

BEST PRACTICE #9

I keep my officials engaged and enthusiastic.



Officiating takes a mental and physical toll. You must be in tune with the morale of your organization as well as that of your individual officials. Here are some ways to help preserve your officials' enjoyment of the game:

A black and white icon of a lit match with a flame.	Look for signs that officials are getting burned out (change in behavior, not attentive at meetings, unusually late in finishing certification requirements, complaints from partners or coaches about attitude, etc.).
A black and white icon of a pause button (two vertical bars inside a circle).	Give breaks and days off when possible. Just because an official is always available, does not mean they have to officiate every day.
A black and white icon of a scale of justice.	Give the best officials a game with other high-caliber officials. Sometimes experienced officials take all the pressure on themselves when they work with less experienced partners. When they are with other top officials on a game, it spreads the load, and makes officiating fun again.
A black and white icon of a hot plate with a flame underneath.	Mix up the level of games an official works. A middle school game can sometimes be the best therapy to get someone back to their normal self after a string of tough high school games.
A black and white icon of a person's head wearing a headset with a microphone.	Be sensitive to other pressures officials may be experiencing such as pressures from work, family, injury, etc.
A black and white icon of a smartphone.	Be responsive. If officials need adjustments to their schedules, try to accommodate if the situation permits.
A black and white icon of a staircase with an arrow pointing upwards.	Give deserving newer officials who can handle the big game the opportunity to shine. A fair chance at a tough game helps newer officials maintain their passion.

Finally, remember to take care of yourself! Take an occasional break. Enlist someone to help with your responsibilities during times when you are swamped, or may be gone or hard to reach. This person may also help you recognize alternatives or solutions that you might not see at first.