

FLOW SYSTEM

PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK

Complexity Thinking

Workbook: The OODA Loop



getflowtrained.com/playbook/ooda-loop/

The OODA Loop

The OODA loop involves a continuous cycle with four essential stages: observe, orient, decide, and act.



The OODA loop is neither linear nor circular; you can begin or end with any of the four stages.

Observe is the sensing stage.

Orient is the sensemaking stage that takes into account who you are, your worldview.

Decide represents your best decision given the time and urgency of the situation.

Act is where you test your decision and identify any changes that are required moving forward, based on the changing conditions in the environment.

There are multiple feedback loops throughout each stage that gives the decision maker information that aids them as they work through each of the four stages.

Identify a change event or a problem and begin working your way through the stages of the OODA loop.

First identify all relevant information to fully understand what is being observed.

THE OODA LOOP OBSERVE STAGE	
Describe the change event or problem.	
Was this a forced change or a planned change?	
What changed?	
Who was impacted?	
Other relevant details.	

Now describe your environment and influences and other elements that form your worldview and current understanding.

THE OODA LOOP ORIENT STAGE	
Identify who you are.	
What are your personal goals?	
What are your team goals?	
Describe your personal culture?	
Describe the culture where you work (team or organization).	
What known biases do you have?	
What is your worldview as it relates to the change or problem?	

Based on the above information you must now form at least one main hypothesis and at least one alternative hypothesis to be tested. Complete the DECIDE table with your hypotheses and define a test or tests to validate them. Carry out the test/s and then return to this workbook and complete the DECIDE table below.

THE OODA LOOP DECIDE STAGE	
What is your first hypothesis?	
What is an alternative hypothesis?	
How can you test your hypotheses?	
Develop a theory based on the results from testing. Yes, you must first test.	
Other relevant details.	

Carry out the change tested through your hypotheses testing in the DECIDE stage. Note the effectiveness of your decision making.

THE OODA LOOP ACT STAGE	
Based on the decision from the previous stage carry out the change.	
What changed in the environment?	
Was this a positive or negative change?	
Was this your desired change?	
What is the difference between your desired change and the actual change?	
Return to the observe stage to identify how to see if the change achieved the desired results.	

This workbook was designed to familiarize you with the basic elements of the OODA loop. Remember, the OODA loop is explaining what you do, it's not telling you how to do anything. You don't follow OODA. What you do is OODA.

The OODA loop is all about implicit behaviors. Implicit - You know it and you understand it. Implicit guidance and control is what controls our human behaviors. Human instinct. The innate abilities and knowledge, the patterns you've developed in your own psyche, and how you execute on them.

The implicit knowledge guides your actions when real events/life play out. Hence implicit guidance and control. It's how you have interlined information before an event occurs that guides your actions and behaviors.

To develop better OODA loops, consider the scenes from the movie "Top Gun" where the pilots play with planes on the end of sticks working through all the possible ways something may happen. It does not happen in the actual moment; you learn and internalize before so when it does occur the implicit knowledge guides your actions/control.

Connect the Three Helixes:

Flow can only be achieved when the three helixes are interconnected. To identify how this could occur, the next exercise requires the reader to identify examples of different methods from each of the other two helixes (distributed leadership, team science) that might work well with, or support, weak signal detection. Knowledge of all three helixes will be required to make these connections.



CONNECT THE HELIXES	
Select a scenario or problem that would would benefit from the OODA loop.	
Identify three methods from distributed leadership that could work with the OODA loop and give a brief description about how they complement one another.	
DL Method 1:	
DL Method 2:	

CONNECT THE HELIXES

DL Method 3:

Identify three methods from the team science helix that could work with the OODA loop and give a brief description about how they complement one another.

TS Method 1:

TS Method 2:

TS Method 3:

Provide a description explaining which methods from each of the three helixes (with the OODA loop being the CT method) work best for the scenario/ problem identified earlier.