



Tip Tuesday #12

Getting Back on Track

Happy New Year! Don't be alarmed if it is January and your team still doesn't have...

- Any costumes
- Any props
- Any other major parts of their solution completed

This is NORMAL. Remember that this Odyssey of the Mind experience may be the first time that the team has had to be entirely dependent on themselves to complete the work. No teacher to direct the play and provide costumes, no parent help on completing projects at home, no sibling help with ideas. But there will be a much greater sense of pride and accomplishment when they present their solution and know they did it all themselves! **No matter where the team is in completing their solution, come to the tournament and let them share their ideas and creations (thus far).** The judges will be kind, supportive, and want to give the team the points they earn. They will listen to the team share ideas after the performance.

No Outside Assistance Don't let the upcoming tournament date tempt you or parents into providing ideas or physical help to the team as they work on their solution. The team CAN do it! Your roles right now are:

- **Cheerleader**- Keep reminding them that they can do it, and to keep trying if something didn't work as they hoped.
- **TaskMaster**- Provide the list of things that still need to be completed. Help the team break these into smaller tasks, if necessary. Call out time remaining before a scheduled snack break or the end of the meeting.
- **Counselor**-Listen if team members become upset, provide time or a fun activity to help them calm down, then help them get back on task.
- **Spontaneous Coach**-If the team gets stuck and something isn't working, have the team solve a simple spont problem... Name different ways that you can attach things. Name different ways to get something to stand upright. Name different ways you can use (this material).

Schedule Adjustments? If it works with your schedule and the team, add an additional day of meeting each week, or on a weekend, or make the meeting a little longer. Ask the team what tasks they are willing to complete at home before the next meeting. Call it their Special Secret Assignment (not homework).

Breathe. Remember that "winning" in Odyssey of the Mind is more than receiving a medal or advancing to the next level. If the team works together and presents their own original ideas and creations at the tournament, that is AMAZING in itself!

Good luck! And remember to **HAVE FUN!**