



# What's a Coach to Do?

## A "To Do" List for Odyssey of the Mind<sup>®</sup> Coaches

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Now that you have your Odyssey of the Mind membership materials for 2005-2006, you may be asking yourself what to do next. Here are some tips to get you started.

- **READ the 2005-2006 Odyssey of the Mind Program Guide from front to back.** Even if you've read the guide before, read it again this year. It's revised every year, with rules updated, and new rules and information added. Refer to it often throughout the year.
- **GET STUDENTS interested and involved.** Show enthusiasm. Announce your school's participation over the P.A. system, hang posters, and have teachers recommend that students participate.
- **HOLD A MEETING of all interested students.** Present the long-term problems. Ask students to sign up for the problem that interests them. Form teams from the sign-up lists. Give each team a copy of its chosen problem.
- **GET AT LEAST one coach per team.** Ask teachers and parents to help. A co-coach or assistant coach can help share responsibilities.
- **CREATE A PRACTICE SCHEDULE and set basic rules.** Stress the importance of attending meetings and practice sessions. Set down rules for good sportsmanship and constructive criticism.
- **ENCOURAGE TEAM MEMBERS to work cooperatively.** Teamwork is one of the basic principles of Odyssey of the Mind. All teams go through growing pains, but members will learn to work together in time.
- **DO NOT HELP the team solve the problem.** A coach is to help team members develop creative problem-solving skills, not help solve the problem. Before giving any input, ask yourself if it would add to or improve the team's solution (outside assistance), or if it would teach better problem-solving skills (good coaching).
- **LEARN ABOUT the spontaneous competition.** Practice Spontaneous at every team meeting. Books of practice problems are available at [odysseyofthemind.com/shop/](http://odysseyofthemind.com/shop/).
- **CONTACT your local association director.** This person will be able to provide information about local Coaches Training Workshops, and tournament dates and locations. If there is no director for your state or country, contact CCI.
- **MAKE SURE you have your membership card.** Your team will need it to compete. If it's not in your packet, contact your business office to see if your purchase order has been paid.
- **STAY UP-TO-DATE with problem clarifications.** Check [odysseyofthemind.com/clarifications/](http://odysseyofthemind.com/clarifications/) on a regular basis.
- **SUGGEST SUBMITTING a problem clarification if your team is unsure of an aspect of its solution.** Cut-off for submitting questions is March 1, 2006.
- **COPY AND DISTRIBUTE materials to all teams within your membership if you are listed as the contact.** If not, check in regularly with the person who is listed as the contact, since that person will receive any information mailed from CCI throughout the year.