

Qualities of an Excellent Crew Mate

It is within each of us to be an outstanding crew mate. All we need to do is be the best person and official possible, always striving to get even better. In addition, we must commit to our crew mates in a selfless manner. The following are a partial list of words that describe an excellent crew member:

Prepared
Team builder
Selfless
Patient
Confident
Giving
Inspiring
Compassionate
Trusted
Resourceful
Efficient
Innovative
Accountable
Flexible
Motivating
Responsible
Supportive
Understanding
Embraces change
Encouraging
Nurturing
Dedicated
Trusting
Positive
Committed

As a member and constant representative of the crew, and our association, we must always be pleasant, professional and respectful. Our professional conduct always makes a great first impression when we conduct our business.

When we communicate with coaches on the sidelines, we are focused, professional and helpful whenever possible or necessary. Helping coaches with penalty options, time outs or opponent's time outs, the status of the clock, time remaining in the game, formation issues to resolve, or players who are having trouble with their emotions are just a few of the ways we can communicate in a positive manner with our coaches. Maintaining a clear and safe restricted area can be accomplished without emotion or aggression. Sideline warnings are used in a manner that is calm, yet purposeful. Safety, and the integrity of the game, is at the forefront of all communications.

When interacting with players we do our best to be positive and reinforcing of proper conduct. Our goal is to minimize illegal contact, demonstrate our presence, and strengthen our voice when it is necessary to get their attention or halt potentially illegal action. As George Schutte taught, “Find a friend”, meaning we should identify players who are willing to engage and serve as a leader and positive influence on their teammates. These players become our “friend” and we employ their help in maintaining order with their team.

An excellent crew member is a consistent communicator with fellow officials. We use strong, confident signals when we make rulings on the field and employ the full range of approved signals to communicate within our crew. We employ a thorough pre-snap routine and communicate dead ball, penalty, and pre-snap information via these signals. The use of the radios is limited to the approved protocols.

Great crew members concentrate on every down as if it were the final play of the Super Bowl. In this way we establish a consistent routine of concentration and communication. When we get to the critical plays of the game, we are prepared because we have been concentrating and preparing ourselves and our crew for every snap!

There may be times in a game where we “reset” or are reminded that concentration and focus are imperative. These times may include:

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- the opening kickoff and the 2nd half kickoff;
- the opening scrimmage plays of the game or the 2nd half;
- after a turnover;
- 3rd down plays;
- following an injury or other delay;
- new QB or center enters the game;
- red zone plays;
- plays inside of 2 minutes of each half

It is at these times when we “reset” our focus and concentration by engaging in a thorough pre-snap routine and employing the tenets of the “Make it be Big” philosophy thus avoiding the temptation to “over-officiate” at these times.

In summary, being an excellent crew member means bring your very best to the crew and participating enthusiastically in achieving all crew goals. Through your individual efforts, and the collective efforts of your crew, you demonstrate:

- Excellence in game timing
- Great dead ball officiating
- Accuracy and efficiency of penalty enforcements
- First class ball mechanics, and
- Outstanding game flow.