



# Ohio Swimming Inc.



## Mentoring Stroke & Turn Officials - Mentor Guide

### Some general guidelines for Mentoring Stroke & Turn Apprentice Officials:

- Primary Goals
  - Develop Swim Officials – Teach Apprentices how to officiate
  - Teach National Standards – Ease entry onto a National Deck where appropriate
- A **Mentor** is a **Partner**
  - Recognizes achievement, encourages progression, motivates, gives Feedback, empowers learning
- Mentor Skills – **Patience**
  - Avoid rush to judgement, allow time for learning, try not to do it for them, be reassuring
- Mentor Skills – **Listen**
  - Provide undivided attention, avoid interruption, repeat in own words, ask questions if uncertain
- Mentor Skills – **Feedback**
  - Use tact and diplomacy to encourage and critique, be honest, 3 positives + only 1 or 2 items to work on
- Mentor Skills – **Preparation**
  - Conform to meet attire, review certification requirements, print/review/provide checklists, answer questions
- Mentor Skills – **Tips to Remember**
  - Flexibility, reason and logic, “Don’t sweat the small stuff”, provide space for learning and avoid hovering
- Help the Official become comfortable in their new role, have them ask questions and make certain that their questions are answered.
- Ask the Official about their past training experiences (clinics, meets worked); have they worked both the start end and the turn end, have they had the opportunity to walk stroke. Work with the Meet Referee to provide opportunities for further education.
- Review past sessions and the possible differences between jurisdictional assignments, procedures, and protocols from session to session and venue to venue. Ask to see prior Evaluation Checklists, if available; discuss.
- Model proper deck protocol:
  - Proper dress
  - Focus on your assignment while on duty
  - Do not discuss calls while using hand motions
  - Do not coach athletes
  - Return promptly from breaks
- Share your experiences about other decks and pass along knowledge that you have learned over time.
- Stress that all questions from non-officials about calls should be referred to the Referee without comment.

### Possible Questions

- How would you describe your officiating experience thus far? How do you feel about your performance so far?
- What have you accomplished so far that you are pleased with?
- What key things would you like to change? Why? How will you change that?
- What would you like to work on? What kind of support do you want?

### Post Meet Follow-up

- Email the Official 1-2 weeks later to see how they are doing and offer to answer any questions they may have
- Always greet the Official at subsequent meets (even if not assigned to mentor them again). You may be the only person they know! **BE POSITIVE ABOUT OFFICIATING!**
- Always encourage the Official to complete their mentoring sessions; elevate their concerns to the Meet Referee or the Commission Officials Chair.

### Quotes

*“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”* – Stephen Covey

*“True Mentors, don’t make their mentees a clone of themselves.”* – Bernard Kelvin Clive

*“Every great achiever is inspired by a great mentor”* – Lailah Gifty Akita