



Assigning staff

Having reliable, competent, and trustworthy staff is essential for your competition to run smoothly and with as few incidents as possible. Here are some thoughts to have when assigning staff:

Pre-assigning

There are two main ways you can assign staff: you can either do it before the competition or find volunteers on the day of to work as judges, runners, scramblers, etc. Both have advantages and disadvantages, so you should be aware of them and pick the one that best fits your local community.

Pre-assigning staff can be done in one of two ways: You can either have dedicated staff or you can assign staff tasks to regular competitors in advance. For the latter, you may want to use [Groupifier](#), as it will automatically assign tasks to the competitors for you (for more information on how Groupifier works, check [this link](#)). If you need to make changes on the assignment, [AGE](#) ([see this](#)) may also be of help to you.

One of the many ways you can pre-assign staff is to assign competitors to staff the group right after they compete, and when it gets to the last group you can assign them to staff the first group of the round. The advantage of this method is that you avoid losing time looking for where people are (most people should be finishing their solves at about the same time, so many of them will already be near the solving area), and since competitors are staffing right after they finish their solves, you avoid running into the issue of calling people that did not show up at the competition. It also makes it easier for competitors to keep track of when they are supposed to be judging, scrambling, running, etc.

It's important to note that having a dedicated team of staff and pre-assigning staff tasks to competitors are not the same thing. With dedicated staff, you will have a hand-picked group of individuals who will be working as staff throughout the entire competition, often getting some perk in exchange for their work (e.g. being waived from registration). The advantage is not only that you can choose people more carefully, but you also have the time to ask questions and train them to make sure they are as qualified as you need. This process helps avoid losing time looking for volunteers at the competition. On the other hand, this selection process is going to cost you extra time and resources, since people often will want something in exchange for staffing throughout the whole competition (e.g. being waived from registration). For more information on waiving registration fees for staff, see section 1.3 of the [Code of Ethics](#).

You also need to be careful with dedicated staff to avoid picking more people than necessary (e.g. you should not have 40 dedicated staff members for a competition with 60 competitors). Sometimes you can get volunteers from the venue itself to work as staff for the competition, but since they are unlikely to be familiar with cubing, there will be some extra work teaching them how competition processes work.

Pre-assigning staff duties to competitors, on the other hand, is about having all tasks distributed among competitors. Everyone will help staff the competition at some point during the day, so nothing is given in exchange and each individual will have a lower workload (notice that there is no training nor a fancy selection process). Although this may result in slightly less qualified staff, there's no work needed for a selection process or training before the competition day (a judge tutorial or similar should still be in place at the competition), and you also reduce the costs of the competition while still getting the advantage of not wasting time at the competition looking for volunteers.

The pre-assigned system is a better fit if the local community is relatively new and doesn't have experience staffing or isn't familiar with the regulations. By training specific individuals beforehand you can achieve a higher quality staff than by teaching them at the competition only. If done correctly, pre-assigning will also result in a higher quality competition than assigning staff on the spot.



Assigning staff on the spot

If you assign staff at the competition, you will save time during the pre-comp work. However, you may have trouble finding people willing to help, and even if it only takes a couple of minutes to get enough volunteers, that can add up to a significant amount of time throughout the day. You need to take this into account when scheduling your competition. Keep in mind that some events will take longer to find staff than others (e.g. it's harder to find scramblers for 7x7 than for 2x2). This approach is useful if your local community is familiar with the regulations and if there are many people willing to help without getting anything in exchange.

At the competition

Regardless of the approach you end up taking, it is good to do some quick recap on the competition day covering the competing procedure, the most common mistakes (e.g. judges lifting the cover before the competitor is ready), and an overview of the most important regulations, such as common penalties or what to be on the lookout for (e.g. competitors wearing headphones while solving). **Always** make it clear that if the staff member is unsure about any decision or the action that should be taken, they should call the Delegate to help resolve the issue.

If you are going the dedicated staff path, you may consider using **staff groups** for the main event, or if you have many people registered in a round (that will usually be 3x3 round 1). A staff group is when all of the staff members compete at once just before the round is about to begin, that way you make them available to work on all the following groups for that round. However, you should avoid doing this for too many rounds in a single competition as that will most likely cost you more time than splitting the staff members across all the groups. On top of that, if staff groups are held at any time other than the regular groups for logistic purposes (e.g. during lunchtime), please make this clear on the competition schedule.

Combining systems

As you may have noticed by now, every approach to assigning staff has its own advantages and disadvantages, however, there is nothing preventing you from combining staff methods at the same competition. You need to be careful not to make a mess with the combinations, but in some scenarios, such as having a dedicated staff for the main event and having some competitors do staff tasks as well during other events, it might work well. By doing this, you won't fill your competition with too many staff groups. Another option is to assign more important duties (such as scrambling) to trusted individuals and let other people fill in the remaining tasks. Keep in mind that these are not the only combinations possible.

Most of the time there will not be any major issue to assign staff for the first rounds, but it may be difficult to know who is going to proceed to subsequent rounds, so it's important that you have more than one option of tasks distribution planned based on the competitors that will possibly be available.



General considerations when assigning staff

1. **Judges** should know at least the basic regulations (such as how to distinguish between common +2 penalties and DNFs) and should be focused on the competitor they are judging (e.g. you don't want judges who keep using their phones or cubing while judging).
2. **Scramblers** should be trustworthy people in order to avoid incorrect scrambles, and, if possible, it is useful to get help from the faster people at the event, as they will be able to scramble the puzzle quicker, often with greater accuracy. Faster competitors are also helpful in case of an incorrect scramble because they can also solve the puzzle faster. You should let your Delegate review the list of scramblers before the competition.
3. **Runners** should be people that are not too shy, as they might need to call the names a bit loud in noisier venues so that the competitors can hear them. Runners should also be attentive to competitors finishing their solves and puzzles being scrambled in order to efficiently transfer the puzzles between solving stations and the scrambling table. If possible, runners should also take multiple puzzles at once in order to avoid losing time. Being familiar with the community can help, but it's in no way mandatory.
4. **Score-taking** – It's better to have someone who's accurate, and attentive to details in order to spot missing signatures or digits and who is also relatively familiar with uploading results to [WCA Live](#). It is also beneficial to have someone with good typing skills so that they are able to keep up with all the results coming in and do not hold up subsequent rounds.