

Principle # 4: What things you are not going to do. That is the most difficult decision for companies, because we all have eyes that are bigger than our stomachs.

What to do and what exactly not to do? Have a To do list and Not to do list.

In my opinion, the First thing which is not to be done is **running with the ball at full speed**, in a straight line. This is done almost every time, majority of players get the ball, especially in the mid and the third quarter, of the field. **There is definitely a time and place for it.** One should first read the game situation, weigh all the options available and then make the decisions accordingly.

Who can run faster the ball or the player? Once the players will learn the **art of making the ball run**, via play making passing skills, they will do themselves a huge favor. This will also facilitate playing first time, one touch hockey, which India was famous for playing during their golden era. Please refer to SV Sunil's example given earlier, in regard to not run with the ball.



This photograph is from the 2017 Azlan Shah Cup, when India played Malaysia, in their last pool match, which they lost. And this cost them a place in the finals. Here we see Sardara Singh running with the ball at full speed and bulldozing his way with force, rather than with grace. Note his left elbow, pushing the opponent. Sardara could have easily slowed down – change the pace and direction – and shuffle to his right, to create more space and time. Sardara used to do this so well. And now he is running with the ball - slightly panicked - when being challenged by the opponent. If you drive recklessly, you end up where the red car is. Think about it. Photo of Sardara is by Ronnie Chin, Courtesy The Star

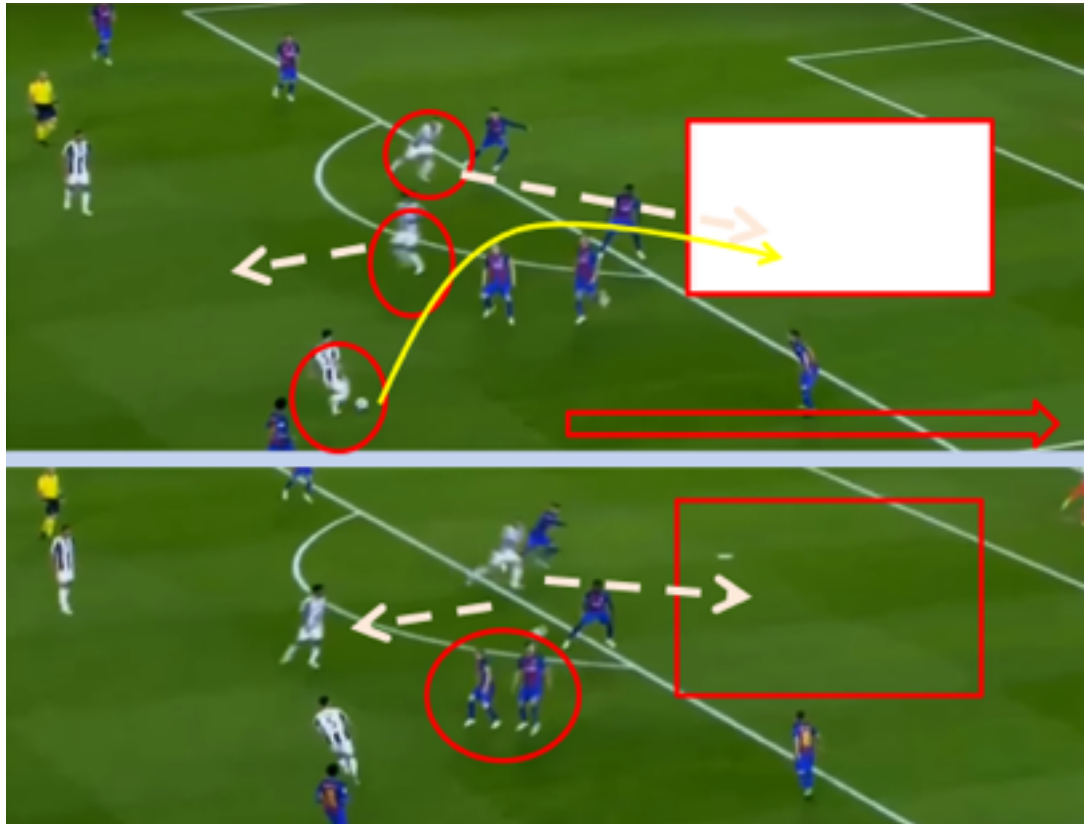
Quote:

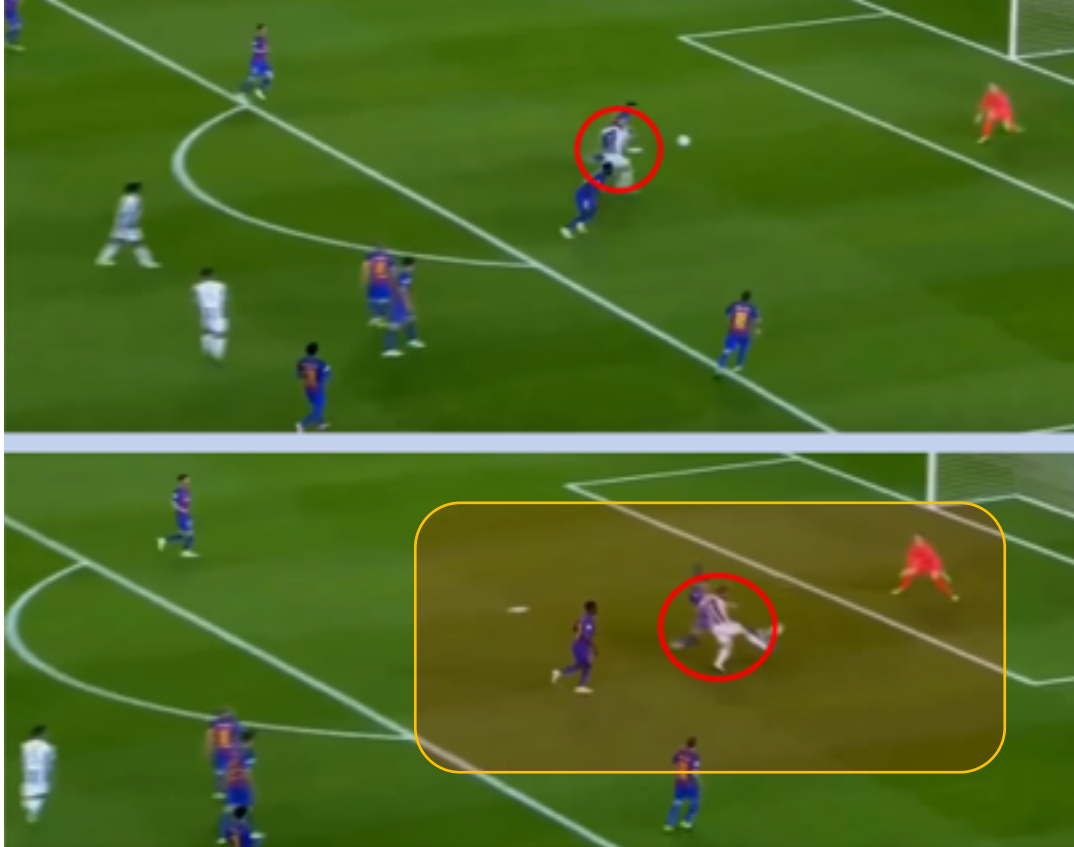
“It’s (Tactical Creativity) not the ability to see where everyone is when you look, (but) where everyone will be if you buy some time and hold the puck for another second.”

Sidney Crosby, Captain Pittsburg Penguins ice hockey team in the NHL.

Here is another example from the Barcelona Football club versus Juventus 2nd leg quarterfinals UCL match, dated, April 19, 2017, which clearly elaborates Sidney's point.

Please observe how the Juventus Right Inner holds the ball for a split second, to make a pass for his leading striker and take a try on the goal. Also observe how the striker floats back, while enticing two BFC defenders to follow him. And creating space for his teammate, striker to enter from the back. Sadly we miss this types of creative plays in our game of hockey. They are few and far inbetween.





Seeing the things from the players perspective: Yes, I know these days as soon as a player gets the ball, opponents pounce upon him like a pack of wolves - gang tackle, giving him no space and time. And out of fear, the player runs at full speed, just as a beautiful lady panics and runs, when approached by three thugs, in a dark alley. Yes, if you **have the guts** and the **close range possession skills**, you can eliminate the opponents or entice them to commit and make a defense splitting, long range or short range pass, to your unmarked team mates. This way burning the opponents. And next time they will think twice before coming too close to you.

Whereas the beautiful lady is concerned, if she had a revolver, she did not even had to run or shoot anyone. Just simply fire some shots in the air and scare the thugs. This is what former great Indian Fullbacks, Prithipal Singh, Surjit Singh and Pargat Singh, used to do, in the deep defense, when gang tackled by the opponents – under press tactics - to create space and time. **They had excellent ball control and close range skills to keep possession or eliminate** the opponents and then make a long range pass.

Overlapping from deep defense: No wonder **Pargat Singh scored 4 field goals against Germany in 6 minutes**, during the 1985 Perth Champions trophy, while playing as a Right Full back. It is a record in itself.

There are more “**Not To DO**” things on the list. We will only cover one.

Principle Lesson # 4: Has principle # 4 been followed strictly? You be the judge.

Quote:

Winning and confidence comes from constructive use of pessimism. Thinking about what could go wrong long before it does. Author unknown.

Indian Hockey tremendously. They have given them **solid team structure, discipline, work ethic, confidence, believe system** ... the list goes on.

New Path: At the same time they have driven them away from their unique strengths, on to a different path. This has made them slightly mechanical. Depriving them of their free flowing style of play, which should of course be executed at the right time and place, as Australians do and did leading to the 2014 Hague World Cup. On top of this, it has also diminished India's creativity and finesse. In a way they have innocently locked a tiger in a cage. And a tiger, in a cage is not the real tiger, but a paper tiger.

Caught in the middle: Further, Indian national teams / players have also been caught in the middle, while making this big change. **There is no question; India needed this change and improvement.** At the same time it was critical to have a deep understanding and knowledge to know, **how to do it with pin point precision, like a brain surgeon?** Knowing what needed to be changed and what not? This is not easy to do. It is easier said than done.

Coincidence:

Before Meg Whitman joined HP, her immediate predecessors, Mark Hurd and Leo Apotheker, were fired in less than three years. Just the way Coaches Terry Walsh and Paul Van Ass, were fired, in less than three years, by Hockey India. And Coach Oltmans stepped in. Quite a coincidence.

Future: Coach Oltmans has time on his side till the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, where India won its last real 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games Gold medal. As all the big guns competed in it. It was not like the Boycotted 1980 Moscow Olympic Games, gold medal, which was India's last.

The question is can India win the Olympic Games gold medal again after 56 years, in the same city? This has yet to be seen. The speed and direction in which the current Indian team is moving, is encouraging.

I have to wait and see, if India will do the **course correction, keeping in mind the principles**, mentioned in this article. How is this article accepted, with a look of love or hate? Probably the later. As I have gently poked a sleeping lion.

The Serenity Prayer:

God grant me the serenity;

To accept the things I cannot change;

Courage to change the things I can;

And wisdom to know the difference.