Frequent comments by judges:

- Ensure proper focus and sufficient depth of field to avoid missed shots.
- Avoid over-sharpening: It can make images look unnatural. Use selective sharpening instead of global adjustments if needed.
- Minimize over-processing, as it detracts from the natural quality of good images.
- For creative images, ensure the concept or message is clear to avoid viewer confusion.
- Prevent sensor spots by keeping the sensor clean, reducing the need for post-processing.
- Identify and address flaws such as artifacts, dust, halos, or file corruption—they're preventable.
- Focus on composition and strive for visual balance when traditional rules don't fit your subject.
- Capture the full dynamic range using bracketing for HDR or shooting in RAW, then adjust exposure bias during editing as needed.