



MENTOR AREA

STAGE 5: Developing your communication

Communication is key in the world of refereeing as not only do referees need to communicate with the other members of the team, but it is also vital for them to have a good rapport with the players. It is important to remember that communication isn't just about good dialogue skills, but is much broader and covers aspects such as accurate and confident signals. Referees must also ensure that they complete the match report form in a clear and coherent manner.



As mentioned above, the ability to communicate in a team increases the chances of making correct decisions on a consistent basis. For example, the assistant may have a better view of some fouls than the referee and will be able to have a helpful input in some incident, so teamwork is vital. Equally, we also often see instances where the assistant referee has signalled for an offside, only to be overruled by the referee after brief consultation. This is effective as sometimes the referee may have noticed the last touch coming off a defender or in some cases the referee may make the call that there were no defenders in the half in question. These examples illustrate the importance of

communication when it comes to getting decisions right.

A good relationship or rapport with the players also helps the referee to stay in control of the match. If referees are upfront and clear with the players in regards to explaining decisions, this will play some part in them understanding and accepting decisions. Away from the pitch, it is also extremely important to speak to the players before the game and lay your card on the table, so to speak. This way the players should be on the same wavelength as you, which should in theory give the referee less work to do out on the pitch in gaining their respect.

Signalling is just as important, if not more important, as not everyone present at a football match will be able to hear the referee's dialogue with the players. Inaccurate or hesitant signals can lead to a lack of respect. Even if a referee is unsure of a decision, it is important to 'sell' your decision to the crowd and everybody around you. They will convince them that you are right, if they are led to believe that you are sure of your decision. Some signals are much more important than others. Take the advantage signal, which is particularly important to avoid the players thinking that the foul has gone undetected. Some referees also see the importance in signalling to reject penalty appeals, such as 'cutting the grass', which immediately tells the players that you will not be awarding a penalty and for play to continue.



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