



OFFICIATING DEVELOPMENT SERIES | RESOURCE 05

PRIMARY COVERAGE

Crew Trust, Cadence and Responsible Help

Great crews do not have three officials chasing the ball. They have three connected officials covering the game.

PREPARE.

PERFORM.

PROGRESS.

THE STORIES BEHIND THE CALLS.

PRIMARY DISCIPLINE

Use this section as a practical conversation guide, self-evaluation tool and next-game plan.

Own your matchup Know which players and actions belong to your coverage before contact occurs.	Referee the defender Position to see between opponents and judge legal position before reacting.
Avoid ball watching Off-ball cutters, screens, holds and displacement require an official's attention.	Finish the play Stay engaged through the shot, rebound, release or transition before leaving your matchup.

Coverage is a promise to your partners.

REFLECTION: What would a partner, evaluator or assigner see from you today? What single behavior will you make visible in your next game?

SECONDARY HELP AND CADENCE

Use this section as a practical conversation guide, self-evaluation tool and next-game plan.

Give time Allow the primary official the first opportunity to rule.	Help with certainty Use a secondary whistle for an obvious miss when you have definitive information.
Do not guess Bodies between you and the play usually mean your partner has the better look.	Share information On double whistles or help situations, meet briefly and state only what you know.
Return to coverage After helping, reconnect to the players and responsibilities you left.	

A simultaneous secondary whistle is often a sign the cadence was too fast.

REFLECTION: What would a partner, evaluator or assigner see from you today? What single behavior will you make visible in your next game?



CREW COMMUNICATION

Use this section as a practical conversation guide, self-evaluation tool and next-game plan.

Pregame Define drive coverage, rotations, press responsibilities, last shot and unusual plays.	Eye contact Confirm partners are ready before throw-ins, free throws and restarts.
Dead balls Non-calling officials watch players, benches, clock and the outcome of the play.	Double whistles Pause, identify primary coverage and communicate before reporting.
Corrections Fix crew information quietly and accurately; avoid public blame.	

Communication should reduce confusion, not advertise it.

REFLECTION: What would a partner, evaluator or assigner see from you today? What single behavior will you make visible in your next game?

CREW TRUST CHECKLIST

Use this section as a practical conversation guide, self-evaluation tool and next-game plan.

Before Can each official explain primary responsibilities and the crew's help philosophy?	During Are all competitive matchups covered, or are multiple officials watching the ball?
After whistles Do non-calling officials stay engaged with players and game information?	At halftime Identify one coverage win and one adjustment without assigning blame.
After Discuss patterns, not isolated personalities, and leave with one shared improvement.	

Trust is visible when every official has a reason for where they are looking.

REFLECTION: What would a partner, evaluator or assigner see from you today? What single behavior will you make visible in your next game?



PUT THIS RESOURCE INTO ACTION

Development accelerates when information becomes a repeatable behavior. Use this page to convert the guide into a personal plan.

MY CURRENT STRENGTH

What can my crew consistently trust me to do well?

MY PRIORITY CORRECTION

What specific behavior—not a vague outcome—needs to change?

MY NEXT-GAME CUE

Write a short phrase you can recall under pressure.

WHO WILL HOLD ME ACCOUNTABLE?

Identify a partner, mentor or evaluator and the evidence you will review.

PREPARE. PERFORM. PROGRESS.

Educational notice: This independent resource is designed for general officiating development. It does not replace any governing body's rules book, case book, mechanics manual, conference directives, state modifications or instructions from an assigner or camp staff. Officials must follow the requirements applicable to their level and jurisdiction.

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