

# **FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY – INTRAMURAL SPORTS**

## **Mentoring Officials**

As supervisor, your role will include being a mentor. You will help develop officials and teach them to perform at a consistent, high level of officiating while making it a pleasant experience. Because of this, officiating quality and moral will improve. Think of this as your chance to pay it forward. You can help our staff reach their full potential while creating new leaders for the program. It's a big responsibility but you wouldn't be in this position if we didn't think you could do it.



As a mentor you must believe in our staff. We hired them because they all possess potential to make our program better. It's our job (Assistant Director, Rec Assistants, and Supervisors) to get that potential out of them. It will take all of us working together to get everyone on the same page.

Mentors help fill the knowledge gaps and seek opportunities to help the officials grow and excel. A mentor should be someone the official feels comfortable letting their guard down with, sharing their insecurities about officiating (we all have them), and asking the 'stupid' questions we all have sometimes. Mentors will also push the officials to take risks, aim higher, and get better every day.

There's a lot of personal satisfaction that comes from watching someone you supervise reach their full potential. But as it turns out, mentoring goes far beyond that. There is so much you can gain in return because mentoring goes both ways; when different generations, come together, their blend of skills can be highly complementary. By investing in our staff, we are investing in the future of the program.



## **Be committed**

Being a mentor is a commitment. As stated earlier, it's our job to develop the staff and push them daily to achieve more. We need to follow through with this commitment and be there for them when needed. Think back to when you were an official, someone helped you get to where you are today. You should want to pay it forward.

## **Listen**

One of your jobs as a mentor is to provide advice and encouragement, but in order to do so, you need to make the time to listen and understand the situation. Intently listening to an official as they describe a situation or answer your questions and, ideally, sort their way through confusion is often more than enough to get them through a game. The importance of listening cannot be overstated here. A good mentor spends considerably more time listening than they do speaking.

## **Have patience**

Mentoring can be a satisfying but trying endeavor. Some situations will require constructive criticism, which can be hard for some officials to take. It is vital that a mentor be patient because feelings could get hurt, tempers could flare, and quick fixes can be far away.

## **Be a role model**

As a mentor, your actions are being evaluated, so you must set the bar for yourself just as high, or higher, than you'd expect from the staff. Your goal is to not only provide direction and advice, but to get your mentee to act upon that advice. Pre-game or halftime discussion with officials can be motivating but few things are more impactful than to lead by example. Your mantra must be: 'Do as I do, not just as I say.'

## **Remember the benefits:**

### **The benefits to the mentor:**

- Renewed enthusiasm and commitment to your work
- Opportunities to share your knowledge and skills
- Recognition of personal expertise
- New learning for opportunities for yourself
- Promotion of lifelong learning through relationships.

### **The benefits to the official:**

- Key learning experience
- Increased confidence and motivation
- Constructive feedback on performance
- Help to translate theory into practice





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University Recreation

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