



**FIBA**  
We Are Basketball

# IMPROVE YOUR... COMMUNICATION AMONGST THE CREW



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## IMPROVE YOUR... COMMUNICATION AMONGST THE CREW

At certain points during a game, the crew may need to communicate collectively in order to ensure that all information observed is shared, processed and evaluated prior to reaching a final decision on a controversial play or any other special situations. This is a process that requires a systematic standard approach that ensures a correct outcome.

Examples of plays that may require a conference amongst the crew include, but are not limited to:

- debatable out of bound plays that cannot be decided upon by the calling official and simple assist
- shot clock and game clock situations
- potential correctable errors
- table administration issues
- fighting situations
- Instant Replay Situation (IRS) - plays



Elite officiating requires sound judgment and correct decision making. Whenever officials are required to communicate together during dead ball periods to decide on a controversial play or any special situation, there will be intense focus and scrutiny on the crew by the players, the coaches, fans and media. Accordingly, the crew must have a reliable system to follow in order to ensure the correct decision is made notwithstanding outside influences, and to be certain that all relevant factors have been taken into account. This also results in the participants and viewers having confidence in the crew and the procedure.

While multiple conferences are not encouraged, there are times when they are necessary. In those instances, the following fundamentals and procedure should be applied:

1. It is the responsibility of all members of the crew to recognize when they should confer and discuss a play that requires the exchange of information. The final communication and clarification with the table should be made by the Referee, but any member of the crew can bring the officials together to clarify a controversial play. If there is uncertainty by the crew as to whether to come together and there is a risk that game control is being compromised, the Referee must take leadership and bring the crew together;
2. The crew should come together in a calm and confident manner away from players. Avoid running in an emotional manner when getting together, or acting as if you know more than any other member of the crew. Allow the crew to come together before offering an opinion;
3. While exchanging information, the crew should not turn their backs to the players or the benches, and should ensure the teams are not engaged in any dialogue or physical altercations that could lead to fighting;
4. Each member of the crew should be prepared to offer an opinion on the issue;

5. Once the crew is together, the Referee should summarize the issue (i.e. "we need to determine if there was a change of team control, and whether we have to reset the shot clock");
6. After stating the issue, the Referee should first ask the official who had the play in his / her primary as to what the decision was and why, and then elicit an opinion from the non-calling official. The Referee should then offer his / her opinion;
7. If you do not have an opinion (did not see the play), then advise the crew that you did not see the play;
8. In providing an opinion, rely on facts and not emotions. Your opinion should be based on what you have observed and what has happened, not what you think or feel, based on previous experiences or consequences;
9. When you provide your opinion and what you have observed, be honest and open as to how confident you are in your view. If you are uncertain or have a doubt, communicate this to the crew;
10. If members of the crew are not sticking to the facts and are surmising or guessing, the Referee should ask them to state what they have seen and evaluate their certainty. Use specific questions such as "which team did you see touch the ball last before it went out of bounds";
11. If a member of the crew is not engaged in the process, ask them what they saw and if they have an opinion;
12. Keep all communication simple and brief. For example, "the clock did not start", "the ball was last touched by blue", "there was new team control by blue 12" etc.;
13. When communicating as a crew, do not express outward emotion, hand gestures or nervous body language. Be calm, business like and have a "poker face";
14. Once the crew has shared their opinions, the referee should summarize the facts and state to the crew what he/she has decided based on the information provided. For example, "We have new team control, and shot clock should be reset." The Referee should confirm the agreement of the crew;
15. If there is disagreement, the Referee must decide before leaving the conference and communicate the decision. A decision by the Referee should be based on the best evidence available and the facts provided;
16. Before ending the conference with the crew and proceeding to the table, the Referee should ask the crew "is there anything else?" or "are we good?" This avoids having to get together again;
17. The Referee should then confer with the commissioner and advise him / her of the issue, what the crew has decided and why. Ask the commissioner if they have a different opinion, and take this into account in the final decision;
18. While the crew needs to slow down and exchange all necessary and relevant information, it should be done in an efficient and expeditious manner;
19. Make sure the table understands the final decision before leaving the table, and proper communication has taken place so that all participants are aware of the decision;
20. For IRS plays, be certain the table and the participants understand the decision on the court, and then follow the FIBA IRS Protocol.

# STANDARD QUALITY

## GLOBAL CONNECTION

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