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100 Officiating Tips

By Al Battista

1. Learn to communicate with coaches, players, partners, table, etc. Work on the tone of your voice. You are communicating not appeasing.
2. Have "3" voices- (1)- Command Presence, (2)-Normal- (3)-Diffusing
3. Check your uniform before the season. See if your pants and shirts fit. Also it might be time to get new shoes.
4. Check your calendar each week for meetings, zoom calls and games.
5. Check the maintenance of your car before the season and get an oil change every 3,000 miles. Check the wear and tear of your tires.
6. When you are starting to officiate, get as much experience as possible. This means not only work but go and watch games.
7. If you are a Veteran, make sure you have a fitness routine during the season and try to work no more than 4 games a week.
8. Try to help someone every day in the officiating community.
9. Ignore obnoxious fans and if they are extremely unsportsmanlike, have game administration remove them. A fan does not have a license to abuse officials. If its handled, it will stop.
10. Be mentally and physically prepared to officiate every game you are assigned.

No nights off, it's disrespect to the game.
11. During the season work on your poise. When doing this make sure you breathe, it will help you with stressful situations.
12. In the Lead position, when plays are coming at you, get on your back foot and keep your "air" in your stomach, this will help you process the play.
13. When dealing with irrational players and coaches, learn how to deflect and defuse.

14. When going to games and meetings, dress and act professionally.

15. Get excited and “fired up” for every game.

16. Every night you will have different partners, make sure you always respect them whether you like or dislike them.

17. Don't be afraid to omit mistakes and move on.

18. Exude Confidence and stay away from being “cocky” and flamboyant.

19. Work on your leadership night in and out. Learn how to lead from the front and behind .

20. Master the definitions in Rule 4.

21. “Attack” the Rule Book, don't just read it.

22. Have a Strategy when you read the rule book.

23. Don't neglect your mechanics manual.

24. Read “5” Case Book Plays every day

25. Make your own Video Case Book.

26. When a mentor, coach, player, and assignor address you, listen first and have good body language. Respond after you listen, with good body language.

27. Have a mentor and be a mentor. This is important for your development, leadership, knowledge and basketball IQ.

28. Learn the spirit and intent of the rules.

29. Learn how to take a “hit” for the game. You will learn this when you gain experience and develop your Basketball IQ.

30. Master Penalties.

31. Be a leader where you can enhance crew dynamics in a game.

32. When you enter the floor, have a positive aura about you. It instills confidence with the teams and coaches.

33. Try to learn an aspect of basketball officiating every day. It could be something repetitive.

34. Work on your game everyday. Be imaginative.

35. Work on being a good partner. Being a good partner and play-caller, actually go hand and hand.

36. When you are being observed and feedback is given to you, that is a positive! If nothing is said to you, a red flag should “light up”.

37. Every game you work you are being observed or evaluated, think that way, this is the power of Hudl and Synergy.

38. Everywhere you officiate be professional, don't expect towels and refreshments at every venue. Always pack your own.

39. You have to battle with minor injuries and be preventive.

40. Putting bad things in the past will become the norm. Look through the windshield and not the rear view mirror.

41. Learn to officiate off the ball and be a good off the ball official.

42. When watching tape, focus on the defense 100%. This will speed your eyes up.

43. When a player catches the ball, officiate 70% Offense and 30% Defense.

44. When a player is dribbling, officiate 70% Defense and 30% Offense.

45. When Officiating the defense, find the defender's hand(s).

46. In the Lead Position, officiate defender to defender.

47. In the Lead Position, find the secondary defender as quick as possible.

48. In the Trail and Center(S) Positions, start being side line oriented and then attack onto the floor to get angles.

49. When telling officiating stories to peers, make the stories a learning experience, tell about the good and bad.

50. Work every game like its your last game, don't complain about assignors, if you do the work, you will get noticed.

51. When watching tape, always find your clock(s).

52. When going from T-C(S), think Big Picture, lift your eyes and officiate moving players.

53. If possible, get to angles, before action occurs, this is a sign of a great play-caller.

54. When going from L-T and there is no pressure, do the following, find your clock(s), find your team fouls, find the formulation of the defense and the offense, officiate the first primary defender in your PCA in the front court.

55. When going from T-L, officiate the last defender, or the defender that can hurt you the most.

56. When going from T-L, find your clock(s).

57. When going to C(S)-C(S), get to the free throw line extended with urgency when there is no pressure.
58. When going from C(S) -C(S), find your clock(s).
59. In the Lead position do not rotate on an immediate shot, drive or entry pass. Learn to stop your rotation when those occur.
60. In the Lead Position, make sure you can see the front of the ring.
61. In the Lead Position, stay off of a play from the ring or above, the Trail and Center(S) can assist with these plays. Go over in pre-game.
62. Have a thorough pre-game.
63. Have a self pre-game, before your pre-game.
64. Have a post game.
65. In the Lead position, officiate where the Center and Trail cannot.
66. In the Trail position, officiate where the Lead cannot.
67. In the Center(S) position, officiate where the Lead cannot.
68. On "3" point shots, sequence/ screen/ line/defender.
69. On jump shots and moving shots, "aim small and miss small, meaning find point of contact. Wrist or below is a foul, hand to hand, usually a good play.
70. On jump shots, sequence up/down/rebound.
71. When a player catches the ball, sequence feet, pivot, release of dribble, hands of defender.
72. Learn to "run" a game and don't let a game "run" you.
73. Really observe warm-ups, you can learn so much. For example, who are your "3" point shooters, who are shot blockers, team tendencies, etc.
74. Practice sprinting from T-L, up hills.
75. In games, fight to get open angles.
76. In the Trail and Center(S), get staggered and be ready to "attack".
77. In the Lead, keep your weight on your back foot, you will learn how to process.
78. Watch tape fast forward, this will speed your eyes up.
79. Hydration, Nutrition and Rest are needed to be a successful official.
80. Ball + Body Usually = No Call.
81. Body+ Ball = Foul.
82. Bring F.A.C.E. to your games. Focus, Awareness, Concentration, Experience.
83. Keep your games moving.
84. Know when to slow your games down, for example, complex plays.
85. If the defender jumps first when defending, they usually foul, if they jump second, they usually contest.

86. Verticality usually occurs around the basket. Remember a player can reach(vertical), but if they re-reach (going forward), they usually foul.
87. Work every possession hard.
88. Don't have the intangible of avoidance.
89. A good veteran will always think Game, Partners, THEN Self.
90. Have a Fitness program off season and in season. They should be two different programs.
91. Do 100 push-ups and Sit-Ups every day. "Old School" IAABO Training by Mr. Shirley and Dr. Fox.
92. Always have an extra bag in your car, if you are traveling by car.
93. When watching games on television, do tape drills, for example, look for plays to the basket and adjudicate them. If you have a DVR, clip those plays that are positives.
94. See what you can call and call what you can see.
95. Don't worry about advancement, become a student of the game and be thankful for the games you have.
96. Join organizations like IAABO, Court Club , Crown Refs to enhance your craft.
97. Buy good officiating gear, remember this is an important avocation.
98. Don't permit unsportsmanlike conduct, address it.
99. Get to assignments and meetings on time (EARLY).
100. Be detailed oriented.