



# **ODE Group-Based Decisions**

## **Break it down to talk it through**

## ODE in Action: Group-Based Decision Exercise

ODE is a practical framework that helps groups move through decisions with clarity, confidence, and composure. By separating **what happened**, **what to do**, and **how to communicate it**, ODE prevents discussions from spiraling into confusion, second-guessing, or emotional back-and-forth.

Instead of everyone talking at once, ODE gives each participant a defined role and a clear moment to contribute. This creates structure without rigidity and encourages thoughtful, respectful dialogue—even in situations that usually feel tense or high-stakes.

ODE works anywhere decisions need to be made clearly and explained calmly, including rules interpretation, strategic choices, scoring or outcomes, teaching scenarios, and collaborative problem-solving. It replaces debate with process, hesitation with confidence, and uncertainty with shared understanding.

At its core, ODE doesn't just help groups reach the right decision—it helps them reach it **well**.

To maintain engagement and reinforce calm, logical thinking, participants are divided into three rotating groups, each assigned a specific **ODE** role. This structure ensures that no one is passive and that each situation is handled deliberately rather than emotionally or impulsively.



## How the ODE Groups Work

### Observe Group

This group watches the brief demonstration or listens to the scenario without commenting, solving, or interpreting. Their job is to state **only what happened**, not what it means. They identify observable facts, actions taken, and any visible conditions relevant to the topic.

No opinions. No conclusions. Just facts.

### Decide Group

This group determines the appropriate outcome, response, or conclusion based on the rules, principles, or framework currently being taught. They discuss privately as a group and commit to a single clear decision before speaking.

### Explain Group

This group delivers the final explanation aloud. Their role is to state the decision clearly, confidently, and once—grounded in the rule, principle, or phase being used.

No hedging, no over-explaining, and no debating while explaining.

## How to Introduce ODE to the Group Script

“We’re going to practice using **ODE: Observe, Decide, Explain**.

You’ll be divided into three groups, and each group owns one step of the process.

1. The Observe group tells us *what happened*.
2. The Decide group tells us *what the outcome or response is*.
3. The Explain group tells us *why*—calmly and clearly.

If things start to feel messy, we don’t argue. We ask: *Which step of ODE are we in?*”



## Why This Structure Works

By separating observation, decision-making, and explanation:

- Participants stop jumping ahead or talking over one another
- Emotional reactions are replaced with a shared process
- Quieter participants gain a defined role and voice
- Discussions stay focused, brief, and respectful

Participants also benefit from clear roles in group settings—especially when topics are complex, sensitive, or high-stakes.

## Instructor Tip

Rotate group roles after each example so every participant practices all three skills. By the end of the session, everyone will have experience:

- Observing without judgment
- Deciding without defensiveness
- Explaining without apology

This reinforces confidence, clarity, and composure across any topic.

