



SMART STEPS

Every club has experienced tricky situations. Be it an abusive spectator, an off-colour remark from a player - we've all been there.

Knowing how to look after yourself and others, while defusing the situation is key to maintaining a strong and respectful club culture.

No matter how well your club's travelling, issues will surface. That's normal. Some may be difficult to handle and take time and energy to properly resolve. That's normal too. It's not easy, but poor behaviour needs to be called out. The poor behaviour by some people at your club is distressing for many. There should be no excuses made for people who choose to behave poorly.

Word gets out, and the image of your club tarnishes in the wider community. So, what can you do? There are strategies that you and your club can adopt to deal with poor behaviours, safely and constructively.

Here's some tips for taking the heat out of the situation so everyone can get back to enjoying the game, safely and respectfully.

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S

Safe

Priority, Your Safety

- Be safe; your own safety and that of others must come first.
- If you judge the situation to be unsafe, don't feel pressured to take action of your own and in the moment.
- However, if you feel that it is safe to take some action then getting your language right at the outset is essential.

M

Moderate

Consider the best approach

- Always be open to dialogue; try to appeal to reason, such as pointing out the harm that is being done.
- Be calm and composed in your language.
- Speak in ways or language that will de-escalate the situation rather than aggravate.
- See below for some helpful starting statements

A

Actions

Challenge the behaviour, not the person

- Solutions oriented approach.
- At all times, try to be constructive.
- A third-party reference helps here, such as suggesting that your club's Code of Conduct doesn't permit us to speak or act in this way.
- Reporting is important; make sure a club official/security are across what has happened.

R

Role Modelling

Represent the Club with your best self

- It is important that at all times you model calm and respectful behaviour.
- Don't drop your own standards.

T

Team/Training

We're all in this together

- At all times, it is best to appeal to the idea of 'team'.
- Your team, our team - and emphasise that team health is the best bet - always.
- Training at a club is never only about the sport, but also how a club continually strives to educate its people.

Club Respect SMART language

The use of appropriate language is vital when approaching people who are behaving badly. It does not take much for some of these people to get very defensive or even aggressive.

You need to always use 'I' or 'we' or 'our club' statements rather than 'you':

- "I don't like it when people yell at the players."
- "We are a Club Respect club. We don't yell at players."
- "Our club code of conduct says that we support players"

You can then expand your statements to include supporting statements:

- "We don't yell at players because it decreases their performance"
- "Sledging and abuse hurts people. Our club encourages positive supporting"

Finally, see if you can bring some empathy to the situation. People who yell at the game are usually bringing frustration from other areas of their life:

- If you can't find empathy for the person involved, then a very good option is to ask them calmly and in confidence; "Are you OK?"

Remember to always use the Club Respect SMART steps, particularly ensuring your personal safety is your greatest priority.