

Don Koharski's  
**GRASSROOTS** – DEVELOPMENT  
AND RETENTION PROGRAM

**CODE R.E.D**

**Retention** = Education + Development



# THE REALITY

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## **Officials play a critical role in the game of hockey!**

The role of the official is to create and maintain a safe and fair game environment for all participants. Officials are expected to work at their highest level of excellence, each and every game. Whether it is concerns raised about player safety, staffing or game cancellations; the role and importance of officials has been drawn into focus.

## **The number of hockey officials has been on a steady decline for too many years!**

Records indicate that our younger officials are leaving the game and unable to reach their full potential. The issue of officiating retention at the grassroots level impacts the strength of our Branches and Hockey Associations throughout the country. Support must be given to these young, inexperienced officials so they are afforded the opportunity to develop to their full potential. This will enable them to remain in the game and officiating program for the long run.



Team Stripes is the solution! We can provide high quality resources using innovative technology for all your development needs. Our goal is to give younger officials a greater opportunity to grow and succeed within their Branches and Associations, both on and off the ice.

This information guide provides the background on our approach to reverse this downward trend. It includes the research that has been completed, as well, will demonstrate how simple, yet innovative tools can be used to educate, support and develop our young officials.

# WHAT DOES THE RESEARCH SAY?

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There have been several studies that examine the factors contributing to why officials are leaving the game and why Branches and Associations, as a result, are dealing with issues of officiating retention.

Factors such as passion for the game, social settings, and game assignments play a role for this decline. However key factors impacting retention fall under two broader categories; **efficacy and stress**!

**Efficacy** applies to an official's skill level, their perception and/or confidence in their skills set. The official's ability to apply their learned skills to game situations must be addressed. What the research indicates is that when an official

lacks efficacy, it greatly influences their likelihood to remain in the game.

**Stress** is a problem to retention issues. Reduction in stressful situations such as abuse, and the ability to deal with and address abusive situations must be a learned process. Typically, this is the most common factor resulting in officials leaving the game. However, the research indicates that it's not just an official getting abused within the game but rather their ability to manage the situation through a learned process. Our program can provide officials the tools to deal with abusive situations. This will make a positive impact with the official and the game.

These factors must be addressed and with the proper tools, resources and innovative technology, we can soon make great strides to improve the development of our officials and ultimately improve the retention rates, across the country.





# SKILLS TRANSFER

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What the research indicates, at a foundational level, is the importance of skill development. Whether it's efficacy or stress, both rely on an official having a skill set that will contribute to being effective in both categories.

What is the best way to ensure proper skills are taught and knowledge transferred? Is it best provided at the local level by the Referee-in-Chief (RIC) and supervisors?

While these leaders play a key role in the development of officials, the reality is that they are limited by time, officiating numbers and their availability to offer comprehensive coaching and support.

At the same time, the objective should be to ensure officials are getting the most current information and a consistent message through a means that is accessible to them.

The picture became clear for Team Stripes. To effectively provide key skills to grassroots officials, we needed to invest in key technology and tools that will get crucial information to officials and ensure that key skills are transferring.

This objective led to the creation of Team Stripes Academy, led by former NHL Referee, Don Koharski. Launched in September of 2018, our Academy has gone on to teach officials in over ten countries by using course material designed by Koharski himself. The content is designed to engage officials, while our proprietary *officiating technology* is designed to make learning easy and accessible.

**So what results have we seen?**



# THE RESULTS

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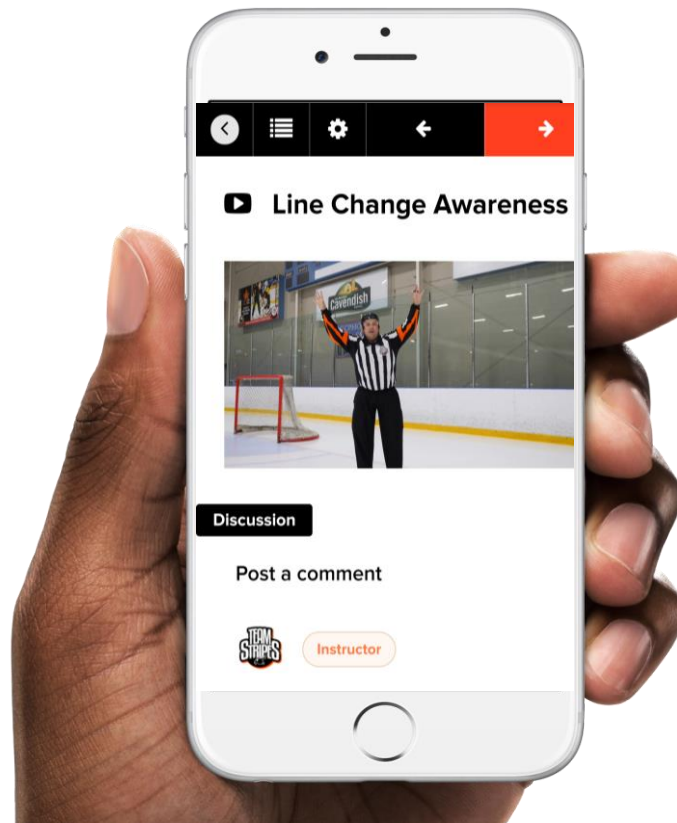
Since launching our Academy, we have been providing on-going support to officials from countries such as Canada, United States, Finland and Australia.

Analytics has shown that 55% of the members sampled would utilize the system at least three times per month. While 33% of the members were accessing content at least five times per month.

This data has demonstrated to our team that the content and technology has provided an engaging learning environment that officials are accessing on a regular basis.

Surveys of our members have yielded these results:

- **78% of those surveyed indicated that it was very easy to apply skills to their games.**
- **92% of users reported higher levels of confidence.**



- **95% of users found the content easy to access.**
- **On a sliding scale from 0 to 100 in terms of 'fun', users ranked the program an 86.**

This important and positive data has been key as it indicates the support and growth of the company and its vision.



# CODE R.E.D

## THE GRASSROOTS SOLUTION

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You need an effective plan to address education and development needs. This will transfer into positive results and ultimately lead to retention in your Branch and Associations. Our team has developed a program specially designed to provide key skills for your grassroots officials to succeed.

### **Why do we use the term “grassroots official”?**

We define grassroots officials as those beginner officials in local Associations who are in their critical development years. These girls and boys are typically level 1 and 2 and under the age of 16.

We know that this demographic is at the highest risk of leaving the game within their first or second year of officiating. Our grassroots program is designed to give these officials the key skills and resources needed to move beyond this critical 2-year window.

### **How does the program work?**

The program functions through the enrollment of designated officials into a provincial-wide *officiating platform* with courses aimed at providing key skills and training through an accessible means. Chapters within these courses are focused on specific elements related to an official's job. Lessons include, but are not limited to; positioning, face-offs and the mechanics of assessing penalties. The program also offers modules on areas such as mental preparation and communication. Your program's specific elements will be completed in a collaborative fashion with input from your Branch RIC and local administrators. This ensures that programming meets your internal requirements and follows the expected content from Hockey Canada.

# CODE R.E.D

## *THE GRASSROOTS SOLUTION*

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Within the platform, administrators, including RIC's, will have access to monitoring and analytics that track progress of their officials. Administrators will have the ability to provide additional learning opportunities; including the ability to add new content or assessment materials that are specific to your Branch or Association.

Within the learning platform, your officials can access the content 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Our platform is completely mobile, making it a perfect fit for a younger audience, which most online activity is conducted on mobile devices.

### **Why should we make this investment in new technology?**

Utilizing this proven and effective officiating technology will enable critical skills to be taught to each grassroot official in your Branch. In fact, government studies have concluded that knowledge retention rates have shown a 250% improvement rate compared to traditional classroom training.

There are also significant benefits to your Branches and Associations in terms of cost savings. In-person training programs have additional costs, including but not limited to travel and lodging. In fact, experts believe that organizations can experience a 40-60% cost savings when comparing instructor-led courses to technology-delivered courses.

The analytics capabilities of this officiating platform also provide powerful ways to monitor your officiating development in a way that has not previously existed. You will be able to use key data to help educate and guide future development of ALL officials.

# WANT TO SCHEDULE A CONSULTATION?

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If you think this type of technology and programming could provide beneficial results to your Branch's officiating program, we would be delighted to schedule a consultation with one of our specialists.

You can connect with our office by:

**Phone: 506-850-7981**

**Email: [Brandon@teamstripesacademy.com](mailto:Brandon@teamstripesacademy.com)**

**Or by Mail:**

**Team Stripes Inc.**

**735 Main Street, Unit 201**

**Moncton, NB**

**E1C 1E5**

For any other information, you can contact Don Koharski by:

**Email: [Don@teamstripesacademy.com](mailto:Don@teamstripesacademy.com)**

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## Our Partners

