



MIND THE NET GOALTENDING

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Communication = Leadership

Part of being an effective goalie is being an effective leader. While normally the goaltender cannot be a captain or assistant captain this does not mean the goaltender forgoes the responsibilities of being a team leader. Once a goaltender grasps the idea of being a positive team leader they will begin to see that their leadership can help to make them more effective. In order to be a good leader a goalie must possess a good grasp of communication skills. The following are some ways to be an effective leader on and off the ice.

Off-Ice Communication

Off the ice the goaltender needs to communicate with teammates. The goaltender needs to discuss, with defensemen, where they want pucks set up for the breakout. The defensemen need to know how the goaltender wants to play odd man rushes, screen situations, and penalty kills. What are some of the key words the defensemen need to hear during certain plays?

Another aspect of being a leader is trying to rally your teammates. Often it is encouraging words that help to build confidence and camaraderie. If someone has done something that you like, let them know. If you think someone needs to pick up their game pull them aside and positively let them know they are capable of more. Even if someone has royally screwed up it is not your job to berate them in front of teammates. If the royal screw up has resulted in a goal you are still the one whose job it is to cover up the mistake (see “Goalie Responsibilities”). Often goalies analyze the goaltender from other teams for weaknesses. If you spot a weakness of the other team or their goalie make sure you inform the players on your team. More often than not the other players will not take scoring advice to heart. When the forwards take scoring advice that works they are surprised. Keep giving the advice because no one knows better how to score than the goalie.

Basically, goaltenders need to begin communication before even hitting the ice.



On-Ice Communication

During the game the goaltender needs to be the leader, the quarterback. The goalie is the one player who gets to see the whole play develop almost all of the time. If you are communicating with teammates on the ice make sure that you are loud enough that the fans can hear you. If the fans can hear you your teammates will too. The most important aspects of on ice communication is **TIMING**, **VOLUME**, and **SHORT PHRASES**.

- 1) **Timing:** If the timing of communication is not correct then a teammate could get hurt or a goal can be scored. ***Remember: The goalie is the eyes for the entire team.***
- 2) **VOLUME:** If your teammates cannot hear what you are saying they will not do what you need them to do. With a mask on, and a noisy rink it is doubly important the goaltender is **LOUD** and **CLEAR**. Let your teammates know what is needed, with authority, so they know you are serious.
- 3) **Short Phrases:** Communicating, on the ice, requires the goaltender use short phrases to describe what actions need to occur. Hockey moves too fast to be able to fully explain a situation. Of course, everyone needs to be on the same page as to which short phrases will be used. Below is a list of some short phrases that can be used during a game.

MAN ON! The goaltender is letting a teammate know they are under pressure.

MOVE! SCREEN! CAN'T SEE! These indicate that a goaltender is being screened by the opposition or their own teammate.

SHOT! The goalie wants the shot. The defenseman should take away the passing option.

BOARDS! GLASS! The goaltender lets the teammate know that the boards or glass are a safe play.

BACK DOOR! There is an open attacker at the opposite side of the crease. Defensemen watch the passing option.

FREEZE IT! ICE IT! Both signals indicate a faceoff/change is needed. Use these instructions if your team is scrambling in your own end.

HIGH MAN! There is an open man in the slot that should be covered.

ICE! Tell your teammates the opposition has iced the puck.

SKATES! FEET! The puck is in the skates of your teammate. Teammates need to control the opposition's sticks and control the body to avoid a sudden scoring chance.

OVER! BEHIND! If your teammate has control of the puck and it is safe to pass to another player across or behind the net this is a good command. This may also be a way of indicating that the puck has been rimmed around the boards to the other side of the rink.

GOT IT! MINE! This indicates that the goaltender has an idea of what they want to do with the puck. The goalie may want to play the puck or freeze for a whistle.

UP! The puck has gone into the air; possibly after a save. There is an open teammate up the ice.

REVERSE! The defenseman's best option is to pass the puck back in the opposite direction they were heading. The reverse pass is a hard pass made off of the boards.

WHEEL! TAKE IT! Let your teammate know when they have a chance to rush the puck.

SET UP! BACK! If the breakout is not working properly instruct your defensemen to start from scratch.

NET'S OFF! Let the ref know if the net is off its moorings. Get the whistle to prevent a deflating goal from happening.

Remember: Hockey happens at a fast pace so communication is important. Proper communication skills help make everyone's job much easier.

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