

Referee Communication and Field Presence

The Job of the Crew Chief

- You are one the best football officials and a proven leader in our Association.
- You are the “Heart” and “Soul” of our Association.
- You must now take seriously the job of developing our newer officials and your crew!
- Your job is to create a “WE” mind-set on your crew.
- Your challenge is to unite, build and develop as a crew.

Communicating with the Head Coach

- Presence starts in the parking lot and locker room
- You get one chance at first impressions
- Present yourself, smile, greeting, handshake, no joking, business-like, control, focus on the game!
- Always refer to them as “Coach” or “Coach Lombardi”
- Tony Corrente – “Transfer of Power” – Can I trust this guy?
- Discuss how you’re going to communicate tonight! In his office!
- Flanks develop rapport early with helpful information, penalty options, player issues (positive and negative), time-outs, clock status
- Are you approachable? Are you listening to understand? Eye contact? Are you calm? Body Language-Tone-Words! Respectful and confirming.
- Coach will almost always have the last word – GET USED TO IT!

Joey Crawford – NBA referee who recently retired after 39 year career - Referee Magazine June, 2016

What would you tell a young Joey Crawford?

“I would tell him not to be as arrogant as he was when he first started. I didn’t think coaches and players knew officiating and I would tell him to be more receptive. I’m not talking about being political; that’s different now. I’m talking about being receptive where you can listen to a coach or a player, because a lot of coaches and players are right when they’re talking to you. Everybody is not always wrong, and I’ve figured that out through the years, now that I’m retiring. It’s probably too late. But my first 10, 15, maybe 20 years, I probably didn’t give it

the proper approach. Coaches and players are right sometimes.”

Post Game Conversation

- What did we do well in our communication? What needs improvement?
- The whole crew should be involved and invested in their ability to communicate.
- No preaching, just good solid preparation for next week!

Develop Rapport Early

- Pre-game introductions and pre-game warm ups
- Player issues both positive and negative
- Formation issues
- Penalty information and options
- Time-outs and clock status

Communication Style and Personality

- Are you approachable?
- Do you verbally respond or choose to ignore?
- Good eye contact? Solid and attentive body posture?
- Do you have an even, unemotional voice demonstrating calm and control?
- Are you completely focused and attentive?
- Non-Verbal, Tone, Words – they all work together but 85% comes from non-verbal and tone!

Be Careful What You Say – Just looking the wrong way can set off a coach!

- Site or quote the rule but avoid over-technical speak
- Use categories of holding and DPI/OPI
- Avoid official's terms like “clean hands” or “PSK”

- Avoid our philosophy statements like “foul was not at point of attack”
- Do say, “I saw the action and it was/was not a foul.”
- Don’t over-use the phrase “I missed it”. Your job is not to miss it.
- Do use please and thank you.
- Let the coach waive you away or disengage – don’t pursue the conversation
- “I hear you coach. I understand”
- Coach, here is what was called. Coach, here is what I saw. Coach, what did you see?
- Again, coaches will almost always have the last word – GET USED TO IT!