

OFFICIATING PROFESSIONALISM AND USE OF PROPER TERMINOLOGY

The final point of emphasis by the committee deals with professionalism by officials. In an era where officials are more needed than ever, it is important that officials maintain professionalism that leaves no one questioning their motivations. Key in this professionalism is the use of proper terminology. In an era of round-the-clock commentators using today's latest lingo to describe game situations to entertain, officials cannot be caught up in that shift to less than professional terminology. A few examples of using the proper terminology include:

- Backboard (NOT Glass)
- Division Line (NOT Center, Mid-Court, or Time Line)
- End Line (NOT Baseline)
- Fumble (NOT a Muff)
- Goal (NOT Basket)
- Grant Time-Out (NOT Call Time-Out)
- Held Ball (NOT Jump Ball)
- Obtain (NOT establish)
- Officiate Game (NOT Call, Control, Manage, Ref, Work; Officials Officiate the Game)
- Request Time-Out (NOT Call Time-Out)
- Ring (NOT Rim)
- Screen (NOT Pick)
- 60-Second Time-Out (NOT Full Time-Out)
- Traveling (NOT Walk)

The use of proper terminology is one of many steps to ensure that the perception of game officials and the reality of their actions, remains on a higher plane and a critical part of the game. Also, wearing the proper uniform is critical. A neatly groomed official instantly has more credibility with the coaches, game administration, and even the patrons at the game. This includes the proper uniform, properly maintained shoes, a neatly maintained pre-game jacket if worn, and the wearing of only approved items by all contest officials.

Lastly, this professionalism is always on display when the officials interact with others at the site. Professional interaction with the other contest officials while on the court, with the game management and table crew, and with the coaches involved in the game are a vital step in "selling" yourself as an official. As the saying goes, you never get a second chance to make first impression.

Maintaining a level tone of voice in all conversations, professionally addressing and interacting with the table crew are very visible signs of your professionalism. Those individuals are key to your maintaining a good game atmosphere and will help ensure the accuracy of all of the necessary elements in managing the games.

All interactions with coaches must be professional, and the conduct of the officials during these situations must be above reproach. Game officials must ensure that no matter the situation, professional actions carry the day!

A good relationship with game management is also critical. Officials must identify their “go to” person in the event of a situation such as the need to address a conduct situation involving fans. Officials should not, as a rule, have any dealings with fans but must rely on the game administration to intercede in these cases. Therefore, the development and nurturing of that positive relationship with game management are essential to the conduct of a contest.