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Effective Communication and Short-Term Decision Makers: Effective Coach Communication
Within the Coach/Official Dynamic in Athletic Competition

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ABSTRACT

In sports, winning is everything. Coaches will do whatever is necessary to gain an advantage for their team or competitor to get the win. But often it is not them who decide the outcome. Neutral third-party officials who maintain rules and order during the game or competition often make decisions which determine the outcomes. It is therefore imperative that coaches understand how and why officials make the decisions they do and how to effectively communicate with them during the game or contest. The purpose of this study is the latter of those two goals: determining the most effective methods of communication by coaches with officials during a game or contest. For this purpose, over three hundred officials were surveyed. We were able to conclude that officials can separate their views of coaches from teams, however there are several dimensions of communication which can impact the feelings of an official toward a team or coach.

Keywords: Official, Coach, Sports, Communication, Effective Communication, Umpire, Referee

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Chapter 1

Rationale

Division 1 baseball umpire Reggie Drummer was in the last inning of a March 10, 2023, game between Mississippi Valley State and New Orleans when he struck out a batter on a pitch that appeared well out of the strike zone (Keith, 2023). A forty-five-second clip of the call spread around the internet. This clip also showed the previous call, a strike by Drummer which was outwardly disputed by the same batter. This clip made the international sports news cycle. Journalists and fans speculated as to why the call was made. In this thesis, I suggest that the answer lies in the communication that took place during the previous eight innings.

Communication is a vital aspect of sport that can sometimes be overlooked. Watch only one game of any sport and you will be able to see the importance of communication. Players on a team need to communicate to work together successfully. Coaches need to communicate with players to explain necessary improvements and provide critiques. Coaches need to communicate with one another to implement successful strategies. Without communication, organized sports would simply fail to function. But where is sports communication most vital? One potentially intense and consequential communication situation involves coaches and officials.

Officials are the ones making the calls. They are the arbiters and judges making decisions based on a set of rules. At the end of the day, their interpretations and observations are what decide the result of the contest; therefore, good communication with officials is imperative for any coach or player. This thesis aims to understand how a coach's communication with an

official can impact their calls, and therefore how coaches could be more effective communicators.

Communication with officials can decide games. Take, for example, the 2021 game between the Golden State Warriors and Charlotte Hornets. With seconds left in the fourth quarter and the Warriors up by two, one of their stars -- Draymond Green -- disagreed with a call by the referee. “He then picked up two consecutive technical fouls, the first for verbally taunting the Hornets, and the second for directing profanity at the referee” (Goldberg, 2021). Due to this penalty, his ejection, and the resultant free shots the Hornets received because of how Green communicated with the official, the Hornets were able to win the game. If Green would have been able to communicate effectively, he may have been able to prevent the fouls and, therefore, the loss. Although this example focuses on a player's communication with an official, rather than a coach's communication, it demonstrates the critical impact of communication with officials during sports competitions.

Given the importance of coach-official communication, this thesis seeks to clarify effective methods of communication for coaches. More specifically, I consider various types of coach-official communication and the dimensions on which coach-official communication can vary. I also examine potential outcomes of communication between coaches and officials. To test the association between features of communication and outcomes, I report a survey of sports officials. The survey results show how specific types of communication by coaches are correlated with specific results during the game. The discussion reflects on characteristics of effective communication strategies, intending to provide recommendations for how coaches can communicate with officials more effectively. Finally, the paper explores how these concepts can be expanded.

Coach-Official Initial Interaction

As a foundation for focusing on communication between coaches and officials during a competition, it is helpful to understand how the stage is set before a match. Although the specifics might vary, the patterns are generally the same across different types of sports. This section briefly summarizes those norms and explains where there may be important flashpoints for communication. It is also helpful to note that it is during these times when an official makes their first impression of a coach and team. As is true in most social situations, a positive first impression is a valuable step to a good relationship.

Most of the time, a coach will have at least an hour warning on who their official may be. The level of competition is directly correlated to how much notice a coach may have regarding their official, such that the higher the level, the more preparation will be given to a coach. No matter the level, an hour before the competition will almost always be the first official time coaches and officials communicate about the contest at hand. It is at this point that all parties try to form some type of connection in any attempt to gain an advantage during the contest (Warneke & Ogden, 2014). The most common method is friendly conversation or what many communication scientists would call identification. For example, this occurs when, “the assistant coach who wants to sidle up while the officials are observing the warmup” (Referee, 2021). Coaches and officials will try to find some way to identify with one another, mainly through creating connections and finding “similarity,” to ease the awkwardness of early communication and form an initial relationship.

Between fifteen and thirty minutes before a game is typically when rules start to be introduced and the boundaries of the relationship are created. While a friendly demeanor is important for any official, it is still important for an official to show they are in control of the contest. During this time, officials may ask questions of the coaches to understand any particulars. Additionally, coaches need to note any preferences officials may explain during pre-game meetings. These preferences, popular in sports like baseball, may give guidelines for in-game communication. Following the guidelines given before the game is an easy way to make sure any type of communication is more effectively received by the official. These pre-game activities set the stage for communication during the competition, which is the focus of the subsequent section.

Categories of Coach-Official Communication

During the game, communication takes place between the officials and coaches in a variety of official and unofficial contexts, all of which affect the relationship. To better understand these varieties of communication, I have separated them into distinct categories. Although these categories may not address every act of communication from a coach to an official, they give a basis by which to talk about and differentiate the communication depending on the situation.

The first category is the one most discussed in the popular media, *disputes*. Disputes are where the coach and official disagree about one or more rule interpretations or observations in the contest. These can look wildly different, from the iconic brim-to-brim arguments between managers and umpires of the 1980s, to the respectful chats between PGA tour officials and players, to even modern “challenges” where coaches ask officials to review video footage with

the possibility of change their ruling. This is often the most contentious form of communication as the coach is telling the official that they believe the official is wrong.

The next category is *clarification*. This, like a dispute, is often about a singular call or moment, but -- unlike a dispute -- clarification is less about disagreement and more about trying to understand the position of the official. This is often done in the form of asking the official what they may have seen or asking for them to explain a certain rule and how it is being applied. Clarification, when done right, is often welcomed by the official. However, if a coach is not careful, an official can misinterpret clarification as a dispute.

The third category is *influence*. This is where a coach tries to influence directly or indirectly the official to have a more favorable opinion of their team and/or a less favorable opinion of the other team. Coaches do this in a variety of ways, but often it is through trying to create a feeling of friendship or comradery to make it more difficult for the official to rule against their team. Coaches also use compliments and other forms of positive affection expression to raise an official's opinion.

The final category is *small talk*. While often overlooked, small talk is probably the largest part of official-coach communication. Small talk occurs whenever there is a break or a pause in the action. With nothing else to do, coaches and officials will talk about whatever is on their minds: the contest, their families, the weather, etc. Any minute piece of small talk can influence an official's perception and therefore their calls.

These types of communication allow for a simple common language when discussing various types of coach to official communication. The categories allow for a common vocabulary to discuss different acts of communication throughout this thesis.

Dimensions of Communication Between Coaches and Officials

Communication between coaches and officials can be characterized in terms of several underlying dimensions. These first features of communication are often easily apparent to the fan on TV or the coach on the sideline. In past studies, these are also the dimensions that had the most focus (Warneke & Ogden, 2014). The common theme of these dimensions is their physicality. One would be able to easily classify them as a spectator, and their operational definitions are easy for a layperson to understand.

One dimension of communication is *Coach Directness*, which is the degree to which the coach talks directly to the official. Direct interactions can either be positive or negative, but they always take place face-to-face and often involve some type of discussion. The other end of this continuum is indirect communication. Indirect communication can occur in a variety of ways, but commonly it involves using the players in the contest. Indirect communication can be seen through the coach making comments to players, having the players communicate with officials, or even through the implementation of specific strategies in the game through which coaches let their feelings be known to officials. If negative, these communications are often seen as passive aggressive and sometimes as the precursors to direct disputes. Coaches may try to use indirect communication to “get around” an official and not get in trouble for disagreements, a tactic which has been found to annoy officials (Hisner, 2019).

Among nonverbal dimensions of communication, *proximity* has been seen as especially relevant (Hisner, 2019). How close or far one is from the coach when engaging in the direct or indirect communication plays a factor in how officials interpret that communication from the coach. Many officials have told me that a coach can use the same tone and the same words, but how they will react to that tone and those words varies widely depending if that coach is on the bench or sidelines versus talking with them directly face to face. My conversations with officials

suggest a correlation between the proximity (i.e., how far the coach is from the official) and the negative reaction from the official concerning the communication. There is a belief in sports that a simple difference of a few feet can radically alter the context of an interaction and, therefore, change the effectiveness of the communication. Notably, the effects of proximity may be related to the private vs. public nature of the communication.

A final dimension of communication examined in the start of this project is one of the categories of communication discussed earlier. There is a belief some coaches have that any *Disagreement* with an official will be treated negatively. In this view, an official would take exception to any act or instance of communication that would have a goal of expressing displeasure or dissent with a call. A game with a high level of *Disagreement* would be characterized by both verbal and nonverbal rejection of decisions. These rejections may be as boisterous as a yell from the sideline or as casual as a quick conversation between breaks. Most of the communication in the game directed at the official in a game with a high level of *Disagreement* would be to express dissent. A game with a low level of *Disagreement* does not mean the coach or team agrees with the calls of the official. It means the communication with the official either does not concern calls or would express acceptance of the calls. Additionally, low overall levels of communication in a game may be perceived as a game with low *Disagreement*.

Each of these dimensions of communication can impact how officials experience interaction with a coach. First, I expect *Coach Directness* to have an impact on the official's view of communication. Because officials want coaches to address their concerns to them directly instead of talking around them, higher *Coach Directness* from the coach will result in more positive disposition on the part of the official. Further, *Proximity*, at least as far as its public vs private nature, will have an impact. Because public exchanges undermine the official's

authority and may give pseudo authority for fans and players to make similar comments, the more public the communication the more likely it will negatively impact the official.

Expectations for the impact of *Disagreement* are more speculative. Officials go into a game expecting for coaches to disagree with their calls, and many understand that different perceptions of the same play may result in different conclusions. Therefore, although I expect that *Disagreement* will decrease positive disposition, this association could be influenced by an official's expectations going into the game.

H₁- As *Coach Directness* increases, so does the positive disposition of the official.

H₂- As *Proximity* increases, the positive disposition of the official decreases.

H₃- As levels of *Disagreement* increase, the positive disposition of the official decreases.

Next, I consider how communication, through the relational messages it conveys, can further shape officials' experiences of interaction with a coach.

Relational Dimensions of Communication Between Coaches and Officials

During the game there is a relationship between the coach and official. This relationship may not extend beyond the buzzer, but during the contest it is the coaches' most important interpersonal connection. Unlike most interpersonal relationships, there is a total power disparity between a coach and official. This means that the negotiations that take place in most relationships cannot take place. Therefore, coaches must rely on influence. In this way, I disagree with Warneke and Ogden who claimed that interactions between officials and coaches, specifically in baseball, mirror a workplace and, therefore, constitute workplace communication. Because officials are not managers or supervisors, I believe a better analogy is a courtroom, where the officials are judges, and the coaches are attorneys. Using this analogy, it is easy to see

the importance of the relationship between a coach and an official and how to influence and maintain this relationship.

One dimension of the coach-official relationship related to communication is *Uncertainty*. Relational Uncertainty refers to the degree of confidence people perceive regarding their romantic relationships (Knobloch & Solomon, 1999). This concept can be expanded to the *Uncertainty* in the relationship that exists between a coach and official. By the very nature of this relationship, one is often skeptical of the other. An official may not know whether an act of good will done by a coach is a genuine act of kindness or some planned charade designed to cast the coach and their team in a positive light. This goes both ways. Coaches often have very little background information on officials; and from the start of the game, they are uncertain of their qualifications and, therefore, uncertain in the relationship. Uncertainty in a relationship, even one between a coach and official, can create turbulence (Solomon et al, 2016). Turbulence in a relationship can harm the reception of any communication between the parties in the relationship, thereby making any communication from a coach to an official less effective.

Reasoning from research on romantic relationships (e.g., Solomon et al. 2016), I propose that the lower the *Uncertainty*, the lower the turbulence in the coach-official relationship. Additionally, the lower the turbulence in the relationship the more stable the relationship. Therefore, the lower the *Uncertainty* between the coach and the official the better the disposition the official has towards the team.

H₄- As *Uncertainty* decreases, the positive disposition of the official increases.

A second dimension of relational communication between coaches and officials is *respect*. Many officials care most about whether participants have respect for them and their position (Warneke & Ogden, 2014). From speaking with officials, I have learned that they need

to see some perception of *Respect*, and they aim to make sure the public or anyone watching the game knows that the coaches and players hold some measure of respect for the official. This usually does not manifest itself in actions, but rather in restraint. Officials report that the largest source of disrespect is being “shown up.” This simply means a public display of disrespect or disagreement, such that a spectator would clearly be able to understand what is being conveyed. Both coaches and officials are known for having large egos. This can make it so both parties want to be the one “in charge.” Therefore, for some coaches, even giving the perception of *Respect* to some officials can be difficult. Accordingly, the fifth hypothesis is that a continued perception of *Respect* on the part of the coach allows for an effective communicative relationship with the official and a positive disposition on the part of the official.

H₅- As *Respect* in the communication between a coach and official increases, the positive disposition of the official also increases.

Emotional Dimensions of Communication Between Coaches and Officials

Emotion, or the arousal of emotion, is another facet of communication between a coach and official. Through my conversations with officials, I learned there are three important emotions—two that coaches should evoke and one that they should avoid. The first emotion is one it would be effective to employ: *Guilt*. By arousing *Guilt*, a coach can potentially inspire an official to throw off the balance of calls in their favor. For *Guilt* to be aroused it is important that an official thinks they themselves did something wrong. If an official believes that a coach is pushing for a “make up call” or a blatantly wrong call by an official to “make up” for what they did wrong, the actual emotion the official will feel is anger. By effectively using *Guilt*, an official will be pushed slightly in one team’s direction.

The other effective emotion a coach can evoke is *Pride*. *Pride* is used opposite and conversely to *Guilt*, and it is effective when an official believes they did something good. By pushing and extending the emotional arousal of pride, the official naturally feels good and wants to replicate this feeling. Arousing *Pride* in a call makes it more likely the official will make a similar call or push calls in favor of the team which originally aroused the *Pride* to capture the same or a similar feeling.

The emotion that a coach needs to avoid is *Anger*. *Anger* at a team or coach can often cloud the judgement of an official, and it cause the calls to be skewed against one team in a major direction. For some officials, *Anger* can even overshadow their desire to succeed at their job. One way to arouse *Anger* in an official is to give the perception you are manipulating them - that you are doing things in certain ways to try to gain some advantage. If this is the perception of the official, then all the effective communication in the world cannot help, and that *Anger* arousal will push against any attempts to create any relationship or evoke any other emotion in the official. Accordingly, a prerequisite for effective communication with officials is avoiding the perception of manipulation. *Anger* is important to avoid mainly due to the high emotional volatility it brings.

I hypothesize that a coach who can arouse *Pride* and *Guilt* from an official during a contest is more likely to gain a positive disposition from the official. I further hypothesize that any coach which causes the arousal of *Anger* will cause a negative disposition against their team from the official. This may manifest in different ways, but any *Anger* will cause a change in communication effectiveness with the official.

H₆- As the *Guilt* arousal increases, so does the positive disposition of the official.

H₇- As *Pride* arousal increases, so does the positive disposition of the official.

H₈- As *Anger* levels increase, the positive disposition of the official decreases.

With this understanding of categories and dimensions of communication related to the coach/official dynamic, I turn next to the dispositions of officials.

Officials' Dispositions

How a coach communicates may be clear, but it may be less clear how this could affect officials. Officials do not change the course of a game due to how they feel about a coach. Most would never purposefully get a call wrong. However, just because they would never intend to do something does not mean their perceptions of coaches and teams would not influence their calls. To this end, there are two indicators of a positive influence communication has had on an official's perception of a team and, therefore, how they will interact with that team.

The first indicator would be the *Liking* an official has for a team. This may seem simple, but it can be highly influential whether an official likes the team or contestant. In fact, many officials will admit they will actively hope one team or person will prevail in certain contests which I have personally seen officiating in the past. They would never say this attitude influences how or what they call, but they will say they naturally prefer one team.

The second indicator would be *Collaboration*. In sports, there are often situations that the rules did not exactly predict. It is in these moments that the official must use their own reasoning to decide how action should precede. It would be beneficial for a coach to be included in any discussion and collaborate with the officials on the best solution to the issue. When an official's disposition toward *Collaboration* is negative, parties are much less willing to talk and, therefore, the official may be even more unwilling to listen to a specific coach. The same goes for when the official tries to collaborate with a coach, often to prevent rules from being broken before the players have the chance. This is normally done in the name of safety, as an important job for

officials is to try to keep all the players safe. It is important for an official to feel they can bring those concerns directly to a coach, and they will only do so if there is a positive disposition. A coach should strive for better *Collaboration* with officials which is only possible with positive dispositions. Therefore, *Collaboration* or willingness to collaborate on the part of the official is an indicator of a positive disposition toward the team or other participants in the contest.

Summary

Communication is complicated. It is especially complicated when that communication is with a short-term decision maker such as a sports official. Due to the extent to which officials control matches and impact their winners and losers, it is important for coaches to understand how to effectively communicate with officials.

Coaches' communication to officials can be broken down into four categories to better understand the differences. These categories are dispute, clarification, influence, and small talk. These categories do not necessarily show how contentious this communication may be, but rather the goal of the coach. This communication can be broken down additionally by not only looking at what was said, but also by how it was said. In this context there are eight dimensions of communication. There are three dimensions of messages themselves. I hypothesize that as *Coach Directness* increases so does the positive disposition of the official, as *Proximity* increases this disposition decreases, and as *Disagreement* increases disposition will decrease. There are two relational dimensions. To create a positive disposition, I hypothesize a coach must keep *Uncertainty* low and *Respect* high. Additionally, for the three emotional dimensions of communication a coach needs to attempt to arouse *Guilt* and *Pride* in the official, while avoiding arousing *Anger* to gain this positive disposition. Finally, I proposed two indicators of a positive disposition on the part of an official toward a team or other participant. The first is *Liking* or

having a positive and hopeful attitude for one of the teams. The second indicator is

Collaboration or willingness to collaborate, which allows a coach to be more involved with the officials.

Chapter 2

Methodology

To study coach-to-official communication, I conducted a survey of current sports officials. This survey asked officials to think back to the last game, contest, or match they officiated in which they communicated with one or more coaches. It then asked them to focus on one of the head coaches and answer a series of questions about this communication. The survey first collected demographic information on the officials. It then collected general information about the contest, such as the level of competition.

The survey then presented a series of questions about the communication from the coach and how the official felt about the communication. Here, I was looking at different types of communication that could have been employed by a coach and what specifically was used by the coach in that game or contest. The survey also asked officials to assess how certain interactions with the coach made them feel. I finally measured how much each official “liked” and would be “willing to collaborate” with the team and coach. These acted as the dependent variables of the study.

Participants

Participants for the study were recruited in two ways. First, the survey was distributed to all working officials of a local Philadelphia sports complex, Maple Zone Sports Complex, with the help of the complex director, Chris Pincin. For the complex, these officials primarily officiate baseball. Days later, the survey was distributed by Justin Gragg, Head of Officiating, to all registered NAIA (National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics) officials. The NAIA is a collegiate athletic group like, but smaller than, the NCAA. This is a nationwide network of officials.

Survey results were collected between March 30th, 2023, and April 12th, 2023.

Additionally, fourteen responses were removed for taking longer than 30 minutes to complete the survey. In total, 304 survey responses from participants were collected and used. As required to complete the survey, all 304 participants indicated that they were over 18 years of age, spoke English, resided in the United States, and had officiated a sporting contest within the last 10 years.

As Table 1 shows, most of the participants were at least middle aged. Almost half of all respondents to the survey were between the ages of 46 and 60 and almost three quarters were between 46 and 75. Table 2 shows that the overwhelming majority (92.1%) of participants identified as male. It is important to note that all three who answered “other” to that question used the choice to express their displeasure with a gender question with more than two options. Table 3 shows that most participants also identified as white. Using most recent census data, compared to the US population, both men and white people are overrepresented among sports officials (2022). Due to the very small number of respondents who were not men or not white, statistical controls for gender and race/ethnicity were not meaningful.

As indicated in Table 4, many of the officials officiated more than one sport. Additionally (see Table 5), although the specific sport which was being officiated and recorded for this survey was varied across officials, there was a heavy concentration on winter and spring sports. This trend likely reflects the timing of the survey (i.e., the beginning of April) and its focus on the most recent game or contest participants officiated. One potential reason for the large number of “other” in response to type of sport is the lack of the inclusion of “ice hockey” as an answer choice. Ice hockey was not included as it is not an official PIAA (Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association) nor an official NAIA sport. Finally, per Table 6, the level of competition

for the sport varied, with the heaviest concentration being collegiate level athletics, likely due to the survey being spread through the NAIA.

Even though the minimum requirement for the survey was that the official have officiated a game or contest within the last 10 years, all the participants in the survey had done so within the last 3 years (see Table 7). Moreover, 77.5% of respondents officiated the game within the last month and 93% had done so within the last 3 months.

Procedures

Participants first read a series of details about the survey and how it should be taken. The survey told each participant, “The purpose of the study is to find the most effective ways for coaches to communicate with sports officials. To do so this study will seek to find what types of communication most influence officials and how coaches can manage these situations to get the best result for themselves or their team. These examples of communication are not limited to verbal communication but include non-verbal variables as well.” Participants were then informed that the survey will likely take fifteen to twenty minutes; however, it assured them that no personal or private information would be collected, much less shared. The survey then informed participants that continuing with the survey implied their consent to participate in the study.

If a participant chose to continue the survey, they saw the instructions to complete the survey. “Please think back to the last time you interacted through the game with one or more coaches during a game or contest. If you interacted with multiple coaches during those games, please focus on your interactions with the most senior coach or manager on one of the teams. Please answer these following questions about the game and your communication with the coach during the game.” The first series of questions asked about the official’s demographics. These were basic questions which try to gain information about the official. This includes their gender

identity, ethnicity, the number of sports they officiate, their general age, etc. No identifying information such as an age or location was collected.

The participants then progressed to answering questions about their most recent game or contest per the survey instructions. These questions start as basic questions about the game such as the sport, when it took place, its level (youth, college, etc.), and where it took place. Additionally, there was information collected about the specific side and coach chosen per the instructions. Did this coach and their team/player win and had the official worked for that coach before were two of these questions. Finally, to measure against potentially confounding variables, more specific information about the game was collected. This information includes the consequential nature of the game, if it took place in the postseason, and if there was any controversy. Any of these variables could have skewed the communication between the coach and official and its impact on the contest.

Participants then responded to a series of statements relating to different communication dimensions in sports. These responses gauged the official's perception of communication that was used in the game by the particular coach. There are thirty-two statements broken into eight sections depending on the variable being tested. Each of these statements was responded to by participants using a four-point Likert scale which ranged from "Disagree" to "Agree" with an additional "not applicable /do not remember" option. This option would remove participants from the data on that statement.

The participants were finally given a series of statements designed to test the effect the coach and their communication had on the official. Here participants responded to, "statement[s] concerning your current opinions and feelings regarding the team and coach from the first parts of the survey."

Measures

A total of ten distinct variables were measured as part of this study. This is in addition to the demographics concerning the official and the game. Each of the ten variables, everything outside of the demographics, were measured using a four-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 2 = Somewhat Disagree, 3 = Somewhat Agree, 4 = Agree). Additionally, a participant could respond that the statement was either not applicable or they did not remember. In this case, their response to the statement was removed from the data.

Official Demographics. Seven questions were asked to participants to gain information about their demographic. As explained earlier, this information included age range, ethnicity, etc.

Game Demographics. Fourteen questions were asked concerning information about the specific game the participant used to complete the survey. Basic information such as the sport and when the game took place were collected, as well as more detailed information including if the game occurred during the “postseason.” Additional demographic questions, or perceptual demographic questions, about the coach in question were also asked including the coach’s perceived gender identity by the official.

Coach Directness. Two statements were given about *Coach Directness*, meaning the directness of the communication from the coach to the official. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Because the items correlated poorly ($r = .28$) it was inappropriate to combine them. Therefore, only the statement “The coach was direct with their communication” was used ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.69$).

Proximity. Four statements were given about the *Proximity* to the official when the coach communicated. The public vs. private nature of this communication was also measured.

Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Because the inter-item correlations were all within 0.10 of 0, they were treated as separate measures. The four statements are: “The coach stayed on the sideline/bench/dugout/etc.” ($M = 3.14, SD = 1.20$), “The coach communicated face to face” ($M = 3.65, SD = 0.75$), “The coaches' arguments were public” ($M = 2.74, SD = 1.18$), and “The coaches' arguments were private” ($M = 2.40, SD = 1.17$).

Disagreement. Four statements were used concerning the extent to which the coach disagreed with the officials calls through the course of the game. These items were: “The coach disagreed with my calls,” “The coach did not like my calls,” “The coach agreed with my calls,” and “The coach liked my calls.” Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). After reverse coding the latter two items, they were averaged to create a *Disagreement* scale ($M = 2.48, SD = 0.92, \alpha = .89$).

Guilt. Four statements were used to measure the extent to which the coach’s communication made the official feel guilty through the game. Additionally, there was a measurement to see if the official perceived the coach as attempting to make them feel guilty. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Only one statement measuring *Guilt* (i.e., “The coach made me feel guilty when I got a call wrong”) was able to be used to create a *Guilt* scale ($M = 1.66, SD = 0.95$).

Pride. Four statements were used concerning officials feeling *Pride* when they made a correct call. Additionally, I looked to see if the coach made any attempt to praise the official for the correct call. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Only one statement measuring *Pride* (i.e., “The

coach made me feel prideful when I got the call right”) was able to be used ($M = 2.05$, $SD = 1.09$).

Anger. Four statements were used concerning the participants feeling *Anger* due to the communication from the coach. Two of the questions were reverse coded to index happiness. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Only one statement measuring *Anger* (i.e., “The coach made me angry”) was able to be used to create an *Anger* scale ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 0.84$).

Respect. Four statements were asked to measure the participants’ perceptions of the coach’s *Respect* for them. Two of the questions were reverse coded to measure disrespect. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Three of the four statements were usable to create a *Respect* scale which were: “The coach respected me,” “The coach disrespected me,” and “The coach respected my decisions” ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.92$, $\alpha = .89$).

Uncertainty. Four statements were asked to measure the participants’ perception of how clear the coach was in their communication. Additionally, these measures tested how certain officials were that they understood what a coach was feeling and thinking. Agreement with the statements would indicate higher levels of uncertainty. Two of the questions were reverse coded for certainty. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with the statements using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). Due to poor inter-item correlations, only one statement measuring *Uncertainty* was used: “I do not know how the coach felt about my decisions” ($M = 1.45$, $SD = 0.84$).

Liking. Ten questions were asked to measure how much the participants liked the coach and the team/player after the contest. This was measuring the effects of the communication used

by the coach during the game or contest. This liking extended to a desire to see the team succeed in the future. To be clear, this was not measuring officials saying they would make different calls for the team in the future, but rather their desired outcome for the team overall. Five of the questions were reverse coded to measure disliking. In the rationale, a concept of “*Disposition*” was used to explain the attitude of an official due to the communication efforts by a coach. To find disposition, I intended to use *Liking* and *Collaboration*. The idea was that a coach with a more positive disposition would both have a higher level of *Liking* and would be more willing to collaborate. What I found was not so simple. Instead, five new and distinct concepts emerged from the data.

Instead of one measurement of *Liking*, there was a noticeable difference in *Liking for Team* and *Liking for Coach*. Although the two concepts are related, with a highly significant correlation of .498, their statistical association suggested they are separate and distinct variables. These concepts were each measured with one question. In addition, these concepts are related to but distinct from *Hope for Team* on the part of the official. (*Liking for Team* had a highly significant correlation of .59 related to *Hope for Team*, whereas *Liking for Coach* has a highly significant correlation of .491.) One of the reasons some of the results for the survey may be skewed was the unusually large number of respondents who declined to respond to the questions related to *Hope for Team* ($n = 164$).

For all the scales, agreement meant higher levels of *Liking for Coach* from the official. *Liking for Team* measured how much the official liked the team. *Liking for Coach* measured how much the official liked the coach, and *Hope for Team* measured the extent to which the official hoped to see the team do well in the future without their influence. Participants indicated the extent to which they agreed with all the statements concerning liking using a 4-point Likert scale

(1 = Disagree, 4 = Agree). One statement measuring *Liking for Team* (“I like the team”) was able to be used to create a *Liking for Team* scale ($M = 3.46$, $SD = .90$). One statement measuring *Liking for Coach* (“I like the coach”) was able to be used to create a *Liking for Coach* scale ($M = 3.37$, $SD = .87$). Two statements measured *Hope for Team* (“I hope the team has success in the future.” and “I would be happy if I learned this team won the championship”) were able to be used to create a *Hope for Team* scale ($M = 3.51$, $SD = .72$, $\alpha = .58$).

Future Collaboration. Four questions were asked about the likelihood for the official to collaborate or seek out communication with that coach in the future. This was also measuring the effects of the communication used by the coach during the game or contest. Two of the questions were reverse coded because they measured avoiding the coach, rather than collaborating. As with liking, this variable had to be further separated. The new variables are *Future Collaboration*, which specifically measures the willingness of an official to collaborate with the coach in the future, and *Future Avoidance*, which measures how likely an official is to try to avoid the coach in the future. One statement measuring *Future Collaboration* (“If I officiated this team again, I would be more willing to talk with this coach”) was able to be used to create a *Future Collaboration* scale ($M = 3.32$, $SD = .94$). One statement measuring *Future Avoidance* (“I would try to avoid communicating with this coach if possible”) was able to be used to create a *Future Avoidance* scale ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.10$).

Chapter 3

Results

As referenced earlier *Liking* and *Future Collaboration* could not be taken together to create *Disposition* as I had originally planned; nor were they able to be used separately. *Liking* was separated into three different variables: *Hope for Team*, *Liking for Team*, and *Liking for Coach*. *Collaboration* was separated into two variables: *Future Collaboration* and *Future Avoidance*. Thus, these variables comprise the dependent variables in the tests of the hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

The first hypothesis predicted that direct communication by the coach would engender a more favorable disposition in the official. Table 8 shows *Coach Directness* and *Liking for Coach* are correlated at .288 with $p < .001$. Table 8 also shows *Coach Directness* and *Future Collaboration* correlated at .238 with $p < .001$. Table 8 shows that none of the other three variables correlated significantly with *Coach Directness*. This would partially support the hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2

The second hypothesis predicted that as proximity increased the favorability of the officials' judgments would decrease. Table 9 shows "The coaches' arguments were public" and *Liking for Coach* are correlated at -.272 with $p < .001$. "The coaches' arguments were public" did not correlate significantly with any other variable. Table 9 also shows "The coaches' arguments were private" and *Liking for Coach* correlated at .216 with $p < .001$. "The coaches' arguments were private" was also not significantly correlated with *Hope for Team*, *Liking for Team*, and *Future Avoidance*. Finally, "The coach stayed on the sideline/bench/dugout/etc." was also significantly correlated with *Liking for Coach* at .238 with $p < .001$. Table 9 also shows "The

coach stayed on the sideline/bench/dugout/etc.” and *Future Collaboration* correlated at .231 with $p < .001$. Table 9 shows that none of the other variables correlated significantly with any of the three questions. As it was not possible with this study to create a proximity scale the second hypothesis was not supported, however the results in the questions may suggest important significance between public and private communication.

Hypothesis 3

The third hypothesis predicted that as *Disagreement* increased positive disposition would decrease. *Disagreement* did not significantly correlate with any of the liking factors associated with the team but was significantly correlated with *Liking for Coach* and *Future Collaboration* (Table 10). This hypothesis was partially supported.

Hypothesis 4

The fourth hypothesis addressed relational dimensions of communication within the coach/official dynamic. It predicted that as *Uncertainty* decreased, the disposition of the official would increase. As shown in Table 11, uncertainty in the feelings and opinions of the coach did not significantly correlate with any of the variables. This hypothesis was not supported.

Hypothesis 5

The fifth hypothesis predicted that as *Respect*, or the perception of *Respect* from the coach for the official, increased so too would disposition. The data in Table 12 supported the fifth hypothesis. *Respect* was significantly correlated with four of the five dependent variables which indicates that a coach showing the appearance of respect will be taken as generally positive by the official. In Table 12, *Hope for Team* had a correlation of .161 where $p = .043$, *Liking for Team* had a correlation of .184 where $p = .012$, *Liking for Coach* had a correlation of

.616 where $p < .001$, and *Future Collaboration* had a correlation of .314 where $p < .001$. Unlike the other for variables *Future Avoidance* is not significantly correlated with *Respect*.

Hypothesis 6

The sixth hypothesis predicted that as guilt was caused and aroused by the coach the disposition of the official would increase. This was tested with the single statement “The coach made me feel guilty when I got a call wrong.” The hypothesis was not supported and in fact the opposite was found. As seen in Table 13, there was a significant negative correlation between both liking variables and the coach attempting to arouse guilt. The correlation between *Guilt* and *Liking for Team* was $-.243, p = .002$. The correlation between *Guilt* and *Liking for Coach* was $-.237$ with $p < .001$. The data would suggest that these attempts by a coach would cause a negative reaction in the official toward both the coach and the team.

Hypothesis 7

The seventh hypothesis predicted that a coach arousing pride in an official would increase the official’s disposition. Pride was measured with the single statement “The coach made me feel prideful when I got the call right.” This hypothesis was supported in Table 14. The results are almost opposite what we found in Table 13, which addressed a coach arousing *Guilt*. When *Pride* is invoked, the reaction from the official and is significantly positively correlated with both *Liking for Team* ($r = .179, p = .027$) and *Liking for Coach* ($r = .219, p = .003$). Additionally, there was a significant and positive correlation between *Pride* and *Future Collaboration* of .202 with $p = .005$.

Hypothesis 8

The final hypothesis related to a coach causing anger in the official. “The coach made me angry.” This hypothesis predicted that if a coach caused anger in the official, the official’s

disposition would decrease. Anger was measured with a single statement, “The coach made me angry.” The results from Table 15 and especially the highly significant negative correlation of .512 with $p < .001$ between *Anger* and *Liking for Coach* supports the final hypothesis. *Anger* was also significantly correlated with *Liking for Team* and *Future Collaboration*.

Chapter 4

Discussion

Communication is an imperative and often overlooked factor in sports. Arguably the most important communication dynamic in a game or contest is between a coach and an official. The ability of a coach to effectively communicate with an official, whether it be about a disagreement, a clarification, or simply to provide some information is essential. This study looked at how coaches can be effective communicators with officials and what factors within communication during a game or contest influence how an official sees a coach or their team. The discussion will look at the sample and discuss strengths and limitations within. It will also look at responses and the strengths and limitations in those. I will then analyze the implications behind the findings. Here I will examine patterns in the data across the hypothesis. Using those implications, I will show how they can apply in sports by proposing two potential communication strategies which could be used by coaches. The paper will then discuss general limitations of the study and conclude by showing the importance of understanding how communication from coaches impacts officials.

Sample

A total of 304 officials participated in this study as participants in a survey conducted over a thirteen-day period. There were several strengths with this sample. The most notable was the recency of all the participants in officiating a game or contest. Of the respondents, 77.5% officiated a game within the last month, 93% within the last 3 months, and all within the last three years. This recency means specific communication and acts from the coach are still fresh in their mind. The further removed one is from an event the harder it can be to accurately recall that event. The high number of officials who were responding to the questions in the survey about a

recent event means their recollections are more likely to be accurate. Additionally, there was a large distribution of officiating levels. A high concentration in youth sports or at the professional level would not accurately reflect the population which the sample represents. Having a variety of levels makes it more likely for the conclusions to be generalizable. There were also several limitations to the sample.

While 304 is an adequate size for the sample, it is on the smaller end. In order to make the sample more representative, I would have hoped for around 500 responses. Additionally, demographically the sample was not very diverse. There was little variation in gender, age, and race among the participants. This may not necessarily be a limitation if this genuinely reflects the demographics among officials. However, with a sample of just about 300 I cannot come to that conclusion.

Additionally, many responses of the sample were limited to two sports--baseball and basketball. These two sports combined represented 67.9% of all sports officiated and recorded for the survey. This is due to when the survey was released and what sports were active at that time. There may be differences in communication across sports so having a greater variety of sports in the survey may have improved its generalizability. That being said, even if the officials indicated that baseball or basketball was the last sport they officiated, half also indicated they officiated more than one sport. That means even if they were officiating one sport at the time how they perceive communication from the coach may be similar across their different sports.

Response Rate

There was a clear separation in the response rates for the questions related to the independent and dependent variables. Participants who did not answer a question or who indicated "Do not remember/Not applicable" were removed from that part of the data. For many

of the independent variable questions, almost all the 304 respondents gave a response. Specifically, *Coach Directness* ($n = 300$) and *Respect* ($n = 285$) had high response rates, while only *Pride* as an independent variable had less than 250 responses ($n = 221$). This was not true for the dependent variables. *Future Collaboration* was the only dependent variable to have more than 250 responses ($n = 252$). Many of the variables had less than 200 responses, the lowest being *Hope for Team* ($n = 164$).

One potential reason for this low number of responses may be all officials' desire to never appear biased. In general officials may not want to say that communication from a coach affects them. They always want to remain neutral. So, while they may not have a problem reporting what a coach did during a game, they may have an issue with the next step in that what the coach did may have affected them in some way. The questions related to *Hope for Team* asked an official if they hoped to see some level of success from the team. This question was not predicated on the belief that even if an official had this hope, they would do something which would purposely influence the success or failure of a single competitor or team. The questions seek to determine if officials were to wish teams well in the future. However, many officials may not like the appearance of having any desire for the future success or failure of any team or competitor for which they officiated. Even in an anonymous survey which does not collect names, they will not express any level of hope.

Implications

The most important observation from the results is the difference between how an official sees a coach and how they see a team. An official can separate their feelings about a team and a coach. Originally, I thought there would just be one feeling that an official held for the team in general, but this was found to be wrong. The two concepts, *Liking for Coach* and

Liking for Team are related ($r = .498, p < .001$); however, the factors which influence each are not always the same. In practice, this may mean a coach can and should modify their communication with a goal of increasing *Liking for Coach* or *Liking for Team*. Importantly, this is seen with *Disagreement*. While disagreement from the coach may negatively impact how much the official likes the coach ($r = -.435, p < .001$), it is not significantly correlated with the feeling that official may have for the team ($r = -.108, p = .144$). Additionally, I found that officials did not interpret a lack of communication negatively. I had predicted that *Uncertainty* in communication from the coach would drive down overall liking, but what we found was there was no significant correlation between any of the dependent variables and *Uncertainty*. Likewise, a coach staying on the sideline/bench/dugout/etc. was significantly correlated with *Liking for Coach*. All of this would indicate that a lack of communication from a coach would not be perceived negatively.

Further, my sixth hypothesis concerning guilt was not supported. I had predicted that an official feeling guilt over a call would increase their disposition toward an official. What I found was *Guilt* was negatively correlated with both *Liking for Team* and *Liking for Coach*. Upon reflection, this may have been due to how the question was worded. “The Coach made me feel guilty.” As I explained earlier in the thesis, if an official feels as though they are being manipulated, they will react poorly. The response to this question may be influenced by this idea as the coach making them feel guilty may have a different effect than a call making them feel guilty.

The largest indicator of how an official would feel toward a team was *Respect*. Approaching and communicating with an official respectfully and especially “not showing them up” is vital to effective coach-to-official communication. Not doing so may result in *Anger*

which is significantly negatively correlated with both *Liking for Coach* ($r = -.512, p < .001$) and *Liking for Team* ($r = -.157, p = .031$). However, showing *Respect* both for the official and their position may cause the official to feel *Pride*. *Pride* or specifically a coach causing an official to feel pride had a significant positive correlation with *Liking for Coach* ($r = .219, p = .003$) and *Liking for Team* ($r = .179, p = .027$).

Officials care about communication from a coach, but officials are also able to separate how they feel about a coach and that coach's team or competitor. Officials also importantly do not interpret a lack of communication negatively, and in fact it may be seen as respectful. If it is seen as such that would help how an official sees both a coach and a team, however a lack of respect could cause anger or other negative effects. Additionally, trying to have an official feel guilty may also cause them to just feel anger, but rather if one is complimentary and again respectful it is possible to arouse pride.

Applications

There are many applications for these results, the most obvious being for coaches in games. As coaches may desire different outcomes or effects through their communication there are several different strategies, they may take which could be informed by this study. An overarching strategy I would recommend to all coaches no matter the approach they decide is: Stay respectful. As was said earlier, *Respect* was significantly and highly correlated with almost all dependent variables. Not showing up the official and treating them right goes a long way to creating open and effective dialogue as well as keeping a high disposition. Additionally, there are never good reasons to show disrespect. Disagreement, debate, and even explicitly objecting to actions taken by official can all be done in a respectful manner. Disrespectful actions only serve to make the coach feel better, sometimes at the expense of their team. And as an aside, there is a

sore lack of officials everywhere in the country (Solomon, 2022). This is partially due to routine disrespect towards officials from even as low as the youth levels (Medina, 2022). Officials are a necessary part of the game and keeping respect will not only increase their *Liking for Coach* and *Liking for Team* but also keep them from quitting.

The first specific strategy maximizes *Liking for Coach* and *Future Collaboration*. This would be the ideal strategy to use with an official one may expect to see in future games or contests. Often leagues or areas use one “assigner” who has lists of all officials and distributes games. In these cases, it is likely as a coach you would see the same official multiple times in a season. The first recommendation in this strategy is to limit disagreement. This is not to say a coach should not question calls. “Where was that pitch” has a different connotation than “That pitch was in the zone.” Disagreement of any type, rather than clarification, could potentially drive down *Liking for Coach*. However, if disagreement needs to occur it should happen in private. A public disagreement is the easiest way to cause dislike in an official and to appear as disrespectful. Additionally, any communication should be direct. Indirect communication or talking around an official would not be perceived positively and may even be seen as disrespect. Finally, silence on the part of the official would not be taken as negative. Therefore, especially in the first few meetings, when in doubt a coach should just stay silent and encourage their staff or players to do the same. Over time a coach may be able to build a relationship with an official or learn specifically what they can or cannot do with an official. However, without this information a coach may even cause unintentional disrespect. It would be impossible to make this mistake in a game or contest if a coach were to choose not to communicate in that instance.

A second strategy maximizes *Liking for Team* without accounting for a need to keep *Liking for Coach* high. This strategy would be best to use with an official one may not

expect to see often or again. This may be the case in playoff, championship, or travel games where you are playing in an unfamiliar area. In these cases, it is imperative to maximize any benefits one can get for their team in the short term. Unlike with the first strategy, disagreement does not play an effect if all disagreement and dispute is done with respect. As with the first strategy though, disagreement and other kinds of communication are best done in private. Public displays of any kind would still be discouraged. Additionally, communication could be indirect with an official, especially if it may give a player or team a better chance to interact with the official. However, when possible, try to make the official feel pride. These two ideas could be taken together as it may be easier to indirectly communicate with an official to arouse pride without it being seen as manipulative. It is extremely important for this strategy that a coach does not give the appearance of trying to arouse guilt. This would cause negative feeling from the official to not just the coach but also the team.

Limitations

The biggest limitation of the study came from the lack of responses for the questions related to the dependent variables. Officials do not want to give the appearance of bias. To this end they do not wish to appear as though communication from a coach may have an effect. If the statement would have been worded in a way which accounted for this appearance of bias, it may have allowed for more responses. This is an issue future researcher who study officials need to recognize and understand. Due to the low rates of responses for these questions there may be external issues of generalizability. An additional limitation comes from the internal validity of the statements. Due to confounding factors or double-barreled statements many of the statements from the survey had to be eliminated. This meant that many of the items were measured with less than four responses from a participant, and in some cases were measured with only one response.

With such few checks and with many of the measures not having even one valid reverse coded statement, coming to conclusions from the data was difficult.

Conclusion

In the start of the thesis, I discussed an NCAA umpire named Reggie Drummer. Drummer gained worldwide notoriety for a decision to strike out a batter on a pitch which appeared out of the zone. A forty-five second clip of the incident showing the preceding pitch where the batter visibly disrespected Drummer gained tens of millions of views with many viewers assuming the call was made in a vacuum as punishment for the disrespect displayed by the player. As explained, disrespect does have a negative effect on officials, however not to the point where we would expect an official to make an objectively wrong decision after one act. However, this decision was not made in a vacuum. Weeks later, Drummer went on an officiating podcast in order to explain the events which lead up to the incident (CloseCallSports, 2023). He explained that the Head Coach for the team had continually **disagreed** and **disrespected** him throughout the game. This included talking around him by outwardly and publicly complaining about calls to players. Drummer talks about multiple instances where the coach tried to **Guilt** him. Specifically, trying to imply that as Drummer is Black, he should side with his team as many of the players are also Black and his school is an Historically Black University (Mississippi Valley State University). At one point, Drummer alleges he was called an “Uncle Tom.” I am not saying that an official should ever purposely make an incorrect call, and in that interview, Drummer says the same. But one moment of disrespect from a player is not the reason for the action. The communication between the coach of Mississippi Valley State University and umpire Drummer in that game could be characterized by high levels of **disagreement**, **Anger**, **indirect communication**, and attempted **Guilt** with low levels of **respect**. Additionally, much of

the communication was **public**. Based on the results of this study, we would expect Drummer to have a very negative view of both the coach and the team, which it was seen. However, with just simple strategies coaches can make sure they are able to effectively communicate with officials, helping both themselves and their team.

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Appendix A

Tables**Table 1***Age of Participants*

Age	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
18-22	3	1
23-32	18	5.9
33-45	61	20.1
46-60	150	49.3
61-75	71	23.4
76-90	1	.3

Table 2*Gender of Participants*

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percent
Male	280	92.1
Female	20	6.6
Preferred not to say	2	.7
Other identity (please state)	3	1

Table 3

Race/Ethnicity of Participants (multiple answer choices permitted)

Race/Ethnicity	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent
White	259	85.2
Black or African American	24	7.9
Hispanic or Latino/a	15	4.9
American Indian or Alaska Native	8	2.6
Asian	3	1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	1	.3
Other	2	1.6

Table 4

Number of Sports officiated

Number of Sports	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent
1	152	50
2	91	29.9
3	42	13.8
4	14	4.6
5+	5	1.6

Table 5

Sport Officiated and Recorded for Survey

Sport	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent
Baseball	87	28.8
Basketball	118	39.1
Football	2	.66
Lacrosse	1	.33
Soccer	2	.66
Volleyball	13	4.3
Wrestling	23	7.6
Other	56	18.5

Table 6

Level of Sport Officiated and Recorded for Survey

Level of Sport	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent
Youth Recreation	4	1.3
Teen/Young Adult recreation	7	2.3
Adult recreation	1	.3
Junior High/Middle School	2	.7
Highschool	71	23.5
College (JUCO)	45	14.9
College (NAIA)	69	22.8
College (DIII)	23	7.6
College (DII)	42	13.9
College (DI)	27	8.9
Semi-Professional	2	.7
Professional	1	.3
Other	8	2.6

Table 7

Recency Of Game or Contest for the Sport Officiated and Recorded for Survey

Time Frame	Frequency (<i>n</i>)	Percent
Within the Last Week	131	43.2
Within the Last Month	104	34.3
Within the Last 3 Months	47	15.5
Within the Last 6 Months	11	3.6
Within the Last Year	7	2.3
Within the Last 3 Years	3	1

Table 8

Coach Directness

	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	.141	.073
Liking for Team	.091	.214
Liking for Coach	.288	<.001
Future Collaboration	.238	<.001
Future Avoidance	.027	.721

Table 9

	<i>“The coaches’ arguments were public.”</i>		<i>“The coaches’ arguments were private.”</i>		<i>“The coach stayed on the sideline/bench/dugout/etc.”</i>	
	Correlation	<i>p</i>	Correlation	<i>p</i>	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	-.083	.304	.232	.003	-.024	.775
Liking for Team	-.034	.658	.185	.011	-.073	.343
Liking for Coach	-.272	<.001	.216	<.001	.238	<.001
Future Collaboration	-.064	.323	.095	.131	.231	<.001

Table 10

<i>Disagreement</i>		
	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	-.042	.609
Liking for Team	.108	.144
Liking for Coach	-.435	<.001
Future Collaboration	-.233	<.001

Table 11

<i>Uncertainty</i>		
	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	-.018	.818
Liking for Team	-.076	.308
Liking for Coach	.127	.059
Future Collaboration	.120	.066

Table 12

<i>Respect</i>		
	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	.161	.043
Liking for Team	.184	.012
Liking for Coach	.616	<.001
Future Collaboration	.314	<.001
Future Avoidance	.063	.415

Table 13

<i>Coach Causing Guilt</i>		
	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	-.139	.095
Liking for Team	-.243	.002
Liking for Coach	-.237	<.001
Future Collaboration	-.091	.186
Future Avoidance	-.114	.158

Table 14

<i>Coach Pride</i>		
	Correlation	<i>p</i>
Hope for Team	.055	.530
Liking for Team	.179	.027
Liking for Coach	.219	.003
Future Collaboration	.202	.005
Avoidance	.072	.395

Table 15

<i>Anger</i>	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)
Hope for Team	-.100	.206
Liking for Team	-.157	.031
Liking for Coach	-.512	<.001
Future Collaboration	-.310	<.001
Future Avoidance	.009	.907

ACADEMIC VITA

The Pennsylvania State University-Schreyer Honors College
Bachelor of Arts with Honors in Communication Arts and Sciences
Bachelor of Arts in Political Science
Minor in Criminal Justice
Certificate in Legal Studies
Honors Thesis: Effective Argumentation: Short Term Decision Makers in Athletic C

May 2023

Work Experience

Chesapeake Basin College Baseball Umpire Association
Umpire

West Chester, PA
October 2022- Current

- Officiate Division 2 and 3 NCAA baseball games
- Attend classes, clinics, and conventions to better officiate

YourBallot

Founder and Product Director

Downingtown, PA
April 2020- October 2021

- Created database driven digital scoresheet for use in Collegiate Mock Trial
- Strategized a meticulous and rigorous sales campaign targeted at mock trial governing associations
- Implemented the system in collaboration with several universities at nine tournaments during the season

Bressler, Amery, and Ross PC

Legal Intern

Florham Park, NJ

June 2022-July 2022

- Compiled, prepared, and wrote a variety of briefs, motions, orders, and complaints for NJ and NY courts
- Participated and contributed to depositions, plenary hearings, and trials
- Conducted research and provided recommendations into a variety of topics including Florida medical malpractice, New York recreational cannabis, and Johnson and Johnson's baby powder litigation

Penn State Speaking Center

Public Speaking Tutor

State College, PA
January 2021- Current

- Tutor individual students on speech and presentation creation, execution, and delivery
- Create and teach presentations on public speaking to classes

Leadership Experience

Penn State Student Conduct Board

Board Member

State College, PA
January 2021-Current

- Adjudicate issues related to the student code of conduct
- Conduct hearings for both students and organizations facing possible disciplinary measures
- Deliberate with faculty, staff, administration, and other students on proper decisions relating to conduct violations

University Park Undergraduate Association Judicial Board

Senior Associate Justice

State College, PA
August 2019-Current

- Longest current serving Justice in Penn State's student government

- Authored major decisions and majority opinions and helped lead internal hearings
- Advised the legislative and executive branches including Penn State student body President and VP

Penn State Mock Trial

State College, PA

Tournament Director

May 2021-May 2022

- Organized, hosted, and ran 3 day long mock trial tournament with 22 teams which raised over \$6,000
- Recruited top level competition from around the country to have 77% of the field being national level teams
- As judging Coordinator proactively created and ran the first sanctioned virtual collegiate mock trial tournament, including organizing over 75 judges for 52 separate trials over 3 days.

Other Experience

- Head of Candidacy- Penn State Undergraduate Association Elections Commission (2020-current)
- Professional Umpire for PIAA and MSI with over 450 games of experience

Awards and Certificates

- The President's Freshman, Sparks, and Evan Pugh Scholar Awards
- Kim Anderson Memorial Political Science Scholarship
- Adma Hammam Shibley Memorial Scholarship in Communication Arts and Sciences
- Phi Beta Kappa
- Interactivity Foundation's Certificate in Collaborative Discussion