

COACH'S LIST

Responsibilities:

- Communicator – (See contact list in yellow section.)
 - ◆ Team Members – Supply them with copies of problem and rules.
 - ◆ Parents – Meet and explain Odyssey of the Mind, expectations, meetings and time lines.
- Facilitator – meetings, resources, schedules...present and explain the rules and Long-term problem to the team, lead brainstorming sessions for the long-term and style, conduct and evaluate spontaneous practice sessions, provide resource options by training team members in various tasks (art, acting, construction), bring guest speaker, films, videos, and field trips. Your teams' ideas will guide you to know when and what to do.

Because the coach is not allowed to give ideas, suggestions or to help solve the problem, it takes a certain amount of finesse to lead the team through the problem-solving process.

Responsibilities:

- Attend at least one Coaches' Training session (even if experienced).
- Set meeting schedule.
 - We recommend not more than 2 hours per week in the beginning although your team may need to schedule more time as they near competition in order to complete their solution.
- Coordinate with parent support team to determine duties and responsibilities
 - Snacks
 - Carpooling
 - Field Trips
 - T-shirts
- Prepare team meeting agenda.
- Keep team focused on task at hand.
- Keep meeting minutes for younger teams so they can review their work at next meeting. (Older team members can keep their own minutes/notes.)
- Make sure teams are solving their problem within the rules and limitations of the problem. (This is not Outside Assistance—Coach may not tell team how to fix problems, however.)
- Arrange with parent support team for field trips or research materials if necessary and requested by team.
- Arrange for guest speaker or demonstration of techniques if requested by team.
- Work with school Membership Coordinator to make sure memberships are paid, team is registered for tournament/special events and that t-shirt orders are submitted on time.
- Help team keep track of mandatory paperwork for tournament.
- Work with parents to coordinate tournament agenda including transport of scenery, meeting place/time and presentation/spontaneous locations, lunch/snacks, Odyssey of the Mind Store and Awards Ceremony.

The Coach is NOT responsible for:

- Solving the problem, giving ideas or doing research. (In fact, it's against the rules!)
- Team extras such as snacks, carpooling, t-shirt or entertainment costs.
- Daycare.
 1. A volunteer coach is not required to allow a team member who is continually disruptive to attend meetings (although that student's name must remain on the roster).
 2. Parents should respect the coaches' time investment by picking up team members from meetings and events at the agreed time.

YOU MAY NOT CONTRIBUTE IDEAS TO THE LONG-TERM PROBLEM OR STYLE

RELAX AND HAVE FUN—IT'S NOT YOUR PROBLEM!!!!

Coaching Do's

- ✓ Do teach your students the creative problem-solving process and use it throughout the problem solution.
- ✓ Do help students to understand that winning is not the goal. The process of getting there is the important thing—not the competition.
- ✓ Do help students to see and recognize the abilities of each team member and encourage team members to capitalize on the individual strengths of all.
- ✓ Do encourage growth through each new experience.
- ✓ Do help them get organized and note the importance of keeping a schedule and meeting deadlines.
- ✓ Do help them expand their minds, dig deeper, and come up with more creative ideas.
- ✓ Do work with teams on the Spontaneous problem part of the program.
- ✓ Do try always to answer a question with a question.
- ✓ Do help team member's give and take constructive criticism of IDEAS but avoid insulting and insensitive personal remarks.
- ✓ Do be willing to admit you don't know everything and encourage your team to get help from others. (Be careful with this one!)
- ✓ Do help them learn how to evaluate their ideas and progress continually throughout each aspect of the problem solution.
- ✓ Do go over the score results with the team after a competition to help it improve in the future.
- ✓ Do set a good example of adult behavior and by all means be a good role model for your team and others.
- ✓ Do let your team members know you are human and have needs also.
- ✓ Do be a quiet "guide on the side" not the "sage on the stage."

Coaching Don'ts

- Don't tell your team how to solve the problem, but rather, ask questions that help them think it through.
- Don't allow any criticism of teammates' personalities or physical attributes—no cutting remarks.
- Don't step in on team disagreements. Let them work it out as part of learning to work as a team.
- Don't limit creativity by setting restrictions that are too tight or which reflect your own, perhaps, limited vision.
- Don't get disturbed when teams make mistakes along the way. This is part of the Odyssey of the Mind learning process.
- Don't allow students to be irresponsible. Help them realize this hinders the entire team.
- Don't make the team feel like they have failed if they don't win. Failing is only when they allow their score to keep them from trying again.
- Don't complain about other teams, coaches or judges.
- Don't allow your team to prepare a problem solution which knowingly goes against the Spirit of the Problem or any of the limitations given in the problem itself. **READ, READ AND REREAD THE PROBLEM AND THEN READ, READ, READ SOME MORE!**
- Don't dispute a judges' ruling without explaining the scoring problem to your team first. Always be sure your dispute is valid and that the team wishes to carry it further.
- Don't get uptight. Remember that the team members are the ones who have to know everything or find out. You are the coach and are not supposed to produce the problem solution.

Relax and enjoy seeing these young, creative minds at work!

Odyssey of the Mind Coaching Reminders

A coach is a person.....

- Who wants to be involved in the education of kids.
- Who can facilitate a team or can learn to facilitate a team.
- Who does not mind a messy house/garage/basement.
- Who enjoys creativity.
- Who loves working with kids.
- Who understands that kids solve the problem, not the adults.

A coach is NOT a person.....

- Who has to control all activity.
- Who has to have a well-ordered life style.
- Who has to always have a perfect house.
- Who cannot think “outside of the box”.
- Who cannot let kids do their own thing.

Roles of an Odyssey Coach

- The coach has *no decision-making authority regarding the problem solution*.
- The coach interacts with the team to improve the way the team identifies and solves problems.
- The coach gets all team members involved in the process of issue identification, idea generation, solution finding and solution presentation.
- The coach helps the team develop strategies, generate ideas, evaluate options or make decisions.
- The coach helps the team produce fresh ideas, out-of-the-box thinking, enhanced teamwork, and better communications among the team.
- The coach provides for the team a safe environment with no criticism while the team develops their solution.
- The coach reads and re-reads the long-term problem and Program Guide; and encourages the team to do likewise.
- The coach develops a timeline, working backwards from the competition date, including holidays and school breaks.