



Post Play Express

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COACH EDUCATION

Submitted by Sébastien Gauthier, Interpreter for Quebec

In the past, coaches were often invited to have discussions with us at our pre-season clinics. This helped to improve communication and understand our different roles in the game. For the last two years, Basketball Quebec has integrated a 3-hour session about officials, in the Levels 2 and 3 of their NCCP. I believe this is an important addition to the training of coaches, which will significantly help developing the sport.

I was pleased to teach two of these sessions for Level 2 et I found the experience very rewarding. Here are some of the topics discussed during those meetings:

- Officials' various levels of certification
- Retention of officials
- Five pieces of advice in approaching an official
- Official-coach interaction
- FIBA guide (Fair game for all)
- FIBA rules (advantage/disadvantage)
- Basic rules

In discussing those subjects, I realized that coaches know little about our job on the court and about the rules, but most of all, about our work off the court.

Based on my observations, which are by no means scientific, I estimated that about 10% of participating coaches already had a negative and obtuse concept about officials and displayed no interest or receptiveness toward improving the situation. However, what makes this initiative by Basketball Quebec so interesting, is the other 90% of coaches who were really keen and curious and wanted to understand and improve their relation with officials and, as a result, become more efficient in their coaching.

Basketball Quebec has confirmed its intention to continue the integration of these training sessions in the framework of the NCCP and to adapt the contents to the different educational levels (1-2-3). Congratulations to Basketball Quebec for this outstanding initiative.

ROLE-PLAYING IDENTICAL ELEMENTS: OFFICIAL AND COACH COMMUNICATION

Part 2

Submitted by Bill Redden, Member of GVBOA

The Theory of Identical Elements states that the more a mastered task is related to a second task, the greater the chance that the second task will be performed successfully. Part I (Post Play Express Vol. 7, No.3, Nov. 2015) dealt with the physical, perceptual, and cognitive skills of officiating and presented learning methods based on the theory. Part 2 focuses on the social skills of official-coach communication, with special attention on role playing as a learning method. This article defines role playing, lists its potential contribution for officials, describes three different models of role-playing, provides a contact email for each described method, lists examples of game situations that could be used in all role playing models, and provides suggestions for role playing experiences.

Role-playing takes place between two or more people who act out roles to explore real life situations. Role playing training puts officials in situations that are almost identical to game situations, thus assisting officials in:

- Building up experience and confidence when dealing with unfamiliar/difficult situations which have a potential for conflict
- Developing quick, instinctive, and appropriate responses
- Providing opportunities for the role players and the audience members in training session to exchange opinions on how game situations were handled and suggest alternative approaches during session debriefs

Model # 1

Experienced floor officials and team coaches role-play game situations in a full-court game setting. Game situations are presented verbally by the training session leader to officials and coaches, as the game progresses. The audience is made of local officials organized in three groups (Beginners, Experienced, and Advanced) seated in different bleacher areas. A mentor, working with each audience group, leads each role-play debrief. "Calls" made by the on-court officials can also be debriefed within each audience group. The game is ongoing during debriefs. This model includes game floor officials purposely role-playing incorrect rule applications, mechanics, and game protocols in order to draw constructive criticism from the audience under mentor guidance.

Contact: Al Haynes, Educator and Assigner - SurDel Basketball Officials Association. Email: abhaynes@shaw.ca

Model #2

In a gym, role-play training takes place in at least three different teaching stations simultaneously. Members from each station are assigned and trained in advance (if necessary) to role-play game situations, as the official or coach. Each game situation is timed and coordinated so that 10 minutes in total are spent on each game situation and a debrief coordinated by a station mentor. The station members who are not playing the role of official or coach during each game situation, form the audience. This learning model has the potential to provide the members of each teaching station with "hands on" experience in official – coach communication by playing the "on-court" official

Contact: Bill Redden, Member - Greater Vancouver Basketball Officials Association. Email: billrdad@yahoo.com

Model #3

In a classroom session, a coach and an official occupy center stage at the front of the room. Prior to the session, all members of the Association are provided (e-mail) with all the game situations to be covered in the session. Coach role-players volunteer or are recruited during the classroom training session. Those who will play the role of officials are recruited in the days before the session so they can prepare their role-play based on their choice of the game situation(s) listed. Debriefs are led by one session leader after each game situation role-play.

Contact: Mykola Misiak, Vice President and Education Chair - Greater Vancouver Basketball Officials Association. Email: misakyouandmehoney@gmail.com.

Examples of game situations for all three models:

- 10 minutes before game during the team warmup period, Coach of team A requests a rule interpretation from you
- While the game clock is: a) running; b) stopped and you are passing by the timer's and scorer's table, Coach B asks civilly to speak with you
- Coach audibly and continually makes violation calls. Coach loudly denounces: a) your call; b) you personally.

Suggestions: Make all coach role playing authentic with game-like behavior (verbal and non- verbal) and emotions included; Provide examples of the appropriate words, phrases, and proper demeanor in training sessions involving inexperienced officials; Officials should practice role playing by mimicking, visualizing, and mentally practicing game situations, responses, and possible coach's comeback rebuttals.

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Submitted by Rob Connell, Interpreter for Prince Edward Island

We have all officiated games when our patience was tried and our frustration level high. It may have been a coach getting "under our skin" or players challenging our calls or the score table not being "efficient" or, at times, all of the above. Most of this frustration can be alleviated with communication. Communication is an important human activity, but it is even more so while officiating. Communication begins several minutes prior to our games when we have a discussion regarding the contest we are about to officiate. We might discuss what to expect in the game, the coaches and the players' tendencies, how fast the game will move, what will help us do a better job and a personal goal we may set for ourselves. We then step on the floor. Our mere appearance and demeanor should already communicate our intention to work hard and to be professional at all times. We speak with the table officials, approaching them all with a smile on our face. Introductions are made; we let the table know they are an important part of the officiating team and what we expect. We ask them if they have any questions and make them feel appreciated and relaxed before the game starts. As the case may be, we meet with the captains. Again, greeting them with a smile on our face. Our body language should communicate the following: "I am happy to be here" and "I

am looking forward to the game". Remember, regardless of the level of play, the game is important to the players. Just before the game starts, we introduce ourselves to the coaches, again with a smile on our face. This communication is all done before we even start officiating the game. However, it is my belief that, in essence, we have already begun to officiate the game with positive communication.

Once the game starts, your first movement on the court is a display of communication. This should be technical and with lots of hustle. This communicates to the coaches and spectators that you have come to officiate and you want to do a good job. We must continue to communicate this throughout the entire game. As I said before, this communication is key regardless of the level of play. During the game, it is our duty to always use respectful tones. Hollering, yelling, being condescending or using sarcasm will only result in hard feelings. This can also lead to a less than adequate performance by the table officials and/or to coaches getting upset. Communicating positively to the players, while on the floor, can prevent the occurrence of unwanted situations which may result in assessing technical fouls or ejecting participants. If we speak to players about what they should "clean up", they will appreciate our tone and be willing to back us up later in the game or help us with an unruly teammate. In saying this, it is important not to over communicate with players, to prevent any ideas that we may be taking sides. Communicating with coaches is important, but it should not distract us from the game. We should not explain rules at length, but rather offer quick answers to questions about rules or what we observed. This should not delay the game. The tone should be calm and respectful; as well, our body language should be positive and confident. We should not attempt to answer a question from an irate coach, but attempt to restore calm first. If we made a mistake, there is no shame in admitting that we may have been incorrect. We must not attempt to bluff our way through calls. It's okay to lend an ear during play, but again, don't let it distract us from our officiating. We need to keep our eyes on the players. When speaking with coaches, we must remain respectful and professional. We don't want to come across as being arrogant. However, we need to know when a coach needs to be accountable for his/her behavior and may need to be penalized. Most importantly, we must never ignore a coach; again, this may lead to unwanted situations. Communication is key.

The communication between us, as partners, begins before we even enter the gym. Coaches, players and spectators notice if we are working together. This helps towards our credibility and the importance for us to do a good job. We all hate to hear from others that the officials did not seem to be on the same page. Eye contact during dead balls and communication during the game are vital to us being consistent. Time outs are good opportunities to not only catch our breath, but to take advantage by communicating about aspects of the game and making improvements. Often in lower level games, more experienced officials will be paired with grassroots officials. The more experienced official needs to help educate the younger official with the importance of communication, from start to finish of the game, and role model this behavior.

The importance of communication is within every aspect of the game. Therefore, we sometimes need to remind ourselves what this entails and that we have the responsibility to educate and communicate. This will go a long way in alleviating friction between spectators, table officials, and coaches and create a flow to the game. Communication is key.

GOOD JOB, BUD!

By Paul Deshaies, Post Play Express Editor

Chuck:

«Hey, Bud! Chuck here. Pretty good game last night, right? I just wanted to thank you for helping the crew to avoid misinterpreting the special situation rule near the end there. Good job, my friend! »

Bud:

«You know, Chuck, a few people deserve the credit for me knowing what to do. Remember that time before the exam, when you insisted that I come over and study the rules with you guys? That's when we reviewed that part, and I finally learned the correct procedure. So, thanks to you, Chuck, for insisting that I learn the rules!

Chuck:

«It feels good to be able to take care of business with confidence and knowledge, doesn't it? »

Bud:

«Indeed, you got that right. By the way, I was talking to our interpreter a little while back and he was telling me that, across the country, some people apparently thought that they did not need to study and that the exam would be a breeze with the open-book deal and all. They probably had the same attitude as me, before you invited me to study. »

Chuck:

«What makes you say that? »

Bud:

«Well, he pointed out that only 40% of the candidates reached the national passing mark of 86% for Level 3. This was the lowest rate of success at that level since 2011, when the exam first went on line. He also added that the rate of failure for Level 1, meaning people who did not get at least 70%, increased by more than 10% compared to last year. »

Chuck:

«Well, I guess that making it an open-book exam may have sent the wrong message to the members regarding the need to study and learn the rules. It doesn't appear to have produced the expected benefits. I would even say that's quite the opposite, right? »

Bud:

«That's what those numbers would suggest. Hey, Chuck, got to go. Thanks for your call. See you soon, pal. »