



How to direct in a friendly manner

(while still respecting the laws and regulations of bridge)



“To create a friendly atmosphere I think the director has to be friendly and relaxed too” – Abbey Smith





What does a
director do?

- The role involves a lot more than resolving issues at the table!



Before the session starts

- a) Ensure the room is sensibly laid out and tables properly equipped
 - b) Confirm the number of pairs and select a sensible movement
 - c) Check boards are ready, set up electronic scoring or liaise with scorer
 - d) Make sure flow charts and law book is to hand in case of issues
- **If the director arrived in good time and is relaxed and good-humoured, then everyone else will be as well**



When the session starts

Formally start the session including:

- a) any announcements concerning the club (normally best kept short, use email for anything detailed)
- b) warm welcome for visitors, named
- c) describe the session “it’s a straightforward Mitchell, east west will have a sit out, three boards a round”
- d) set the tone “we have a lovely evening of bridge, please enjoy it, play quietly, and keep up the pace”
- e) offer help: “any problems or queries just call me, I’m here to help”

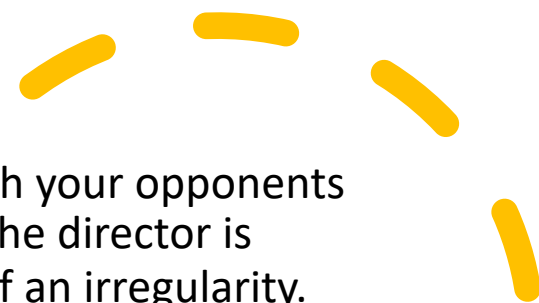


During the session

- Call the movement at a suitable time. Styles vary but ... if you always wait for the last table to finish they may never realise they are behind
- Generally, no table should start a new board after the movement has been called, but any table that has already started a board (pulled out the cards) should be allowed to finish it
- Ensure that the right boards and pairs are in place for the new round
- Keep an ear open for excessive noise/chat or any altercation and be willing to intervene
- If playing, set a good standard at your own table for best behaviour in bridge (friendly welcome, quiet, etc)

Applying
rules is only
a small part
of the
director's
role

- Quite often the director is never called during a session
- Most issues are common and easy to resolve, eg lead out of turn, revoke, insufficient bid
- Since director training tends to focus on the complexities of resolving those occasional difficult issues, it may neglect what is actually the bulk of the role: managing a session in a friendly, firm and clear manner
- The goal is for everyone to enjoy the bridge



Making sure everyone understands the director's role

- “Calling the director is a way to punish your opponents for their mistakes” – **wrong!** Rather, the director is there to restore equity in the event of an irregularity. So when you get to the table it is “How can I help?” not “who’s messed up this time”!
- “We should only call the director in an emergency when we can’t resolve a matter ourselves” - **wrong!** In general players should not self-direct as they may get it wrong or cause aggravation. “You can’t bid because your partner hesitated” – no, call the director if you think there is unauthorized information and you have been damaged by it.

Directing with a light touch

- Club sessions are not at the same standard as tournaments with screens or high level competitions and attempts to make them so are likely to fail
- Novices and weaker players make more mistakes. Smile a lot and make them feel at home. Room for flexibility over things like hesitations and more tolerance in general. Do not allow stronger players to intimidate them





Help is
available!

- The director is not required to understand every nuance of the rules. If the issue is difficult, score or average the board but say you will look at it later, just make sure you take notes on exactly what happened
 - The EBU has a TD forum as well as directors who are willing to be called. Most queries on the forum are answered within a day.
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