Questions Asked as a Judge

1 Handling a thrip infestation.

Recommend going to aos.org for a complete discussion of thrip control. If they want a quick answer, recommend insecticidal soaps, Malathion, acephate as common, not particularly toxic insect control measures. Discuss control measures like isolating the infected plants and quarantining any incoming plant.

2 Weak Plant

Ask about the plant’s growing conditions. Listen for any red flags that come up. Explain the importance of the timing of repotting, fertilizer amounts, humidity, light, etc. Talk about the particular plant’s needs based on what it is.

3 Inappropriate Medium

Recommend a medium best for the particular plant and the best timing for repotting. Recommend AOS Culture Sheets.

4 Stressed Blooms

As in #2, ask lots of questions about growing conditions. Recommend best practices based on AOS Culture Guidelines.

5 Pick a good one

Ask about growing conditions at their home. Based on their answers, make a few recommendations of orchid groups that might do well for them.

6 Award Worthy

Point out the good qualities of their plant. Talk a bit about what judges look for in the way of improvements over what has been awarded before and how high the bar is for their particular plant.