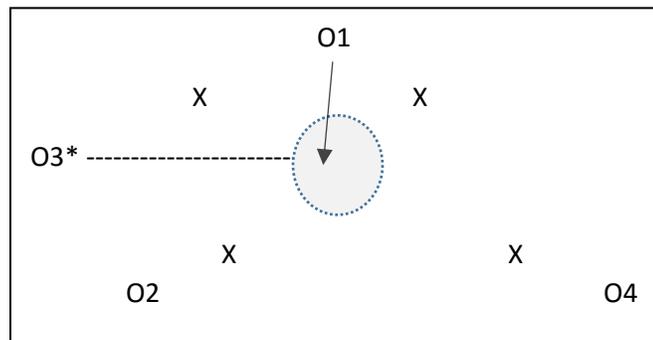


Tactical Concepts

Width and Depth

Offensively you want to try and create as much space to pass and dribble in as possible. O1 & O2 give Width and O3 & O4 provide depth.



Notice that O1 and O2 are at different heights (not on same line). This makes it harder for defenders to see and defend. If O3 has the ball(*), O1 has space in the middle of the field to cut to looking for a pass from O3.

Passing Lines...Losing Your Mark

Offensively you want to create open passing lines meaning there is not a defender between the player with the ball and the player you're passing to.

Example A:

Open Passing Line

O1 ----- O2

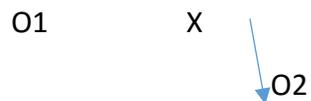
X

Example B:

Closed or Guarded Passing Line

O1 ----- X O2

In example B, O2 needs to "loose his/her mark" X to create an open passing line



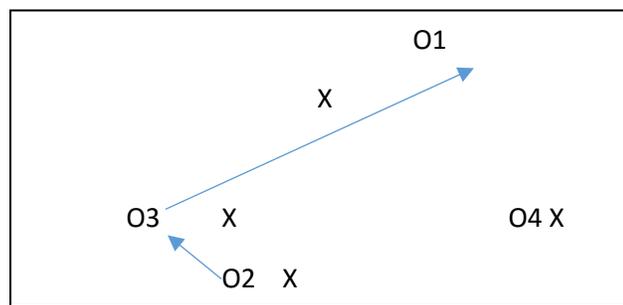
Another option is for O1 to pass the ball into the open space *before* O2 moves there, as opposed to waiting to pass to O2 after he/she gets to the open space.

Passing Short...Passing Long

When you win the ball back after pressing hard defensively, you want to find a safe, short pass to make sure you keep possession. The worst thing you can do is work hard on defensive to win the ball and then turn around and give it (ball) right back to the other team.

While you are making a couple of safe short passes, your teammates should be spreading out to give you width and depth (week 1 tactic).

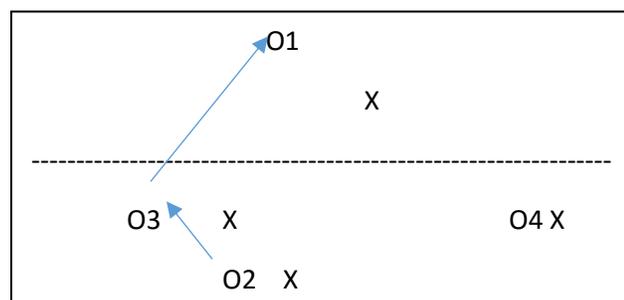
The time to look for longer passes is when completing the pass gives you an advantage. It's the risk vs. reward concept.



In the diagram above, if O2 and O3 just won the ball back from the X's and made a couple of safe passes to keep possession of the ball, the long pass from O3 to O1 is a good idea because the pass is beyond 3 defenders and O1 has a lot of open space to attack.

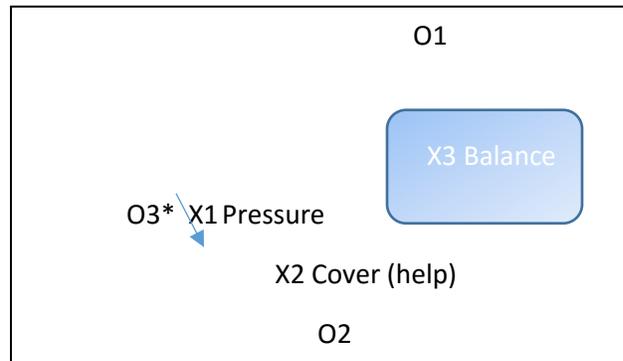
Ball Movement, Switching the Field

In the same diagram, the dotted line divides the field into two halves. The concept of switching the field is shown as the O's move the ball from the right side of the field occupied by 6 players (3 O's & 3 X's) to the left side of the field with fewer players (1 O & 1 X) and consequently move space. O1 now has more space for 1 v 1 play and the defense (X's) must shift to pressure the ball and defend open spaces.



Pressure, Cover, Balance on Defense

- **Pressure** is the 1st defender who closes down on the ball (takes space away the offensive player with the ball).
- **Cover** is the 2nd defender who provides help by covering the space if the 1st defender gets beat.
- **Balance** is all other defenders who cover space on the field away from the ball.



X1 pressures the ball, cuts off passing line O1, forces towards X2 the cover person. X3 is the person covering the open space on the field.

Important Rules:

- Move as a unit. Everyone moves together
- Move AS the ball moves (don't wait for the ball to get there)
- Communication is key...It's the glue that holds your defense together.

Transition – Offense to Defense

There are 3 phases to the game: offense, defense and transition

When in the transition going from offense to defense there are some very important principles to follow:

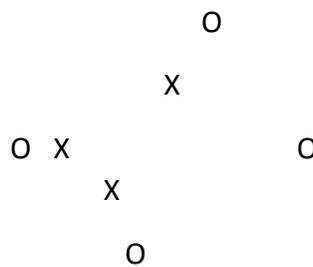
- Immediately become compact to cut off space in the middle of the field
- Everyone presses together, hard the first 3 seconds to win the ball back
- Follow pressure, cover & balance rules

Transition – Defense to Offense

When in the transition going from offense to defense there are some very important principles to follow:

- This is most important – everyone runs towards the center of the field so that you become compact!
- Compact in terms of width – you want to be narrow
- Compact in terms of depth – you don't want big gaps in between, forwards and midfielder, midfielders and defenders
- Compact means – NO Gaps!!
- Closest 2 or 3 players to the ball hunt for the ball together. By this we mean no gaps between them, they pressure the ball and cut off passing lanes.

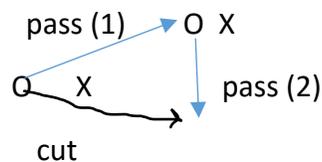
In the diagram below, 3 X's are pressuring the ball to win it back and also cutting off passing lines because they are working together!



Combination Play

Combining player's movement along with good ball movement can cause major problems for defenders. Here are a couple of basic combinations that can be incorporated into offensive play:

- 1-2 or "Wall Pass"



- Overlapping Run

