

Wrestling Officials Vocabulary

Primary Actions to Address

- ACTION
- IMPROVE
- CENTER (CIRCLE)
- CONTACT
- CONTINUE (use rotation hand signal)
- RETURN (to mat)

“Working” Vocabulary

- Work In / Center (boundary)
- Work to Stay In
- Work to Improve / Score
- Keep Working / Wrestling
- Wrestle!
- Use That (point)

Use of Hand Signals

- Indicate Control
- Award Points
- Signify Rules Violation
- Stimulate Action
- Indicate Clock to Begin / Stop
- Communicate Head ><Assistant

Safety Vocabulary

- CONTROL (Lift – Return)
- CAREFUL
- KEEP IT LEGAL / SAFE
- ADJUST
- ‘NO’ (accompanied by whistle & stop)
- ‘STOP’ (w/ whistle / hand – potentially dangerous)

Tool Kit

1. VERBALIZE: Set up calls, encourage action, reinforce hand signals, prevent injury.
2. ACTION: Seek to constantly stimulate. Stop & restart when there is no improvement.
3. STALLING: If there is no response to verbal encouragement, the warning serves notice that you are serious about seeing action.
4. ASSURANCE: Hold your call until you are sure someone has established or lost control.
5. STALEMATE: Especially with shorter periods or in tighter matches, allow no more than 10 seconds of inactivity before you stop and restart.
6. HOLDS: Move closer when a potentially dangerous hold is being applied. Warn clearly and monitor carefully. If warnings are ignored: stop action, then warn or penalize. If necessary, be close enough to catch the aggressor’s hand to stop the action from injuring an opponent.
7. PROACTIVE: Objective is to not take an earned hold away from the offensive wrestler, while also being in position to protect the safety of the defensive opponent.
8. POSITION: Lower your level. Be where you can best observe while in position to protect.

Coach Talk (what you say is as important as what you do)

*** Listen before you respond. Sometimes all the coach needs is to be heard. Remember that not all coaches have wrestling experience or have been trained in coaching.*

1. Coach your wrestler, not the official.
2. Can you phrase that as a question? (not as a statement or accusation)
3. That is a rule interpretation – I can answer that.
4. In my judgment, that was the best call. You are not allowed to challenge that.
5. Thank you for your feedback, Coach. I will take that into future consideration.
6. I understand your concern, Coach. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.
7. We do the best we can, Sir.

Official’s Agreement

I have read and understand that an official works best when s/he is proactive and verbal. I will make an effort to use these commands and insights to perform at my highest level on the mat.