

Dear Odyssey of the Mind Membership Coordinator,

This Membership Coordinator's Handbook has been developed to help you start the program at your school or community group and carry out all the details of your duties. It is not meant to be overwhelming, but rather, one source that you can turn to when you need information and tools to do your job quickly and easily.

You are free to copy any and all pages in this book. Pages on coaching have been included here – even if you are not coaching, it is helpful for the Membership Coordinator to have a full understanding of the Coaches' role as well.

We also recommend that you do the following to make your job less hectic:

1. You will receive a hard copy of the Program Guide and Long Term Problems when you complete your membership application. In addition, you will find each of these items in electronic form online on the membership site of www.odysseyofthemind.com
2. Copy all national newsletters as they arrive at your school. Send copies on to your coaches. Keep the originals in the Handbook. State newsletters will come via email. Please forward these on to coaches and parents.
3. Keep copies of completed membership and registration forms with your membership information. Be sure to record the check numbers and the dates they were sent.

Finally, the suggestions in this book are not intended to replace any systems already in place at your school that are making your Odyssey program successful. Not all of the suggestions are appropriate for every age group or every situation. Work with your school administrators, coaches and parents to find the combination of tools that work best for you.

Thank you for all the time and attention you put into your school's Odyssey program. Your teams could not do it without you!

Sincerely,

Jenny Zachry

Jenny Zachry, Association Director
And the
Utah Odyssey of the Mind Board of Directors

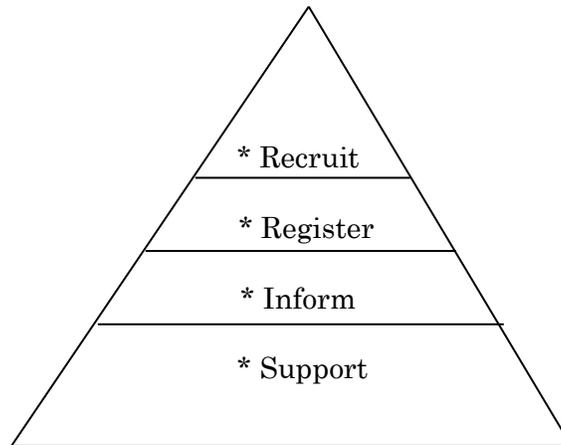
The Importance of the Membership Coordinator

The Odyssey of the Mind Membership Coordinator is the quiet “behind the scenes” volunteer, but is **the most important link between team and tournament**. With the diligent support of a Membership Coordinator, your school’s teams will compete successfully with other teams at the State Tournament.

Your job as Membership Coordinator is very important. This job takes planning and attention to detail but it does not have to be a drain on your time. The Membership Coordinator may feel free to delegate Odyssey of the Mind tasks and/or ask for help from parents, school administrators, State Directors or former Odyssey participants in order to stay on top of the duties.

Just remember that your teams and coaches will be counting on you to make sure all the details are taken care of as they prepare to compete.

MEMBERSHIP COORDINATOR DUTIES



Your time is valuable so we have included some tools and tips that can ensure the success of your teams and make your job much easier.

Membership Coordinator Job Description

A Membership Coordinator acts as a liaison between Utah Odyssey of the Mind, and their school, principal, parents, teams and coaches.

Recruiting

- Generate student interest
- Coordinate coaches and co-coaches
- Help form teams
- Match teams/coaches/parents
- Recruit tournament judges

Register

- Order national membership(s)
- Register teams at the state level
- Keep problem/division assignments current for all teams (membership roster)
- Keep team/coach/parent information current (team roster)
- Register teams for regional tournament and special events (if any)
- Help order team T-shirts

Inform, Inform, Inform!

- Make a copy of membership card for each team.
- Make sure coaches have copies of the most current team roster.
- Make copies of all Odyssey newsletters upon receipt and distribute immediately (or in the case of electronic newsletters, forward them accordingly).
- Ensure that all coaches attend a Coaches' training --- teams will be assessed a fee if no coach attends an official Utah Odyssey of the Mind Coaches' training. As a coordinator, you might consider attending a training session so you are more aware of what is involved in coaching and can be more helpful to your coaches.
- Assist your teams and coaches with tournament forms. (Copies of forms can be downloaded from the national website: www.odysseyofthemind.com as they become available.
- Let your principals, teachers and school office know about the dates and locations of important regional and state tournaments as well as World Finals.
- Attend any scheduled virtual meetings for Membership Coordinators to stay on top of important information about the state tournament.

Support:

- Advertise OotM in your school. Back to school night, newsletters, posters, parent meetings, announcements, newspaper, etc. are good ways to accomplish this. Board Members from Utah Odyssey of the Mind are available to attend these meetings and present as well.
- Recruit coaches.
- Help coaches find volunteers and judges.
- Hold periodic meetings with coaches to discuss team concerns and to plan a practice performance for the student body before the tournament.

- Encourage your principals, teachers, students and all school parents to support your teams at tournament. Give them accurate information regarding performance times and locations as soon as you receive it.
- Recognize your teams' hard work in a school-wide presentation of certificates.

Membership Coordinator Survival Tips

- Make sure the principal, teachers and administrative staff at your school knows that Odyssey of the Mind is an active program and that you are the person in charge.
- Set up an Odyssey of the Mind mailbox in your school mailroom.
- Order your Odyssey memberships early and keep a copy of your teams' membership card(s) in a handy place. You never know when you will need it.
- Become familiar with the rules. Read the Program Guide even if you read them last year!
- Attend Coaches' Training. The more you know, the more successful your program can be!
- Contact the Association Director in early fall to be sure you and your school are on the current mailing list.
- Know your coaches and team parents. Make sure that everyone is comfortable with meeting locations and times.
- Check your school's policy regarding volunteers who work with children. Some districts require background checks to ensure the safety of the students.
- Find out about your school's policy regarding use of the school facilities and equipment. Are there any restrictions regarding use of the school building for team meetings or prop storage? Do they allow use of shop facilities, computer lab, etc.?
- Keep Membership Roster(s) and Team Roster(s) current for easy reference.
- Check in with your coaches often. Schedule meetings every six weeks to go over questions, concerns and tournament plans.
- Have a team/coach/parent meeting one week before tournament to discuss logistics and behavioral expectations of team members, coaches and parents.
- Attend all your teams' performances if you are not judging.
- Never give up an opportunity to promote Odyssey of the Mind in your school. The more informed your parents and students are about Odyssey, the more successful your program will be!

Hints for Generating Student Interest

Although your school may not have the opportunity to use all the hints below, feel free to use all or part of the ideas to let students and parents know about your Odyssey of the Mind program. Some of your previous years' Odyssey of the Mind Coaches may have some fun ideas as well so be sure to include them in your recruiting efforts!

- Have teams perform in spring for the entire student body or homeroom classes. Take names of students who show interest in participating for the following year. Be sure to invite those students and their parents to your Odyssey of the Mind Information Meeting in the fall.
- In the fall, have former team members talk about their Odyssey of the Mind experiences at assembly or in homeroom classes. Have last year's team members show videos and pictures if possible. Have students fill out a Student Interest Questionnaire and sign up to be invited to an Odyssey Information Meeting to be held with interested students and parents.
- At Back-to-School night, post the current Synopsis of Problems, pictures of Odyssey teams and display certificates and/or medals if any. Show the short "Odyssey of the Mind Awareness" video or the longer "Now You're On an Odyssey of the Mind Team" video. Have parents and students sign up for invitation to Odyssey Information Night.
- Hold a short Spontaneous demonstration in classes and/or Back-to-School night.
- At the High School level, have teachers post the synopsis of problems in a conspicuous spot in their classrooms with a sign-up sheet. Make sure all students who indicate an interest are given copies of the problems and names of other interested students.

Preparing for Your School's Odyssey of the Mind Information Meeting

- Consult with your school administrator to select the most ideal date and time for your Odyssey of the Mind Information Meeting.
- Advertise the meeting date, time and place in the school newsletter, on posters in the halls and over the PA system.
- Specifically invite parents of children who have expressed an interest in Odyssey of the mind through your school recruiting efforts (see Generating Student Interest)
- Contact experienced coaches to help you promote the program at your first meeting.
- Invite experienced team members to share their experiences with prospective team members, parents and coaches.
- Arrange for audiovisual equipment for any videos or overhead presentations you would like to make.
- Have copies of the original problems, the rulebook and the manual available for team members and coaches.

- Make two copies of the Membership roster form and make as many copies of the Team Roster form as you think you may have teams.
- Get a copy of the school calendar from the office. Make sure all school holidays and special events through the end of the school year are included.
- Have printed copies of Coaches' Training dates/locations and tournament information for teams, parent and coaches.

Hold a Parents Meeting

- Explain the program.
 - It is a program for the children (outside assistance rule).
 - Children are allowed to take risks in a safe environment.
- Explain the problem the team selected.
- Explain the assistance that you need from parents.
 - Commitment of child and parent
 - Co-coaching
 - Assist in teaching skills that the team discovers it needs; the rule that says if you can find it in a book, someone can teach the skill (e.g. acting, welding)
 - Identify friends that have skills that the team finds that it needs to learn
 - Host practice sessions
 - Provide refreshments
 - Chaperone the team at competitions
 - Donate materials (paint, cardboard, etc.) to be used in the solution
 - Provide transportation to get materials, for field trips, and the tournament
 - Volunteer at tournaments (judge, sales or other positions)

Information Meeting Sample Agenda

(Members of the Utah Odyssey of the Mind Board of Directors are available to present at meetings as well).

Greetings and introductions of parents and students

Brief outline of Odyssey of the Mind program

- What is Odyssey of the Mind?
- What it means to be an Odyssey of the Mind member school
- Teams, problems, divisions

Testimonials of former team members and coaches or group spontaneous demonstration

Video presentation (*"A Creative Experience"* or a video of your school's team(s) from prior years).

Description of this year's problems and tournament / Odyssey of the Mind event schedule.

Describe team and parent support team commitment.

- Recruit coaches – (Be specific on what is expected. See Coaches' Responsibilities.)

- Solicit Parent Help – (See Parent Support Team.)
- Form teams using copies of problems, Student Interest Questionnaire, Team Roster, and Student/Parent Contract.

Set up timeline for beginning team meetings. Give new coaches a copy of first meeting agenda. Questions and answers.

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER

Dear Parent:

At a recent school presentation, your child expressed an interest in participating in the Odyssey of the Mind program.

Odyssey of the Mind is an extracurricular activity that teaches children creative problem-solving skills and teamwork. Working with one or more parent/volunteer coaches, our Odyssey team members will work together to solve one of the problems described on the attached synopsis. The team(s) will then present their solution(s) at the Odyssey of the Mind State Tournament this coming spring.

Odyssey of the Mind is an exciting opportunity for your child to learn problem-solving skills while having lot of fun! You and your child are invited to attend an

Odyssey of the Mind Information Meeting
(LOCATION)
(DATE)
(TIME)

If you are unable to attend this meeting, but would like additional information about Odyssey of the Mind in our school, please call me at (phone).

Sincerely,

(Your name)
(School) Odyssey of the Mind Coordinator

Heads Up On Forming Teams and Assigning Problems

Forming Teams

Many students are very excited about the prospects of being turned loose to solve problems their own way. This strict point of Odyssey of the Mind is the very thing that makes it so popular and for this reason, there may be more students interested in Odyssey than your program can accommodate. Below are some points to consider as you are forming teams in your school. Not all suggestions are appropriate for all situations.

- Remember that every team must have at least one coach of record who is over 18 years old and willing to accept the responsibility of working with the team on a regular basis.
- Do not set up expectations that may be impossible to meet, i.e., too many team members, and not enough coaches.
- When faced with teams without coaches, we offer the following suggestions:
 1. Ask parents of team members to consider co-coaching to share responsibilities.
 2. Recruit teachers. Check with your district to see if it offers CDE credit for teacher coaches.
 3. Contact former coaches from your school.
 4. If a parent is willing to be a coach of record with help, ask former OM participants from high school or college to work with the team regularly.
 5. Contact community volunteer organizations such as YMCA or a professional fraternity that may have people willing to coach. (We recommend that a teacher or parent always attend meetings to help these volunteers manage the team.)
- Children of coaches should always be given a chance to participate on a team even if not on the same team.
- Age, problem, interest or location of practice site can group teams.

Assigning the Problems

- Use the Student Interest Questionnaire to help assign problems according to preference.

- Teams with long history of success may wish to stay together and select their problem first.
- Younger teams may wish to be assigned problems with less technical requirements.
- Maximize your membership dollars by assigning all problems in the needed divisions before buying a second membership.

Tips When Selecting a Team

- Get recommendations from teachers.
- Announce tryouts using spontaneous problems or find enough coaches for all the students.
- Post a sign up list. If more than seven students sign up for a Division/Problem, have an intramural competition to choose a team to represent the school, OR purchase additional memberships.
- Remember that you should have at least five, but no more than seven, team members for a single long-term problem.
- You may want to start with six team members, leaving the door open to select an additional team member later if the need arises.

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.

As noted in earlier sections, the Membership Coordinator and every coach need a copy of:

- Calendar for Odyssey of the Mind trainings, etc.
- Program Guide
- The problem your team is going to solve
- Complete copy of the clarifications – Your team sends for these (see the rulebook or the back of the long-term problem and/or print them out from the national website: www.odysseyofthemind.com).
- Your school's Odyssey of the Mind Membership Card
- T-shirt/pin design form
- Spontaneous Day Registration Form
- Tournament Registrations Form(s)
- Volunteer Form(s)
- Judges' Form and Description of Positions
- Clarification Form(s) (Can be found in Program Guide)
- Outside Assistance Form(s) (Can be found in Program Guide)
- Style Form(s) (Can be found in Program Guide)
- Material (Cost) Form(s) (Can be found in Program Guide)
- Any permission forms required by your school district.

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

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

Coaches' Responsibilities

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.

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.

Preparation for Tournament Day

- On Tournament Day, the coach needs to spend time with the team and not chasing last minute problems. Enlist help from the parents.
- Make sure the parents know the location of the competition site and the team's performance schedule.
- Make a checklist of things that the team needs.
 - Props
 - Repair Kit
 - Forms, including Clarifications (See Program Guide)
 - Snacks
 - Activities
- Get parents to take care of transporting the props. They need to know where and when to meet the team.
- Visit the problem site with the team early so they can see the layout of the site and the location of entrances, exits, Staging Area, and judges. The team needs to make any changes to their plan caused by the site setup well before their performance time.
- Unpack and check all props before you go to the competition site.
- Get to the long-term competition site at least 20 minutes early, unless your tournament has different rules.
- Have parents assigned to take care of props after the competition.
- Get to the spontaneous site early enough so the team members can have some quiet time before they enter. Know how long it takes your team to warm up prior to starting spontaneous and what activity is needed to warm them up.

The Bottom Line

You are starting a journey that is fun and rewarding to both you and the team members. There will be trying times and fun times, but remember always—it is finishing the problem solution, not the competition, that counts—so have fun!!!

The Utah Odyssey of the Mind State Tournament

Preparing for the State Tournament takes careful planning. To compete, your team must first register and pay State Tournament fees. You will need to make plans for transporting props, finding your performance site and meeting your teammates.

The tournament committee tries very hard to schedule teams for Long-term and Spontaneous so they are not rushed nor are they stuck in one area for the day. In fairness to all teams who compete at the State Tournament, no team may be guaranteed preferred schedule requests.

Teams competing at the State Tournament should plan on an all-day experience whether they are traveling across the state or across the city. While planning for the State Tournament, don't forget:

- ✓ To register for the State Tournament in a timely manner.
- ✓ To include parents and grandparents.
- ✓ About lunch, snacks and dinner before the awards ceremony.
- ✓ To invite your principal and teachers.
- ✓ To budget for the Odyssey of the Mind store.

All registration must be done online at www.utahodyssey.org.

ODYSSEY OF THE MIND WORLD FINALS

Winners of the Ranatra Fusca Award and first and second place teams in each division of each problem from the Utah State Tournament are invited to participate in the Odyssey of the Mind World Finals. **The 20114 World Finals will be held in Iowa May 28th – May 31st, 2014.**

World Finals is like nothing else you or your students have ever attended. Over 5000 participants (almost 15000 people total) from 15 different countries come together to celebrate creativity, problem solving and teamwork. Teams can buddy up with an international team, participate in the Creativity Festival, and meet new friends from around the world all in addition to a Spontaneous Competition unlike anything else (yelling, cheering and loud noise is usually frowned upon for Spontaneous, but not at World Finals!!) Team coaches and parents who are prepared for their team's victory at the State Tournament have a wonderful time as well. It's never too early to start thinking "What if we win?!"

When planning for World Finals, the first obstacle to consider is cost. After winning the State Tournament, teams will have only a few short weeks to finance their trip. The cost for this event is approximately \$550 per child to participate and includes the tournament fee, housing and food. In addition to these fees, your team must figure in the cost of transportation to get there and prop freight. Pins for trading, Odyssey of the Mind Store and souvenir purchases are usually the responsibility of the individual child. Parent travel and lodging (coaches excluded) are the responsibility of the individual families.

It's easy to do a little homework now to see what kind of support is available if your team goes on to World Finals.

- ◆ Does your school have a fund for special projects?
- ◆ How much is your school district willing to contribute to this type of event?
- ◆ Does your parent-teacher organization have a contingency fund that could be used to help defray costs?
- ◆ Does your parent-teacher organization have favorite fund raising companies that they feel could be put into place quickly and that will turn a big enough profit?
- ◆ What area businesses are known for supporting excellence in student academics?

Watch for fundraising tips throughout the year. One of the best things to do is to start a pledge-a-thon so that participants can get pledges of donations in the case they are eligible for Worlds. That way, once State Tournament is over, all they have to do is go back to those who have pledged!

The World Finals Winners packet distributed to each winning team has all the information needed to make plans immediately after picking up awards. The Utah Odyssey of the Mind Board of Directors begins working closely with teams to make sure that every detail is taken care of and everyone has a great time!

Setting Up an Odyssey of the Mind School Performance

Why have an Odyssey of the Mind school performance?

1. It gives the team a chance to perform once in front of a live audience before the tournament.
 2. It gives the rest of the student body a chance to express their support and wish the team well at the tournament.
 3. It gives the rest of the student body a chance to find out about Odyssey of the Mind and the fun of creative problem-solving.
- ◆ Check the school calendar and schedule the performance well in advance. Don't wait until your school has scheduled too many other events to fit it in.
 - ◆ The ideal performance will take place at least one week prior to the regional or state tournament so the team can work out any performance bugs before the competition.
 - ◆ Schedule the performance for an all-school assembly during school hours if possible so all of the team's friends can be there.
 - ◆ Invite all teachers, staff members, team parents and other interested parents.
 - ◆ Allow each team at least 10 minutes so they can give the audience a short synopsis of the problem and do the performance.
 - ◆ Give the audience a chance to ask all the teams questions after the performances.
 - ◆ Let the audience know where and when the teams will be competing so they can go to support them.

Clarifications

While the Odyssey of the Mind Long-term problems are written very carefully and as clearly as possible, they are still very dynamic. As teams develop their solutions, they may interpret the problem in a way that wasn't envisioned when the problem was written. If the team is concerned that their idea may violate the Spirit of the Problem, they should write the national Odyssey of the Mind for a clarification. Procedures for requesting a clarification are found in the School Program Rulebook.

Every team is responsible for being aware of all general clarifications published for their problem. It is important that you, as the Membership Coordinator, keep in touch with your coaches to ensure that their team checks clarifications on a regular basis and keeps their solution within the guidelines provided by the problem and the clarification.

There are a couple of ways to do this:

- a) You can take responsibility for checking all clarifications for each problem and providing copies to your coaches, or
- b) Make your coaches and teams responsible for checking clarifications for their problem.

Whatever method you choose, you can help your coaches and teams avoid problems at the regional and state tournaments by continually making them aware of the need to be current and aware of all clarifications for their problem.

NOTE: The methods for checking clarifications are published in the Program Guide and in each Long-term Problem. The website address is: www.odysseyofthemind.com. Also, you need to be aware that clarifications may come out between each level of competition.

Recruiting Judges

Utah Odyssey of the Mind is a completely volunteer run organization. Therefore, we ask each membership to provide judges and volunteers for the state tournaments. When you think about it, it does make sense. After all, the way to ensure fair representation by judges is for every team or membership to provide volunteers! If every team and membership provides trained judges, the tournament is assured of running smoothly with no single volunteer doing all the work. Teams are given the time and attention they deserve by unhurried, qualified judges who are having fun!

Prospective judges must commit to a half-day training (on a Saturday) and to a full Saturday at a state tournament.

Below are some tricks to identify and recruit judges who may end up making a commitment to represent your team/membership for years to come.

- ❖ Take your time looking for an adult who enjoys working with kids. (Judges must be over 18 and out of high school.) Don't settle for just a warm body!
- ❖ Identify the people in your school and/or community who get excited about innovations and creativity in education.
- ❖ Talk to the principal, teachers, aides and administrative staff at your school who have expressed an interest in Odyssey of the Mind and have been eager to support the team(s).
- ❖ Call some of the larger businesses and churches in your area to see if they have a community volunteer program.
- ❖ Don't forget to give parents who have expressed an interest in Odyssey of the Mind a chance to find out how it all works by making a minimal commitment! This is an excellent opportunity for parents whose children were not able to compete in the current year but are looking at it for the future. (Former judges make excellent future coaches!)
- ❖ And what about former coaches from your school? Many retired coaches are itching for the chance to sit on the "other side!"

- ❖ Team parents are eligible to judge, but remember that most parents want to see their own children perform. If a parent does express an interest in judging, please ask him/her to train in a different problem from their child's.

PERMISSION SLIPS

Each school district may require their own specific sets of permissions slips for Odyssey of the Mind activities. Please check with your principal to determine what your school district requires.

Utah Odyssey of the Mind requires a Media Release from every participant and coach. These are available in the forms section of your Coordinator Handbook.

Utah Odyssey of the Mind
~ what creative minds crave!