

# A Guide to the MYSTICAL WORLD OF OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE!

Do you have an overwhelming urge to help the team succeed? Do you have itchy fingers and want to spray paint the scenery or fix the mechanics on a vehicle so it runs better? How about the desire to add glitter to a prop or sew the costume that's falling apart? What about debriefing a spontaneous problem on how to build a better bridge?

But ... you have been told by your OMER that you absolutely cannot help at all!

## That's both right and wrong!

You may do many things to assist the team, but there are also things you may want to do that would result in those dreaded Outside Assistance penalty points. So, what can you do ... and NOT do?

What YOU CAN do!	What YOU CANNOT do!
Support the team in their choice of long-term problem	Tell the team which long-term problem to pick
Facilitate the team's thinking process, but not think for them	Tell the team HOW to solve the problem
Teach or arrange training in a skill - ONLY if the team ASKS	Schedule a skill's lesson without the team asking
Take the team to buy things	Give specific ideas on what or how to build things
Open attics and closets for the team to rummage through	Write the script, choreograph the dance, write the song
Take the team to practices and tournaments	Physically do anything (e.g. paint, sew, weld, glue) that contributes to the solution
Provide a place to meet, build and store props	Suggest which skills to use
Transport the props	Suggest what to buy or what to use
Carry props on tournament day all the way into the staging area	Repair any broken props broken in transit. Don't repair anything – PERIOD!
Help the team move props after their performance	Critique any part of the team's long-term solution by suggesting improvements
Help the team facilitate Spontaneous Problem solving	Teach pre-prepared responses to spontaneous questions
Provide delicious snacks	
Provide cheers and encouragement	
Let the team think and problem solve for themselves!	

Odyssey of the Mind encourages students to use their minds and to problem-solve. Let them develop these skills on their own, even though they might take longer to achieve the end goal or approach the solution in a way you might not choose. YOU are an important part of this Odyssey journey by providing moral support, being a resource for learning new skills, helping get materials and facilitating the logistics of a working team.

So be the car pool driver, the snack provider, leader of the supplies scavenger hunt, the prop driver and carrier, the audience, and the team's greatest supporters. Be the people whose support is vital to the team ... without doing the work for them!

**Remember it's not about the winning,  
but about the journey!**

