

Seven R's Guarantee Improvement

There are seven elements that, if in place, have a significant effect on performance improvement in business as well as in sports. They are:

- **Rapport:** First, establish a rapport with the official. For effective, successful performance improvement, the official must know you are on the same team and feel comfortable with you and the task at hand.
- **Respect:** Next, respect the official and communicate that respect. You can show respect in many ways: by acknowledging their efforts, communicating your appreciation of those efforts, and being willing to allow the official to learn from mistakes.
- **Response:** Clearly explain and demonstrate the desired response or response set. The official must know exactly what must be done, how it looks when it is done correctly, and how it feels when it is right.
- **Reinforcement:** Reinforce the official's performance with verbal feedback and praise when the official does something correctly. This recognition is more intrinsically motivating and therefore longer lasting than tokens or financial incentives.
- **Repetition:** Positive reinforcement will also lead to repetition of the appropriate response (improvement). The more the official makes the right call or is in the right place at the right time, the more it becomes ingrained in memory so that future performances can occur at a high level, as if automatically.
- **Rhythm:** If you can create a rhythm to the performance it will be easier for the official. Rhythm helps people do whatever they do better. Help the official identify the best rhythm associated with the improvement task. Pay attention to the way people move, what they say (often this is an outward display of thought processes), and what they do before, during and after the game.
- **Ritual:** Now sit back and watch the types of rituals the official creates to complete the new skill. Golfers wave the club back and forth before hitting the ball. Businesspeople talk to themselves as they rehearse a presentation. Some people do physical stretching exercises before getting up in front of a group to talk; it helps them relax and focus on the performance. These are all rituals.

When officials develop a ritual for a task, you can be sure there will be improvement as well as a high level of achievement because they are repeating a series or pattern of behaviours that they are comfortable with and that have led to successful performances in the past.