable to draw properly in it. These boxes will act the “screen” for your computer. The main premise of storyboarding is to just get a quick idea of what you want to accomplish for your animation, this means that it does not have to be super complicated. Sketch a rough draft of different frames for your animation and then write small descriptions for each box, varying on different transitions or scenes that you are sketching. After you have completed the storyboard to your liking, the next step is to take it to the computer!

Step 4: Animating

Throughout exploring different programs for animations, we found a fun, easy program for beginners to use called Drawing Cartoons 2. It was very simple, and could be used on your mobile device to bring with you wherever you go. Make sure that when you are animating that you do not take any copyrighted material from the internet. If you find yourself to really want something from the internet that you find necessary to the animation, try to change a few things so that it is not exactly the same. For example, last year we included a Donkey Kong portion for our Power Up theme, so we had to change DK to an orangutan, the color of the beams to green instead of red, and we changed the word “OIL” on the barrel at the bottom into the word “FUEL” in order to stray away from copyright. Using your storyboard, create your animation onto the computer. Make sure to create a section at a time and to go back and play through the animation for each section in order to make sure it turns out how you planned to. This is very important to having an effective safety animation. Also, make sure that the animation meets the required time limit. Usually, the time limit for the safety animation is around 40 seconds at maximum.

Step 5: Submit

When you are satisfied with your animation, submit it to FIRST and your team dropbox so that your team gets to view it and so that we can enter the FIRST safety animation award.

This award is difficult to get because of the several other robotics teams that we are against for that award, so don't be discouraged if we don't get it. To submit it to the dropbox, you must open the Student Share Drive and open the Robotics folder. Then pull up your file from the original page, and drag and drop it into the folder. Most of the time, a subteam will use a communal Google Drive folder that has been shared with every person on the sut4eam in order to make submitting projects easier. This orks in the same way, you will need to pull up your Drive folder and open it, pull up your file explorer, find the file you want to submit, and drag and drop it into the open Drive folder.

Step 6: Enjoy!