

Most of a football game is during the interval between downs;
therefore to be a great official, you have to be a great
DEAD BALL official.

1. Know that three things ruin a football game: 1) Fights, 2) Excessive penalties, and 3) Injuries.
2. Do whatever it takes to prevent problems from occurring. Preventative officiating is the key to being a great dead ball official (hustle, presence, voice, whistle).
3. Primary responsibility is player safety (and their own). Personal fouls cause injuries and provoke other problems. All personal (player safety) fouls must be enforced (zero tolerance).
4. Do not tolerate taunting, baiting, and unsportsmanlike acts. Unsportsmanlike acts lead to more problems during the game—personal fouls and fights (zero tolerance).
5. Set standards early and are consistent. Active prevention starts the first play of the game.
6. Are firm, but fair. They Warrn — they don't threaten.
7. Remember: No pain, no gain, no foul. Quality calls=advantage/disadvantage.
8. Maintain their poise at all times. Keeping their cool when all around them are losing their composure.
9. Get into a flow and maintain a tempo. They follow a routine. They move the game along.
10. Continue to officiate after they have thrown their flags.
11. Keep their eyes on the players. They do not look down at their progress spot (feet). They keep their heads up—continuing to observe the action around the ball carrier.
12. Work as a unit. Dead ball officiating is a team effort. They box-in players. They don't let players get behind them (Rubber band effect—expanding and contracting around the play and players). They communicate and cooperate with each other.
13. Close up out-of-bounds. They get there quickly (usually straight down the sideline and then out of bounds). They avoid getting obstructed by the players in the bench area. They bring opponents out of the team area (visually, if not physically). The official marking progress should also be looking out of bounds, following the action.
14. Pinch in, but don't lose their field of vision (peripheral vision). They hustle, but don't hurry. They make their presence felt when needed (being ubiquitous). They are disciplined to follow their keys (don't ball hawk), but see the big picture (soft eyes). They officiate on-ball and off- ball fringe areas (hot spots) and behind the play as dictated by their keys and how the play develops.
15. Continue to officiate until players separate and the potential for problems no longer exists.

16. Are never in a hurry to get the ball.
17. Sense trouble and take the necessary steps to prevent it. They act, so they don't have to react. They are proactive. They expect the unexpected, anticipating problems before they happen. They have the courage to step up when necessary.
18. Maintain their concentration the entire game (never letting up). They are totally focused on their tasks and the game. Remember, fatigue (conditioning and excessive weight) effect concentration/effort/judgment.
19. When all else fails, several officials should trying to break up fights and the rest of the crew should step back and take numbers.
20. Take pride in being great dead ball officials.