

## Attentional Problems

As well as understanding how individuals differ in their concentration style and how sports may differ in their concentration demands, it is also useful to understand the different types of concentration problems that may occur in sport. These concentration problems are usually caused by various distractions. Instead of focusing on the competition itself, the official becomes distracted by other events, thoughts or emotions.

Anything which is irrelevant to the task in hand is a potential distraction. In accordance with Nideffer's direction dimension, distractions can be external (in the environment – weather, spectators, coaches) or internal (task irrelevant thoughts – dwelling on past mistakes or decisions, worrying about the outcomes and its repercussions).

Look at the following table and then use the next activity to analyse the typical distractions that characterise officiating for your sport, and identify any solutions that could minimise or eliminate those distractions from your performance.

### Attentional Problems

External	Internal
Background noise	Thinking about other games
Players/Coaches talking	Attending to past events like a recent mistake
Planes/Cars	Attending to future events like "What if a bad call decides the game?"
Action on the field/court next to you	Thinking too much
Noticing family or friends in the audience	Unclear on variables around certain rules

## Activity

List examples of external and distractions you have experienced and identify potential solutions to eliminate or minimise these distractions.

External	Internal	Solution