



"Sometimes it is necessary to pass to a voice you recognize"

ALL ZONES – COMMUNICATING ON ICE

The game is so fast moving and a player's peripheral vision and ability to "see the ice" is limited so communicating with your teammate is critical in many situations like:

1. The puck is passed into our end under a heavy forecheck and our defenceman going back is facing a 50-50 puck battle. Our other D is set up and open behind the net for a D to D pass and our weak side winger is open low on the half wall boards. Both should be letting our under pressure defenceman know they are open for a pass
2. The puck is in the offensive zone in the corner and our winger is getting set to pass it back to our D at the blueline. Our weak side defenceman is getting open as his winger check is leaving him but our strong side defenceman cannot see that
3. We are crossing their blueline 3 on 3 with no strong backchecking support by them. Our winger without the puck can see that but that our puck carrier cannot see behind him. Our winger fades into the slot behind our puck carrier and calls for the puck knowing there is no backchecking pressure. Our puck carrier relies on our winger being open and drops the puck back to him getting a good scoring chance

There are literally dozens of examples like this, making communications well worth while on any team most times.

But like anything else there are no absolutes. Sometimes by calling for the puck we tell the other team what our play is going to be, so we have to be sure our calling is necessary and not overdone. One example of this is the delicate breakout play where our defenceman behind the net passes net front to our open forward when our forward calls for the puck. A skilled opponent particularly if he is used to this play may instantly read the play by hearing the call for the puck and intercept the puck. Not often but sometimes.

One of the advantages of letting forwards and defencemen team mates play a lot together and gain "chemistry" is that they will eventually learn where each other is and is likely to go in various situations, lessening the need for communication and possibly telegraphing the play.