



by Jürgen Boss and Matthias Schmeing

LET YOUR BODY TALK!

Boorish behaviour towards referees – whether it comes from spectators, coaches or even players – is a lamentable phenomenon. However, you as a referee should not resign yourself to the role of a victim, but rather seek ways to actively improve the situation. HSR shows you how to do it.

Internal and external perception are key factors which have an influence on your (self) presentation – both can be controlled with goal-oriented training. However, before we begin to demonstrate specific exercises, it is important to start with a brief overview of the scientific background.

Embodiment & Jürgen Klinsmann

A well-known scientific discovery, which is the underlying basis for the following content is: it's not just internal attitudes – such as emotions and perceptions – which influence external attitudes, but also external attitudes effect internal ones, thus influencing one's emotions and perceptions (see Storch, Cantieni, Huether, Tschacher 2007). So the point here is not to put a mask on by affecting certain physical attitudes, in order to show self-confidence, for example, but rather to steer one's own emotions. A quote from Jürgen Klinsmann from the movie about the football world championship „The Summer Fairytale“ is based on this discovery: „Even if you are losing 1:0, I don't want to see any stooped shoulders!“ Just mumbo-jumbo? A personal trial with your referee colleagues will hopefully give you a feel for the so-called “embodiment”, - a word built with “emotions” and “body” which describes the

interdependency of physical body and the psyche.

The Stress Phenomenon

The high emotional strain associated with conducting a match unleashes a great amount of stress on a referee – which has immense consequences on the physical and spiritual well-being. In primeval times our ancestors had to learn in a painful and sometimes deadly way, that in dangerous situations pondering and deep thought led to

certain death – when a sabretoothed tiger appeared, what was required was quick, instinctive action – and those who violated the rules were eaten. Therefore, throughout the process of evolution a „short-circuit in the brain“ developed, which switches on in “dangerous” situations and enables an escape through flight: the pulse becomes faster, the eyes become more focused thereby restricting the field of vision somewhat, the blood runs to the extremities, first and foremost to the legs.



Self-experiment With Posture and Breathing

1. The Influence of Breathing

- You or your partner lie down on your back and make yourself as stiff as a board.
- Now the other lifts your feet up. How long can you maintain this position?
- Usually one loses strength after less than a minute and lowers back down.
- Lie down on your back again.
- This time, breathe in through the nose, taking long, deep breaths and then let your breath out in a deliberate stream, feel it as it travels from your abdomen back out through your nose. Repeat for 1 to 2 minutes.
- Now tighten your muscles again and your partner will lift your feet up for the second time.
- You will be amazed at how long you can maintain this position now. You will even be able to carry on a

conversation without any problem during this „exertion“.

2. The Influence of Imagination

- Take a rope with your partner, each holding one end.
- Now one should say out loud: „I am a hero“ and keep repeating it while the other says: „I am a failure“ while each pulling on the rope at the same time.
- Observe what happens – who needs to use more of their strength reserves?
- Now stand upright and imagine yourself in a positive and pleasant situation – for example, lying on a beach and relaxing.
- Breathe peacefully – what do you feel, in your stomach, in your shoulders etc.?
- Now transfer yourself in your mind into an unpleasant and vexing situation (receiving undeserved criticism for one of your decisions). Focus on the situation and now pay

attention again to your body. It probably feels completely different. You have „feigned“ something for your brain and that has triggered completely different physical reactions.

3. The Influence of Posture

- Place yourself opposite your partner with an extremely pessimistic posture (stooping shoulders, gaze downwards) and try to say loudly: „We are a great team!“
- Pay attention to volume and effects.
- Repeat it again: this time with your chest out and shoulders up!
- Notice the difference?



In short: deep thought is barely possible, because the brain is, so to speak, „turned off“. A referee, who finds himself/herself in such a stressful situation is hardly in a position to keep track of and make reasonable decisions. Breathing and relaxation exercises can be very helpful to avoid such a „short-circuit“.

Don't Worry – Imagine the Stress Away

Such stressful situations can be triggered during a critical decision in a match or even before a match – for example, when one remembers a bad experience that happened in the hall where they are due to take to the field that day.

The brain cannot distinguish between a past experience, the actual situation or imagined future actions. Fiction and reality can trigger similar reactions, as you know from your own experiences. So, just thinking about a particular unpleasant situation – whether it really occurred or is just your worst-case-scenario for a future assignment – can make you sweat, or make you sad, angry or distraught. The good news is: positive influences and reactions can be released in the same way and it is within your control. The thought of past successes or a mental image of a task brilliantly mastered, can raise your spirits considerably, leading to a

substantial increase in self-confidence. Test it when an opportunity arises: for example, when you are travelling by car and in a bad mood, you probably don't even feel like listening to music. Therefore: listen to your favorite music, which, above all else, is connected to pleasant memories. (By the way: singing loudly is allowed!) Upon your arrival at your destination – perhaps a match – you will climb out of the car in a much better mood. Your favorite music, linked to positive memories, simulated and thereby stimulated a good mood in your brain.

STABILITY & SOUVEREIGNTY



Posture & Behaviour

That our outward appearance has an effect on others as well as our own inner feelings, has already been explained. You can optimize these effects through the following actions and attitudes:

- Some transformations are achieved without even the slightest training: You can signal determination and solidarity even before the match when you warm-up together as a team.
- A firm stance on both feet (Picture 2) denotes the feeling of confidence and resolution, in comparison to teetering from one foot to another – which you can see here with the goal line referee.
- A parallel, intense whistling signals decisiveness and solidarity, it is immediately clear that both referees are in agreement. No trace of insecurity, no reason for discussion.

• Running together to the scene of the foul further supports the decision and the clarity of the offense.

• One should not show the yellow card or signal the 2 minute penalty straight away after interrupting a match. A more self-confident approach in such a situation is to show the penalty after the injured player or the player that has been fouled, has been taken care of. Another benefit of this adjustment in behaviour is it gives you time to talk to your partner about the degree of the penalty, if necessary.

• Furthermore, you as a referee can make the determination of the decision very visible (Picture Row 2): While Picture 1 demonstrates a downward gaze and minimal tension in the carriage of the arms, Picture 2 signals the free throw with a straight, outstretched arm (tension) and a forward-aimed, direct gaze demonstrates self-confidence and security. The upright posture with the shoulders back takes it even one step further.

• Demonstrate the intensity of your concentration by maintaining a permanent, slightly forward-leaning stance – this is especially pertinent for field referees (Picture Row 3:1).

• Quick, light steps and staying with the level of the ball represent more dynamic than slower movements do.

STRAIGHT ARM & STRAIGHT VIEW



ATTENTION & DYNAMIC



Regular Training

A person can influence outward perception through inner perception and posture using various methods – some of which have been introduced here already. Breathing (Info 3), posture training (Picture Rows 1-3), Pictures/Imaging and Brain-Gym (Info 4) with regular training, can be of great help.

Now It's Your Move.

If you would like to experience the effects of this training first-hand then contact us at HSR by e-mail: hsr@philippka.de (Subject: Crnojevic) – all inquiries will be forward to Helena Crnojevic. You

have tried the exercises, were surprised by the effects, or you perceived little or no change? Tell us about your experiences: hsr@philippka.de (Subject: Experiences).

Additional Literature

D. Goleman: Emotionale Führung, 2002
 D. Caruso, P. Salovey: Managen mit emotionaler Kompetenz, 2005
 A. von Kanitz: Emotionale Intelligenz 2010
 C. Steiner: Emotionale Kompetenz, 2001
 Helga Kernstock-Redl, Bea Pall: Gefühlsmanagement, 2009

Quick Relief: Stress

- Breathing: Inhale and exhale deeply 3 times
- Shoulders back & high: relieves diaphragm and releases muscle spasms
- Imagine a picture which radiates peace:
 - I sit on a lonely beach and look at the sea
 - I sit relaxed on a couch and read a book
- Drink a lot before and during the match (at least in the half-time).

Case Study: Two Croatian Referees Focused on Improving Their Perceived Image

Helena Crnojevic (Biotechnology PhD) and Emma Kostecki Radic (PE teacher) have been working with Jürgen Boss (www.projektdialog.de) since September 2010 to optimize their effectiveness on the field. Both 30-year-old referees; were active as players with RK Lonia (2nd League) up until 2001; have a good professional and methodical education; have been EHF- (since 2008), IHF- (since 2009) referees and conduct matches for the male Premier League in Croatia.

„On the Job Training“

An initial agreement of objectives was followed by an „on the job training“ after the qualifications tournament for the world championship in Greece. Each member of the young team made preparations over the course of three days in which they each had to conduct a match, analyse it and set new guidelines and new goals for the next match. They were impartially photographed during each game and a video analysis was conducted in order to analyse and discuss specific moments.



„We felt like we had better control over the game which in turn gave us more confidence“, says Helena Crnojevic of the changes that took place during the training, „for example, when we looked the players or coaches in the eyes during complicated situations we could see how they were better able to accept our decisions, because there was more power and resolve in our gestures and facial expressions.“

More confidence, fewer time penalties. The trained charisma obviously works, both referees can – since the training – avoid critical situations and the result of an average of 30% fewer

progressive penalties speaks for itself. Coach Jürgen Boss explains: „One should be friendly towards players and coaches – but has to show who is the boss on the pitch!“ Arrogance is, however, out of place. „One shouldn't put on an „I'll show you!“ face.“

„We are very proud“. in addition to the fact that both referees have received better ratings, they also experience more acceptance from players and coaches. Emina Kostecki Radic sums it up: „We are very proud that through this method we can constantly improve ourselves and the level of professionalism in our work.“

Exercises for Breathing and Relaxation

Breathing

1. Release Tension

Sit down on the front part of a chair. Inhale through the nose and exhale through the mouth. Feel the inhalation and exhalation in your body. Breathe in and out three times in a row. Each time your tension releases a little bit more and you feel more relaxed.

2. Body Tension Build-up

Push-over: Sit opposite your partner on a chair (or kneel down) with your upper body upright. Your partner lightly pushes one of your shoulders – and you lightly fall backwards. **Steady:** Like in exercise 1, deeply inhale through the nose

3x – then have your partner push you again and you'll find that this time you can hardly be knocked over.

Relaxation

You can release muscle tension with exercises for progressive muscle relaxation by Jacobsen. Here are a few examples, which can be included in a warm-up program before a match.

1. Clench your right hand into a fist and tighten the muscles of the whole arm as hard as possible, release. Then do the same with your left arm.
2. Frown as hard as possible, draw your eyebrows as high

as possible – and then relax the muscles of your forehead again.

3. Squeeze your eyelids and roll your eyeballs – then relax eye muscles again.
4. Push your lower jaw out as far as possible – then relax the muscles of your lower jaw again.
5. Lower your head in an upright position as far as possible to the back – then relax your neck muscles again.
6. Lift your shoulders up as high as possible – then relax them again.

Brain-Gym Flexibility Instead of Routine

One example of brain gymnastics is the so-called „Life Kinetik“, invented by Horst Lutz, who has a degree in PE, and which is also used by Jürgen Klopp of the BVB Dortmund. Its aim is to better connect various parts of the brain and to develop the unexploited ones. For that purpose the exercises are not based on repetition, but on a continually changing set of motion tasks. Example 1 (right): Throw the person opposite you a tennis ball and at the same time say which hand your partner should catch it with. In addition, he/she should take a step forward at the same time with the opposite leg. For example when you say „left“ he/

she has to catch the ball with his/her left hand and make a step with his/her right leg and vice versa. Try it a few times and see what happens.

Example 2 (below): Throw two balls in the air, catch them with arms crossed and repeat again in reverse order.

