



THE DNA OF ENGLISH REFEREEING



Rebuild. Unite. Inspire.



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It is important that all levels of English refereeing are underpinned by values which are shared by all those involved as match officials, coaches, observers, tutors, mentors etc...

The values underpinning English refereeing are its unique DNA, which should be integral to the work and attitudes of everyone from the newest referee to our FIFA officials, and from those training new referees through to those working with our senior officials.

The DNA of English refereeing (both on and off the field) is defined as follows:

RESPECT
EMPATHY
FITNESS
EVALUATION
RELIABILITY
EDUICATION
EXCELLENCE

Outlined below is a more detailed explanation of each of these crucial elements.

RESPECT

Everyone should have respect for:

- The game
- The Laws of the Game
- Match officials, observers, mentors, tutors, coaches, players, managers, administrators, volunteers
- Competitions rules and regulations

Implicit in respect are INTEGRITY and HONESTY in all aspects of on-and-off-the field behaviour and conduct

EMPATHY

Everyone should have empathy (feeling/understanding) for the needs of each match - the best referees are not unfeeling 'robots'. For example, empathy allows a referee to distinguish between frustration and dissent and to appreciate the reaction of a player who misses a match-winning goal in the final minutes. The very best referees 'understand' the game and referee with an empathy for the needs of each game

Off-the-field empathy is important in developing positive relationships with others. For example, when a referee has made a major mistake, colleagues with empathy will offer support and encouragement. An empathetic assessor will decide when it is best to offer advice.

In dealing with other people, empathy and respect are closely linked – if you respect other people then you will have empathy for their feelings and know how best to interact with them in different situations.

FITNESS

It is self-evident that all match officials must be physically fit to perform in a match, and one of the major requirements is the fitness level in the final minutes of the match, when the most controversial incidents often occur. Physical fitness comes not just from correct and focused training but also from diet, lifestyle etc... Refereeing is a 'sport' and successful referees need to be athletes in terms of training and preparation.

Fitness is both physical and mental, so the need to develop mental strength (to resist on-field pressure, cope with controversy, etc) is a key area that needs greater focus.

In a wider sense, those involved in assessing, coaching, tutoring and mentoring must be fit for purpose. Having been a match official is no longer sufficient to be a successful assessor, tutor, coach, mentor etc.

EVALUATION

The best referees have a high level of ability to evaluate not only specific incidents in a match but also to evaluate the match 'atmosphere/temperature', and, as this changes, to adjust his/her refereeing level to the needs of the game, in order to ensure match control.

Match officials must develop the ability to self-evaluate and to relate their self-evaluation at official evaluations (assessment, coach report...). The ability to identify trends is another key evaluation skill, ensuring that advice can be placed 'in context'.

Official evaluators (assessors, coaches, mentors) constantly need to develop their evaluation skills and themselves be subject to evaluation, to ensure they are fit for purpose.

RELIABILITY

Referees must be reliable and dependable both on and off the field. On the field, everyone depends on the reliability of the referee's decision-making and expects him/her to be the 'leader' when there are major incidents (e.g. serious injury), and to be reliable in terms of applying the Laws of the Game and competition rules.

Off the field, everyone should be professional and reliable in terms of administration, information about availability, submission of reports, appearance, etc.

EDUICATION

People only improve by learning, and those who succeed must have a willingness to be educated and to educate others by passing on their knowledge and experience. Education takes many forms: from hands-on experience gained as an assistant referee or 4th official, through watching other officials operate, to formal education courses, etc. Education is not only for active match officials – those who coach, assess, mentor and tutor must be ready to be educated and be educators.

Only those whose minds are open to learning will improve and progress.

EXCELLENCE

Underpinning everything related to English refereeing must be an individual and collective desire to achieve excellence.