



Coaching 9v9 Soccer

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Culture Building

- While this book will venture into detailed explanations of the x's and o's, it's important to remember that coaching has more to do with social competency and the environment you create for your players.
- Coaches must therefore be capable of raising the social competency of their players, build a positive team culture of support and encouragement, and have a deep understanding for the psychological characteristics of their players.
- For resources on how to build a successful team culture, see:
 - > [How I Coached An Unbeaten Team](#)
 - > [Football Is More About Psychology Than Tactics](#)
 - > [Finding the balance between being fun and assertive in coaching](#)

Remember, the coaches that make an impact on players are not the ones that win. It is the ones that truly get to know them on a level that exists outside of sport, and inspires them to be the best version of themselves each and every time they set foot on the field.

With that in mind, let's jump in.

Weekly Session Topics

WEEK 1:
PRESSING FROM
THE FRONT

WEEK 2:
PLAYING OUT
FROM THE BACK

WEEK 3:
DEFENSIVE
TRANSITIONS

WEEK 4:
ATTACKING
TRANSITIONS

WEEK 5:
SWITCHING PLAY

WEEK 6:
COMMUNICATION

WEEK 7:
PROGRESSIVE
POSSESSION

WEEK 8:
SUPPORT IN
DEFENSE

WEEK 9:
SUPPORT IN
ATTACK

WEEK 10:
FIRST TOUCH

WEEK 11:
DEFENDING 1V1s

WEEK 12:
ATTACKING 1V1s

WEEK 13:
COMBINATION
PLAY

WEEK 14:
SHOOTING &
FINISHING

WEEK 15:
ATTACK-MINDED
WING-BACKS

System of Play: 2-3-2-1



Pressing ✓

Playing out from
the back ✓

Quick Transitions ✓

2 Defenders

3 Defensive Midfielders

2 Attacking Midfielders

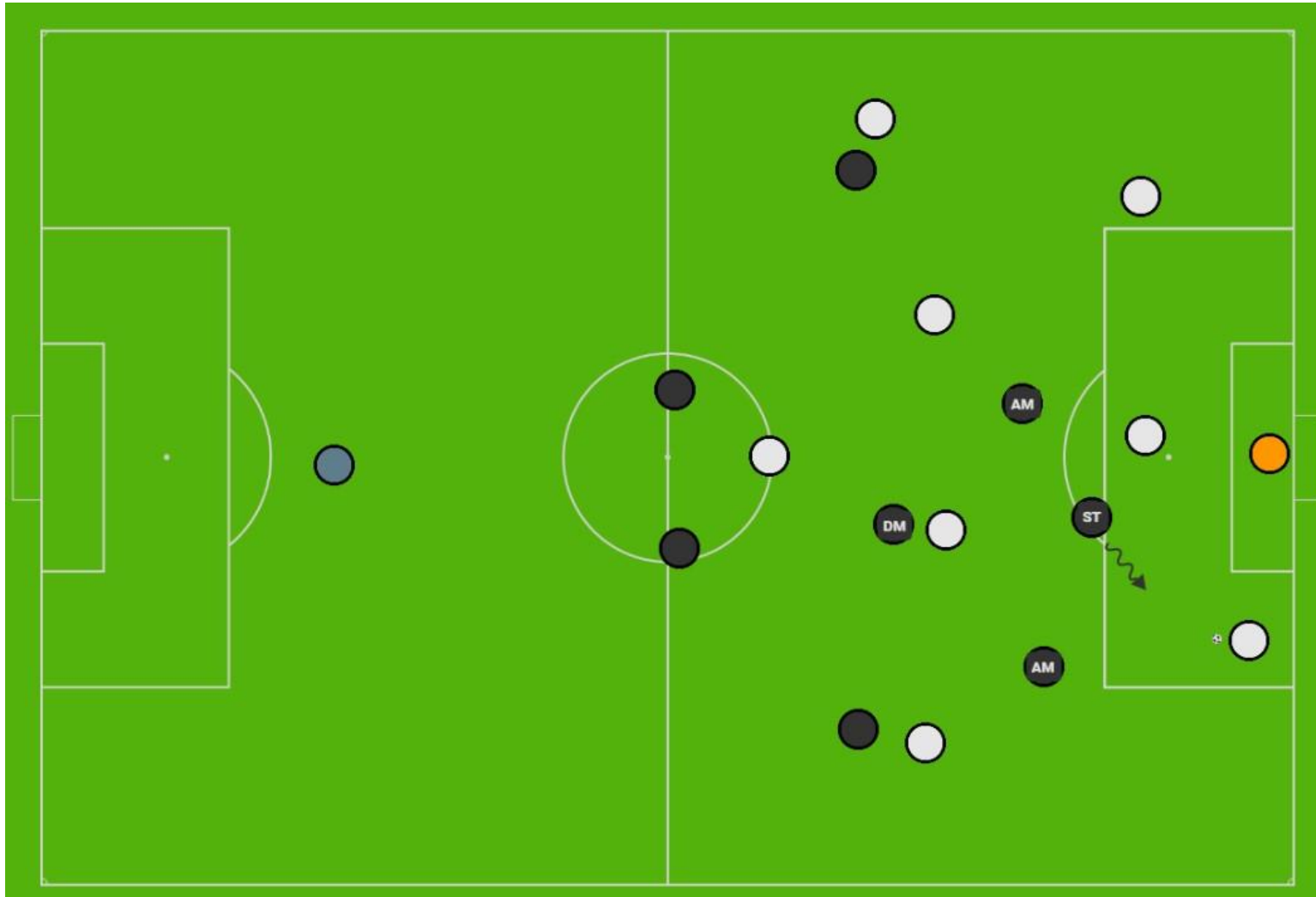
1 Forward



Principle of Play #1

Pressing from the Front

1. Pressing from the Front



Key Factors

1. Striker First To Press

- Leads the line of pressure, immediately and quickly.

2. Force Inside

- Force toward their own goal, where the far-sided attacking midfielder waits to pounce.
- Slanted body angle to cut off the outside options.

3. Diamond Shape

- Maintain diamond shape. Striker at the point of the diamond, attacking mids at the sides and defensive midfielder at the lowest point of the diamond. Wing-backs remain wide and covering opp. wide players.

4. Pressure, Cover, Balance

- Striker press, far-sided AM provides balance, DM and near-side AM provide cover. WBs provide cover.
- Defenders communicate about movement of opp. forward(s) and come to side of the ball when appropriate.



Principle of Play #2

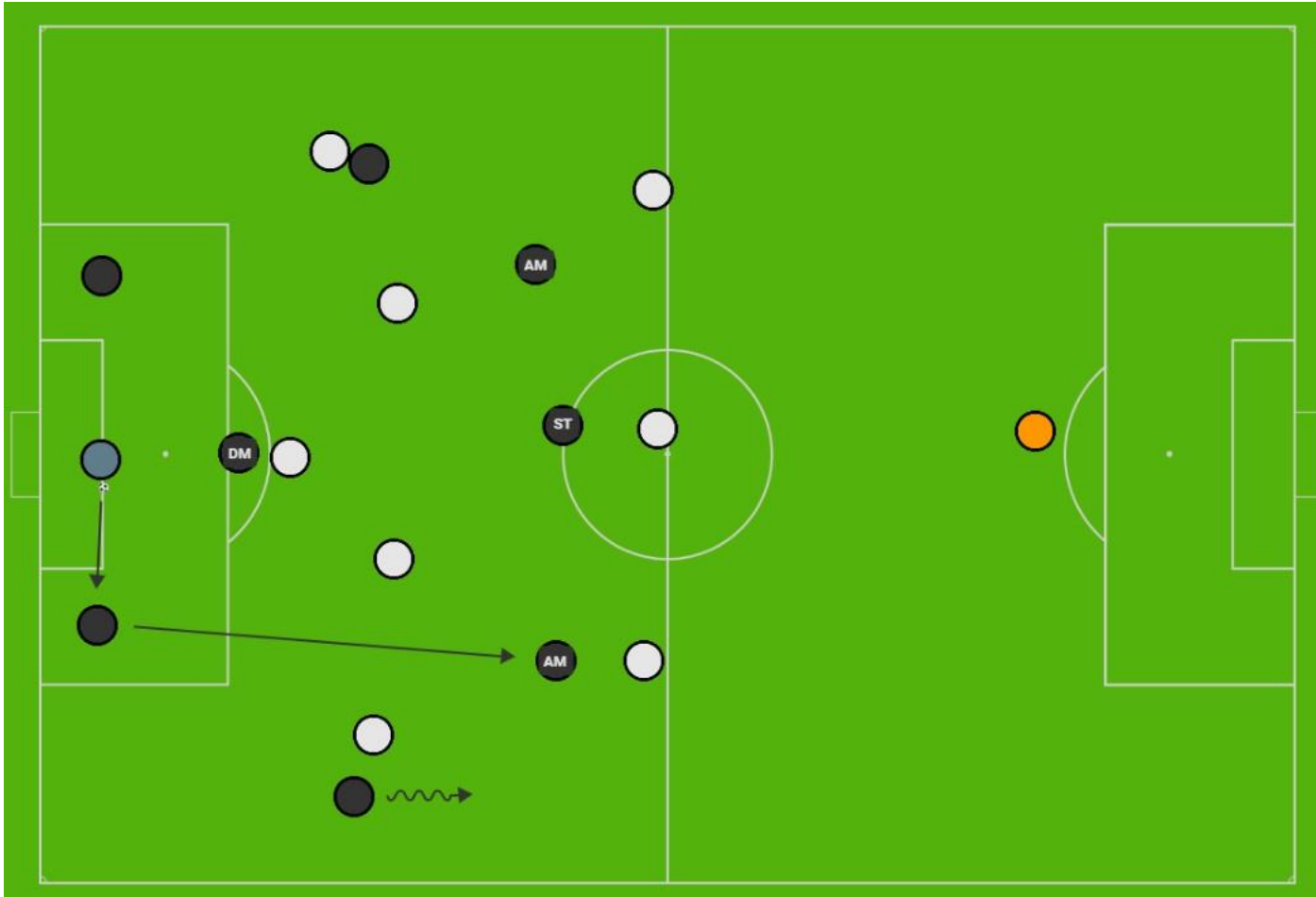
Playing out from the Back

Important to develop routines around your team's strengths and weaknesses, and the traits of your personnel.

- Attacking midfielders and striker can look to position and receive in between the lines.

- Maintain width to allow for switches and outlets away from the goal.
- Shift as a unit toward the side with the ball to remain in close proximity for short connections.

- Practice possession-based exercises relentlessly in training to allow players to develop comfortability playing under pressure, and on a one-two-touch.
- Smart off-the ball movement must match, ensuring players remain in close proximity and receive away from pressure.

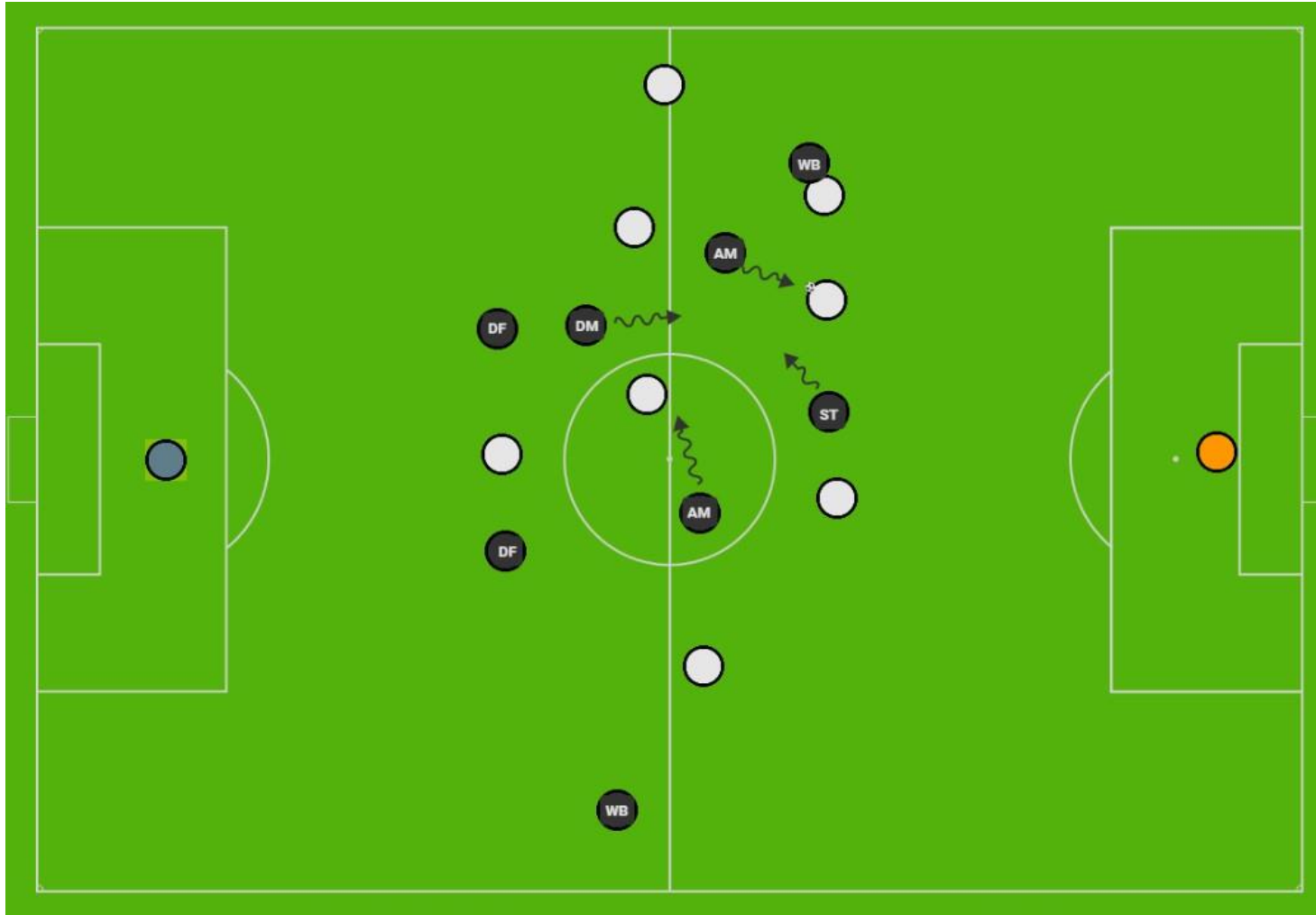




Principle of Play #3

Quick Transitions

3. Quick Transitions



Key Factors

DEF. TRANSITION

1. Closest Player Pressures the Ball

- The closest player should pressure the ball immediately and intensely, as others provide cover.

2. Fall Back Into Shape

- If not close to the situation, still fall back into defensive stance to support teammates
- If the ball is not won within five seconds, the entire team may fall back into shape.

ATT. TRANSITION

1. Verticality on the Break, Use of the Striker

- Far-sided fullback goes forward to create numerical superiority in attack down the weak side.

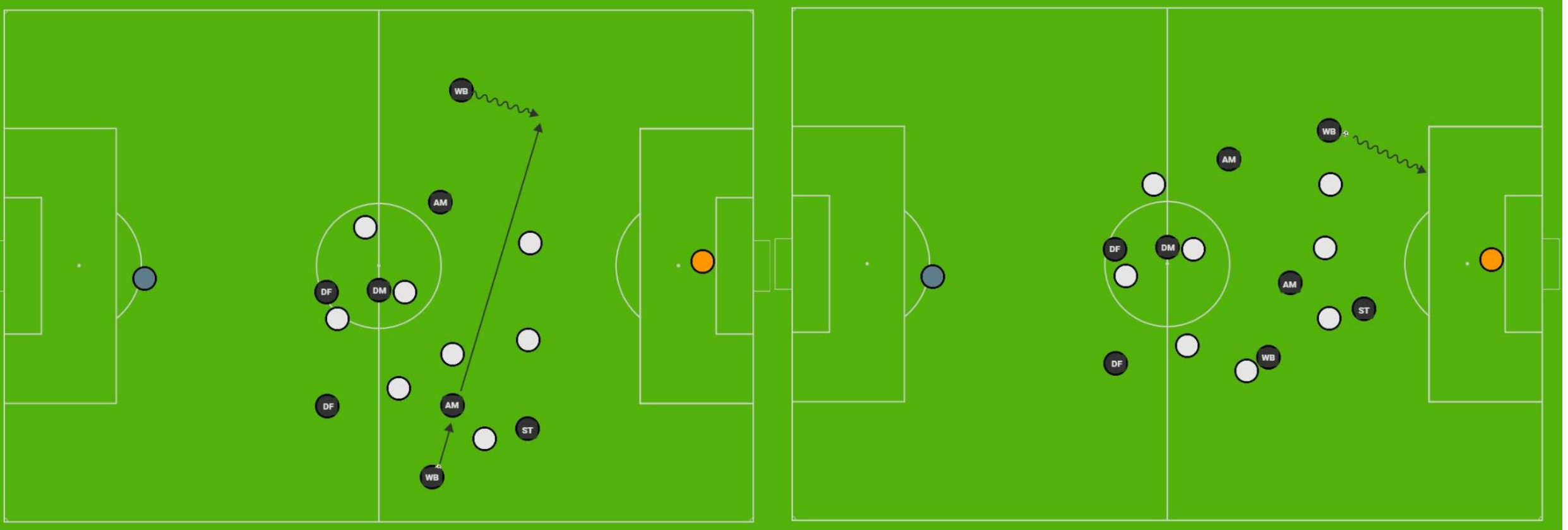
2. Quickest Route to Goal

- Decide whether to dribble or pass depending on BOTS (ball, opposition, teammates, space).



Switching Play

Switching Play



Wing-Backs Maintain Width, Overload & Isolate

- Overload one side through forming a diamond shape, drawing defenders toward the ball.
- Maintain maximum width on the other side for the option to switch the play, where no defenders remain.

Activate Speed After the Switch

- After the switch of play, look for the quickest route to goal to take full advantage of the switch.
- The entire team should then follow suit by sliding toward the side of the ball.

Importance of Communication

Communication is one of the most important skills for young players to develop. It can sometimes be difficult for players to see past their own role, but effective communication can propel the entire team and lead to a better team spirit.

Most young players understand that they should ask for the ball when they find themselves open, but don't have a greater understanding about how they can effectively communicate to their teammates. You as the coach are responsible for developing that.



Alternate System of Play: 4-3-1



Pressing ✓

Playing out from
the back ✓

Quick Transitions ✓

4 Defenders

3 Midfielders

1 Forward

1. Striker First To Press

- ## 2. Force Inside

- ### 3. Diamond Shape

- #### 4. Pressure, Cover, Balance

- Striker press, far-sided MF provides balance, DM and near-sided MF provide cover. WBs provide cover.
- Central defenders communicate about movement of opp. forward(s) and come to side of the ball when appropriate.

Striker First To Press

Starting Positions on Goal-Kicks

Striker: Waits at the edge of the box and anticipates the side of the first pass.

Wide Mids: Ready to pressure on their side, and then immediately form into the diamond shape on ball-side, to limit options and force turnovers.

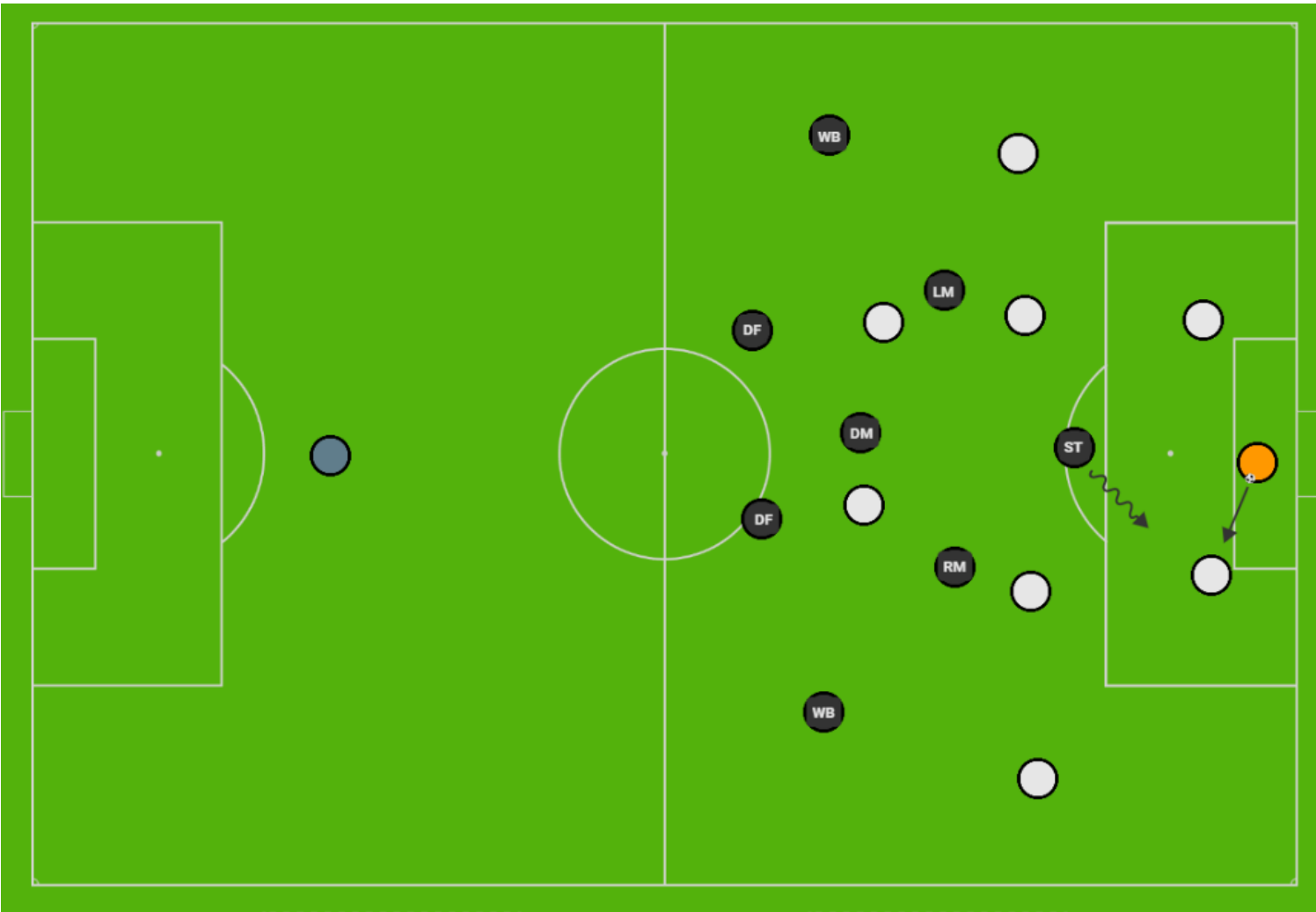
Defensive Mid: Start central and then step up on near-side opp. CM, ensuring to complete the diamond.

Wing-Backs: Cover opp. wide players, usually in behind and ready to anticipate. Starting position may be lower depending on opp. Wide players' height.

Defenders: Remain watchful of opposition attackers. Remain central and compact. Shift to the side of the ball.

Striker Actions

- Anticipate the direction of the pass to get there by the time the player receives
- Pressure the player on the ball quickly and immediately
- Force inside
- Win the ball back



Playing out from the Back

Key Factors

Important to develop routines around your team's strengths and weaknesses, and the traits of your personnel.

1.Space in Between the Lines

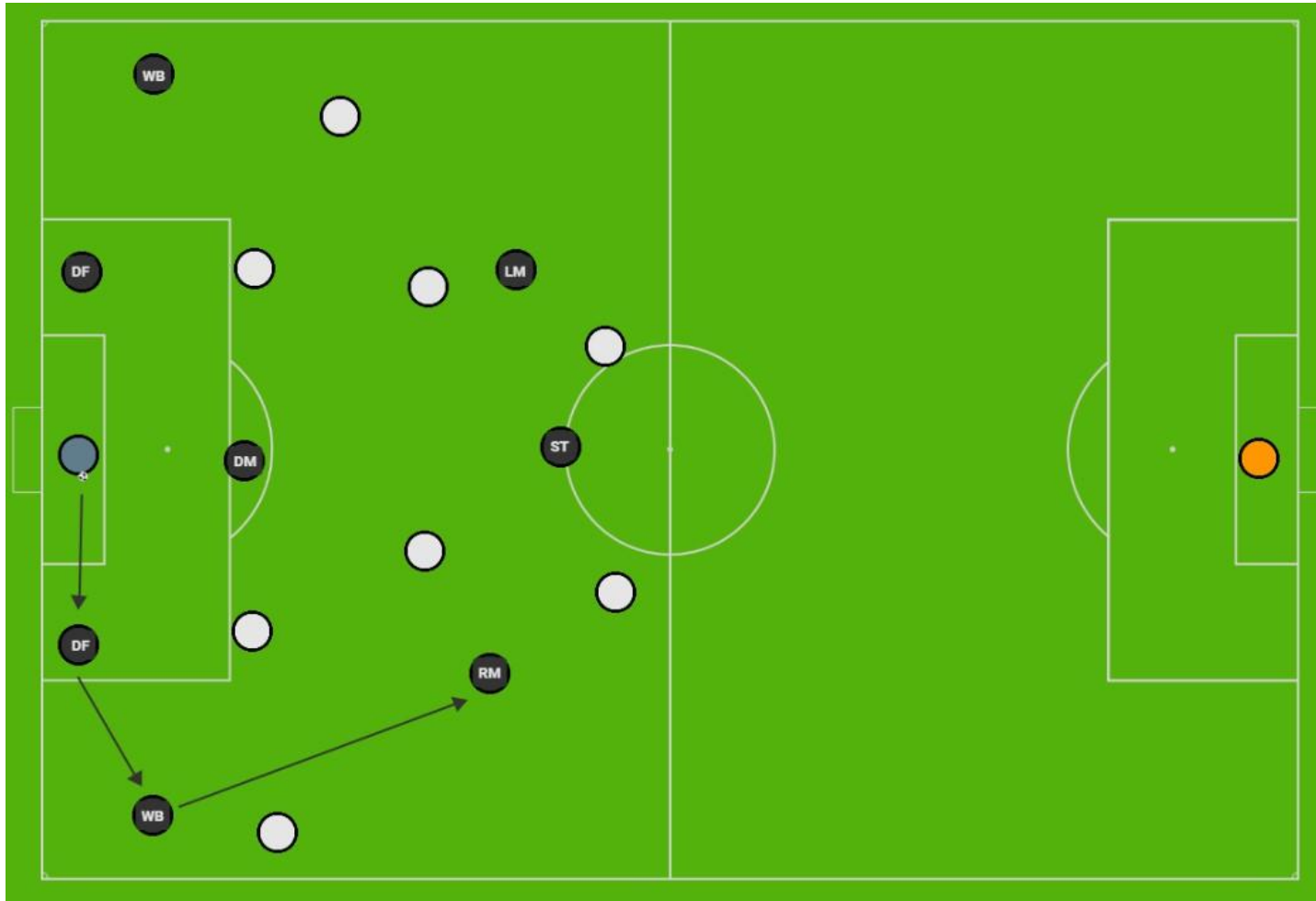
- Wide midfielders and striker can look to position and receive in between the lines.

2. Shifting & Width

- Maintain width to allow for switches and outlets away from the goal. Wing-backs can start low, to entice the opposition away from players higher up the pitch.
- Shift as a unit toward the side with the ball to remain in close proximity for short connections.

3. Quick, Short Combinations

- Practice possession-based exercises relentlessly in training to allow players to develop comfortability playing under pressure, and on a one-two-touch.
- Smart off-the ball movement must match, ensuring players remain in close proximity and receive away from pressure.





Playing Against a 2-1-4-1



Playing Against a 2-4-2 Diamond



Playing Against a 3-1-3-1

Additional Resources

FORMATIONS

[Best Formations for 9v9](#)

[Best Formations for 9v9
\(Part 2\)](#)

[Best Formations for 9v9
\(Podcast Episode\)](#)

3-2-3 FORMATION

[Coaching 9v9 Soccer
\(2020 Edition\)](#)

[Coaching the 3-2-3 \(9v9\)](#)

[Positions, Roles and
Responsibilities in the
3-2-3 \(9v9\)](#)

SESSION PLANS & SESSION DESIGN

[The Art of Structuring an Effective
Warm-Up](#)

[Session Planning Template](#)

[How To Make Graphics With Planet
Training - Video](#)

[13 Warm-Up Activities with the Ball](#)

[13 Shooting & Finishing Ideas](#)

[Playing Forwards vs. Backwards –
Session Plan](#)

[Spatial Awareness & Switching
Play – Session Plan](#)

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE & TMS EXCLUSIVES

[Consultation with Rhys](#)

[Introduction to Football
Analysis – Online Course](#)

[Coaching Philosophies Guide](#)

[Role Continuity](#)

[Game of Numbers](#)

[Game Models](#)

[Tactical Theory](#)



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