

Rutledge's General Rules of Officiating

Taken from "TIP-OFF: TECHNIQUES OF BASKETBALL OFFICIATING" published in 1986.

Don Rutledge has a prestigious career in officiating at all levels and is presently the supervisor of officials for the WNBA.

Personal rules, most of which you won't find in any rulebook or casebook

1. Be a good listener (use your receiver and not your transmitter). Be careful about what you hear.
2. Talk softly but carry control in your voice.
3. Hustle everywhere you could walk, especially after reporting a foul.
4. Sell the call hard only when you need to. (Don't cry wolf on every call)
5. Be careful what you say (You never know how someone will take what you say)
6. Give a coach no opening to find fault (neat appearance, complete rules knowledge and optimum conditioning)
7. Get the captain on your side and other players will follow.
8. Get the scorer and timer on your side (bench communication should always be the same: precise, concise and from the same spot on the floor).
9. There is no 'magic spot' on the floor; keep moving
10. Be a quick starter, a good front runner, a plugger in the middle and a strong finisher.
11. Be realistic, not legalistic.
12. Every referee needs a wishbone, a backbone and a funny bone!
13. Get the call right and there is no comeback.
14. Be ready to admit a mistake and correct it for the betterment of the contest.
15. Some of your best calls are your no-calls.

16. Effort should rise from strength of character rather than anticipation or reward.

17. Make the most difficult task look easy.

18. Keep a cool consistency.

19. Develop a resolve for improvement and not revenge.

20. Leave no doubt about the singularity of your purpose: The GAME