# PHILOSOPHIES

Football Officiating requires the proper application of the Rules of the Game combined with Common Sense. Common Sense dictates that extremes are as undesirable in Officiating as in any other endeavor. As Football Officials, we should consider the following:

* Be consistent in declaring the ball dead, signaling to start the 40-second play clock, or marking the ball ready for play
* Avoid contact with Coaches both before and after the game
* Coaches are not your friend
* Never react emotionally
* A word of warning or caution at the right time, with the correct tone, goes a long way
* Develop and deploy a repeatable Pre-Snap Routine
* Concentrate on each play, one play at a time
* Be involved in each and every play, both physically and mentally
* All officials must know the Down and Distance, Time, and status of the clock for every play.
* Be consistent in marking the ball ready for play and declaring the ball dead
* Timing and Forward Progress are critical aspects of the game
* Never sacrifice accuracy for speed when making officiating decisions
* Go Slow; do not be in a hurry to make an error
* Analyze and process the entire action before throwing the flag
* If the action did not involve player safety, affect the play, or disadvantage an opponent, it is not a foul
* Never guess or assume as to what may have happened
* Do not nit-pick or be over technical in applying the rules
* Always be sure when calling a foul, no phantom fouls
* If you are in doubt, do not throw the flag or blow the whistle
* If you did not see the entire action, it was not a foul
* If you think it was a foul, it was not a foul
* Continue to officiate after calling a foul
* Never seek out fouls or hunt for trouble
* Pick up your flag when thrown in error
* When a play is over it is over forever, do not dwell on it
* Do not compound an error with another error
* Go slow, and be positive when declaring possession of fumbles and loose balls
* Let the play kill itself
* Never blow the whistle unless you see the ball
* Under officiating is as big a problem as Over Officiating
* Never anticipate fouls; let the play unfold
* Be felt rather than heard as much as possible
* Warn, never threaten
* Officiate in a manner so that no one will ask the names of the officials
* Preventative officiating is the best tool for maintaining game control
* If you did not see the approach, it is never a clip
* Holding fouls require a material restriction
* Be a great dead ball official
* We are members of Officiating Crews. The game is either well-officiated or poorly officiated

We must strive to be positive and accurate in all of our judgments, rulings, and enforcement. But on those occasions when the observed action is not clear, the following Football Officiating Axioms are to be considered and applied.

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| **DO NO HARM…** | **BE ACCURATE…** | **BE POSITIVE…** |

* When in question, the action is legal
* When in question, the pass is incomplete
* When in question, the passer's arm was going forward
* When in question, the pass is forward, behind the neutral zone
* When in question, the pass is backward, beyond the neutral zone
* When in question, the ineligible was not downfield
* When in question, the runner's progress was stopped
* When in question, the ball is fumbled
* When in question, the runner is not out of bounds
* When in question, the forward pass is not touched
* When in question, the kick is not touched
* When in question, the ball is accidentally kicked
* When in question, it is not a touchdown
* When in question, it is a touchback
* When in question, the block is from the side and not a clip
* When in question, the block is legal rather than below the waist
* When in question, it is not a face mask foul
* When in question, the celebration was not prolonged or excessive