



## Tasks and Dates for Organizing and Executing OM

This list is not comprehensive and is based only on my years as a coordinator. Each school is different and each communication process needs to be tailored.

### **August**

1. Inform regional directors that you are the coordinator for the school; make sure you're on their email list.
2. Identify former coordinator and current PTA and school Odyssey "champions" or supporters. Confirm budget and support from PTA. Confirm CEU options for teacher-coaches/judges from principal.
3. Submit membership application via region to get discount (if available).
4. Identify school officials responsible for communications (PA announcements, Keep-In-Touch, newsletters, mailings). Learn when orientation and back-to-school nights are.
5. Determine official ways to communicate Odyssey information per above.
6. Pick a date and sign up for a room to have first Odyssey information meeting in late September or early October; identify place registration forms can be delivered at school for your pickup; arrange for TV, projector or other equipment.
7. Create Odyssey information flier and Odyssey information meeting invitation; mail it to all students via newsletter or take-home mailings; put copies in front office.
8. Arrange for table at orientation and back-to-school night with someone to man it and materials to hand out.

### **September**

9. Orientation table.
10. Confirm existing teams with existing coaches and invite them to help at meeting.
11. Set agenda and materials for meeting, including a presentation, spontaneous problems, veteran students and coaches to help, registration forms.
12. Attend first PTA meeting and confirm that you're coordinating Odyssey; ask for volunteers; confirm budget support (and whether PTA will pay for 2<sup>nd</sup> membership, coaches training, registrations, t-shirts). Confirm reimbursement process.
13. Attend coordinator's orientation (email from Coordinator Liaison will list date).
14. Back-to-school night table.
15. Throughout year, forward relevant emails from Coordinator Liaison to all coaches.
16. Send out last-minute information meeting reminders (via PA, Keep-in-Touch).

### **October**

17. Hold first information meeting, highlight deadline for returning registrations, hammer on need for coaches.
18. Create Excel spreadsheet for keeping up with team members and helping form teams.

19. Form teams with given information.
20. Email out team status information to ALL interested parties right away, including all kids – to inform them that you are in the process of forming teams and will be getting back to them. Confirm existing teams with existing coaches.
21. Email to all coaches: include team member contact info and information about their mentors; ask for feedback and any identified problems; tell them to contact their team members by email AND phone and get back to you to confirm that they have done this. **IMPORTANT:** Send information about official team number and zip “code” for downloading all necessary information, including long-term problems, from website.
22. Call all coaches to confirm that they received your email!
23. Email to coaches: Reminder of coaches training; reminder that coaches meeting is planned ; ask for further confirmation of unresolved issues. Remind them of code and downloadable info, and of resource websites. Always ask for confirmation that they received your emails. Ask whether they’re attending coaches training.
24. Email to coaches: Arrange for first coaches’ meeting scheduled for late October or early November. Include forms and any background info, such as medical form, emailed program guide (even though they can get it from website).

## **November**

25. Email to coaches: Information about managing money and reimbursements, give them any information that has come up in private discussion that could be useful to all.
26. Email to coaches: Agenda for first coaches’ meeting; coaches training reminders and request again for info on whether they’re attending.
27. Email to mentors: Ask how things are going.
28. First coaches meeting: Confirm all teams, problems, issues, etc.; inform of what to expect in coming months; identify someone to take on t-shirts, spontaneous invitational, resources; begin search for judges and volunteers. Hand out materials like first meeting agendas, example expense forms, Odyssey forms, example long-term problems.
29. Coaches training.
30. Coaches meeting follow-ups as needed.

## **December**

31. Email to coaches: Reminder that they need judges and to be prepared to register teams; tell them to tell you who their judges and volunteers are so they can be coordinated.
32. Email to coaches: 2<sup>nd</sup> Coaches meeting in late December if needed.
33. Coaches meeting: Resolve issues; discuss registrations, volunteers, judges, January events, T-shirts, spontaneous, etc.
34. Email to coaches: Hang in there! Your team may not seem to be progressing, but everyone is in the same boat. Things pick up in January!
35. Email to coaches: Reminder that problem captain meetings are in January and can be valuable. Reminder that TJ Spontaneous is coming up and to watch for information.
36. Order second and third memberships if needed.

## **January**

37. First week in January: Confirm that all coaches have judges and are registering teams. Follow up right before registration deadline and right after. Remind coaches that team numbers may change and will be confirmed by regional directors as late as mid-February; hold off on signs.
38. Second week: Remind coaches of problem captain meetings and encourage them to attend; remind them of TJ spontaneous invitational (and/or one you're doing).
39. Problem captain meetings
40. TJ Spontaneous invitational (might be in February)
41. Email to coaches: Plan for third coaches meeting.-
42. Third coaches meeting: Spontaneous problems/invitational, paperwork, what to expect at meet, T-shirts, news articles, arrange to present skits at school, reminder that judges training is in February and judges should be reminded, plans for celebrations/announcements, etc.
43. Continue with upbeat reminders to all coaches. Keep on top of receipts. Keep on top of regional info.

## **February**

44. Send out samples of everything to all coaches: All the forms with some reminders, coaches checklist, sample information sheet for team parents, warnings, advisories, cheerleads, spontaneous problems.
45. Email to coaches AND teams: Deadline for clarifications reminder. What is outside assistance reminder – and that this is very tempting along about now, and to keep a lid on parents! Reminder that emergency forms are needed by coaches for their team members. Make sure you have all cell phone contacts for coaches for day of meet. Rah rah.
46. T-shirt follow-up and distribution.
47. Judges training (not much needed here).
48. Several upbeat emails to ask how things are going, give reminders, get feedback, give advice as needed.
49. End of February: Remind all coaches AND team members that the best part is already done and the meet is the “icing on the cake.” Lots of rah rah now. Remind parents that outside assistance is absolutely not allowed and to sit on their hands and bite their lips at the meet, and that they can't attend spontaneous; give them thanks and encouragement as well.
50. Last-minute information; plans for celebrations; plans for post-mortems.

## **March**

51. The Meet. Coordinators be prepared with all contact information.
52. Team celebrations! Thank-you notes! Ceremonies! Coaches Meeting – Post-mortems!
53. State and National meet!

## **May-June-July**

54. Get the budget nailed from the PTA for next year! Succession planning.

### **Websites:**

**[www.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.odysseyofthemind.com) (National; go to photo gallery!)**

**[www.novasouth.org](http://www.novasouth.org) (Regional website; local events)**

**[www.va.odysseyofthemind.com](http://www.va.odysseyofthemind.com) (Virginia website; has coaches handbook)**