



How to analyse football

veo

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ANALYSE LIKE A PRO



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Introduction

In modern day football, post match analysis and review of training sessions play an increasingly important role. There are many ways to analyse football, but as a video company, we naturally focus on video analysis in this eBook.

Analysing football is not the same as watching football. This is why we want to give you an initial understanding of video analysis and give a few tips on how to get started and make the most of your time and resources. You won't find a complete step-to-step guide to instant results for exactly your team. But we hope to inspire you to take the first steps and to make analysing football a little clearer for you.

This eBook is primarily for the coaches at grassroots level who would like to get started with post match analysis, but has constraints when it comes to time, technology and know-how. We have divided it into three chapters that represent a chronological approach, from preparation to analysis and presentation of your findings: *Find your why, Know what you're looking for* and *Observe, analyse and present*.

Previously in our eBook "[Four reasons why you should record your football matches](#)", we have demonstrated the many benefits that film can bring your team. However, for those of you who dream of a career as a coach or analyst, it's

also important to practice and get familiar with analysing recordings of football. There's no doubt that it's a skill that gets more and more important when clubs are recruiting coaches.

The eBook is based on countless conversations with coaches, analysts and players from several different football clubs that use Veo. As well as the many members of our staff in Veo who are involved in football, both on grassroots and elite level, in Denmark, Sweden, UK and USA.

Veo is a multi-sports camera. Since February 2020, our camera system has been able to cover eight different sports. This eBook, however, is about analysing football. This is the sport that the vast majority of our users play and where we have by far the most experience.

With that being said, most of the principles and methodologies apply to other sports too. Examples and expressions might come from football, but sport is sport and all sports that can be recorded with Veo have the same elements of invasion sports.

Enjoy!

Find your **why**

The key belief of this eBook is: to maximise advantage from analysing your football matches, you always need a goal to work towards. Unlike what you can sometimes experience from pundits on the television, we don't believe that post game analysis is a tool to beat players over the head with, finding a scapegoat for painful defeats.

We want to promote a positive and proactive approach to video analysis where it's seen as a tool that can help you achieve your goals as part of a process. And this eBook reflects that.

The first thing you need to do is asking yourself the important question: *"why do I want to analyse my team's matches?"*



Finding the *why*

The answer to the question *why* pretty much decides everything you do from here. The most common reasons that we hear from our customers and users are:

- **Individual development**
 - Evaluate each of your players' match performances in order to help them become better football players.
- **Tactical analysis**
 - Make adjustments in order to achieve better results, e.g. if most of the goals you are conceding are coming from mistakes in midfield.
- **Implement club philosophy**
 - Implement and strengthen a specific way of playing in accordance with your club's philosophy and long term goals.
- **Talent development**
 - In elite level youth academies, video analysis is pivotal for the individual player's development into a professional football player.
- **Coach development**
 - The skill of conducting an analysis of football is something that you need to learn if you want to become a football coach or analyst at the highest level.
- **Fun and highlights**
 - Have fun analysing your and your friends' football matches and find the most spectacular moments and highlights.

At this stage, there are no right or wrong answers. And the possible reasons to record are in no way limited to the ones mentioned above. However, the reason behind your choice to analyse your matches should be decisive.

To help you find your *why*, a number of things can assist your thought process. The players' age, the team's level and the club culture are some of the most important things to consider. So is the time you have available to analyse – both for yourself and with the players.

But the most important thing to consider is really: What are you interested in knowing more about? If you are fascinated by a specific playing style and want to implement this style on your team, this is your *why*. If your goal is ultimately to develop players to the senior first team, this is your *why*.

Define objectives

An important component of your *why* is what you hope to gain from analysing your games. If you hope to get an edge on your opponents, your objectives should be well defined.

Clearly defined objectives and goals will help you massively throughout your analysis process. Especially when it comes to knowing what to look for which we'll get back to in the next chapter.

Align your objectives with your playing style. Naturally, your goals are closely related to the *why* that you decided to earlier on. If you want to implement a high pressing style and intensive counter-attack, an obvious objective could be to win the ball in the opponent's half more often.

It's useful to have measurable objectives in video analysis, even as measurable as scoring more goals than the opponent. But collecting a thorough statistical data set for analysis is very time consuming to do yourself, and it's expensive and out of reach for the vast majority of football coaches.

So you have to trust your eyes when you rewatch the match and assess if you're getting closer to your objectives. In other words, if you want to implement a high pressing style of play, show your players situations where they do well in a press and situations where they need to improve and you've come a long way.

The advantage of having access to post match video analysis is that you can concentrate on winning the match, i.e. focus on mentality, opposing players and substitutions, when you stand on the touchline. After the match, you can focus concentrate on the more intricate areas of the game like style of play, back four positioning and so on.

CLUB PHILOSOPHY

You'll often hear or read the expression *club/team philosophy*, this eBook is no exception. But how do you define your club's philosophy? What is the thread of DNA that runs through the club and can be summed up succinctly? Style of play, mentality, ambitions and culture are all elements of the club philosophy.

To find your philosophy, you need to define what makes your club or team unique. An example is that probably all teams strive to be "*hard working*". But try going a little deeper and think about what it means to be *hard working*. Does it mean that you value the physical side of the game more than technical abilities? Club philosophy is also a way of saying what you are not. Take the example from above. If you define your team as primarily hard working, you probably prioritise stamina, consistency and work rate over dribbling, technique and flair. And ultimately, club philosophy can help you find your *why*.

3 tips to finding your why

1.

Be honest with yourself

Analyse what feels right and exciting for you and what is realistic for you to demand. Otherwise, chances are that you might stall in the process.

Football is about having fun!

2.

Find out what your players need

And don't just focus on where the players must improve. Core skills at both an individual and team level are worth highlighting too.

3.

Work with objectives

And trust your eyes when you do it. When you know what to look for, when you rewatch the match, everything gets easier.



In our HIK under-19s team, we want to implement high pressure on the opposition and effective counter pressure when we lose possession. This goes well with the club philosophy and prepares the young players for the first senior team. We also want to prepare our players for professional life where the ability to play at a high pace is crucial.

Sam Rafique
Coach at Hellerup IK



In the next chapter ...

We dig more into the merit and start looking for things to analyse when we guide you to *what to look for* when analysing football.



Know what you're **looking for**

As a football coach, your time is precious. In this chapter, we'll focus on how you get the most out of the time you dedicate to analysing football. When you've found your *why* that we focused on in the last chapter, you've already come a long way, but here we'll go more into depth and focus on concrete methods of knowing what to look for.

As mentioned in the introduction, analysing football is not the same as watching football. With that being said, you still rely on your eyes and interpretation to make a thorough analysis.

Though it obviously varies a lot, there are approximately 350–400 passes per team in an average football match. An eventful match can have 20–25 shots on goal and 22 players who can track up to 10–11 kilometers each. That's a lot to keep up with. The good news is that neither every touch on the ball nor every step of a player is significant to achieve your objectives.

But how do you then find the things that are significant for you and your team? We have to come back to the *why* again.

Why decides what and how

It's important not to confuse objective with outcome. It's probably very few teams who have a goal to get more corner kicks or commit more fouls. Though these would typically indicate something about your playing style. And yet, it's perfectly normal to have objectives to have more possession in the final third or play with a more aggressive attitude.

When you have found your why and you have narrowed your objectives down to two-three concrete goals for your analysis, you can start breaking things down into smaller components. Focus on only a few, but critical things that will help you save time. The questions below can help:

- What period of the season are you in?
- Are you working in line with a set program?
- Is your focus on results or development?

Results and development are not contradictions and will often be intertwined and related to each other. I.e. results often come from positive development and developing players is often easier if the results are good. But still, you can deliberately choose to focus on one. Often, it's determined by the age of the players as senior teams logically most often consist of adult players who are more matured in their development. At the same time, teams often get more focused on tactical details that are easily applicable when the season comes to an end as it often comes down to a few results if the whole season has been a success or not. You also need to consider how the two or three concrete goals fit with your club's philosophy and if they are compatible.

Whereas your *why* is determined before you even start analysing, the small goals can be decided and changed before every match or even your training sessions if you choose to focus on a specific aspect in training.

Now that you are down to a few things to look for, your time can be spent much more efficiently. It's a good idea to take a few notes during the match, as long as it doesn't take your attention away from winning the game. The moment you start noticing good or less good situations and plays from your game, you are analysing! Use this to go back after the game and start looking through the recording of your match with a clear mind and start looking for the small things that lead up to the situations and what the outcomes are – positive or negative.

Never forget that you are the expert in your team's playing style. So trust your eyes and the observations you've made during the game. Nobody knows better than you. These observations are the foundation for your work from here.

Get it done - delegate responsibilities

If you have a focus on individual development, it can be a good idea to delegate some responsibility to your players. Almost everybody loves to see themselves play and most players want to become better football players. Use this to maximise your time.



Maybe even more important, delegating parts of the analysis work to your players will help them become even better athletes. Talented players today have to be able to analyse their own performance based on goals set by you – the coach – who have the knowledge and skills when it comes to talent development. Let the players find out themselves where they've done well and where there's room for improvement. Helping the players' ability to help themselves is a craft that will help them for the rest of their careers.

A particular way to do it is to pick three situations – two with a successful outcome and one with a negative outcome – and let the player themselves

analyse the situation and propose what went well, what went wrong and how it relates to the objectives of the team and the player. This way, you also get a unique insight into the players' thoughts and focuses.

What if the players are very young? Some players might be too young for the task, but parents can play a role here in helping out. Just like helping with homeworks, parents and players can work it out together.

With a system like Veo's platform, you can share highlights and clips directly with players and parents and keep private conversations.

CODING AND LIVE CODING

You'll often see the word *coding* when you read about analysing sports. It simply refers to defining what you see. You can code both quantitatively and qualitatively. The former refers to things that can be measured with numbers, e.g. amount of free kicks or shots on goal, and the latter refers to what you interpret from the match, e.g. the overall quality of passing in the first ten minutes. Often, professional analysts will have a coding manual where it's stated what constitutes each unit.

Live coding is when a coach or analyst codes while watching the match live. It's very useful, so you don't have to rewatch the whole 90 minutes without a clue on where the important situations appeared.

3 tips to help you know what you're looking for and maximise your time

1.

Break down your objectives

Two or three specific things or aspects to focus on when you rewatch your games will help you save time

2.

Delegate responsibility to the players

Helping them help themselves can be very valuable for their development.

3.

Prepare well before every game, so you know what to look for

Starting from scratch after the game is a massive task to give yourself.



We break our why down to two objectives that goes well along with the club philosophy and overall goal with the analysis: steal the ball more often at the opposition's half and force the opponent's goalkeeper to clear the ball. If we can succeed in this, it indicates that our high pressure works well.

Sam Rafique
Coach at Hellerup IK



In the next chapter ...

We'll dive deeper and start looking at the recording of the match. We also take a look at some good practices for presenting your findings.



Observe, analyse and **present**

In just a 15 seconds clip of a football match, you can analyse numerous things: ball pressure from the defending team, technique, passing ability, team shape (both offensive and defensive), patterns in forward runs, and much more. For the vast majority of coaches, it won't be necessary to analyse every single detail in the game.

Luckily at this stage, you've already found your *why* and narrowed down a few objectives.

Watch the recording and find great examples

The eyes do not operate like a camera. During a 90 minutes football match, there are a lot of different things that you can see and observe, but the brain doesn't remember it all. A lot of activity and details are deemed unimportant in the heat of the moment, when focus is on winning the game. The inaccuracy of the human mind affects the understanding of the game. Therefore, it's critical to use video when you analyse. Video remembers things unemotionally.

Maybe, you've already done a bit of coding during the match. Or maybe, you're rewatching the game with your objectives in mind. In both cases, a pivotal step in your analysis is to find great examples in the recording of what you have seen during the matches. Are there any patterns in the buildup that bring your players in good positions or are there situations where your players don't follow your instructions which makes it difficult to play the way you want your team to play?

Analysing is all about finding these situations and holding them up against your initial *why* and the objectives that you decided to focus on in that specific game or training session. What does it tell you about your team and the individual players when they have to take your ideas and the club's philosophy and transform it into actions on the field?

With all the action of a normal football match, it's not uncommon that you can find great examples of everything within the first 20 minutes of your recording. Which is great! Except if your objective is to close down the game in the last five minutes, of course. As stated many times in this eBook, your examples should always be based on your observations which should be based on your objectives which should be based on your *why*.

Positive reinforcement and constructive criticism

At this time of the process, you probably found out some new things about your team that you can use to improve your performances, develop your players' talents and win more matches. You've found some great examples of the way you want to play, but you've also come across some situations where the team doesn't perform or do as you want them to — and maybe also seen a reason why these situations appear.

In other words, you've analysed your football match.

However, your job is only halfway done at this point. How you present your findings to your team is just as important as the analysis itself. A great analysis is only worth the quality of your presentation.

Over the last few years, research has shown that positive reinforcement and constructive criticism is by far the most efficient way to get your messages across — especially when you deal with youth players — and it's therefore much more likely that you can produce results with this approach.

Montages of good build-ups, great goals and cheeky dribbles work encouraging and you avoid that your players perceive the video analysis as an awful chore.

Players are visual learners

Players like anybody else are visual learners, so showing them what you want them to do is much more powerful than just telling them. But the attention span is probably limited, so it's a good idea to only choose a few examples of your findings and don't overload them with new information.

When presenting your findings to the players, you should ask yourself,

“is this a good example to get my message across?”

One good example is better than 10 mediocre.

If your time with the players is limited, use your time with the players on the pitch! However, if your players are committed to their and their team's development, you should consider giving them homework. With a solution like Veo, you can send clips directly to them via the platform, or download small videos and send them through tools like WhatsApp or Messenger.

As we touched in chapter 2, it's also a part of a player's development to be able to analyse themselves. And so is it for you as a coach. The ability to analyse a match in a compelling manner will not only give you better results, it will also make you more attractive for clubs who recruit new staff.

Analysing football is a process

From the moment you decide to start analysing your football matches, you probably already know why you want to do it and what you want to get out of it. This is great and will help you massively with your preparation.

This eBook has emphasised a lot on preparation, but good preparation is key to getting the most out of your time and resources and to actually use video analysis for improving things on your team.

And as with anything else, practice makes perfect. Your analysis skills will naturally improve the more you do it. And the more you analyse, the more you will save time on preparation.

One last tip? Remember to have fun! Football is all about having fun. But we warn you. After you start analysing football matches, it can be difficult to go back to just watching!



3 tips to observation and presentation skills

1.

Analyse your observations with the objectives in mind

The core in your analysis is the comparison of your goal and what you see on the pitch or recording.

2.

Present your findings with positive reinforcement and constructive criticism

And always try to make it a good experience for your players. The work is done for their sake.

3.

Use video when you analyse

Have your games and training sessions recorded. Video is the gateway to analysing your games!



During our latest match, I noticed during the first 15 minutes that we were able to force the opponent to clear the ball a bunch of times. I found two examples where our players worked well and cut off the possible passes, so their goalkeeper had to play long. But I also found a situation where the rest of the team didn't follow our strikers and a large gap appeared in the middle of the field which lead to a dangerous situation in our own end.

Sam Rafique
Coach at Hellerup IK



In the next chapter ...

Next chapter is you analysing your football matches, improving your team's performances and winning more football matches!

Questions?

Do you have any questions about how to implement video technology and camera technology in your club? Please don't hesitate to contact us here in Veo. We have vast experience with analysing and using video on all levels of football.

hello@veo.co

For analysing your matches, video is an absolute must-have. There are many different solutions to both getting the footage wrapped and performing the analysis. However, if you want to analyse your team's tactics, you need recordings taken with a relative overview of the pitch.

Veo is a one-stop solution that enables you to both record your matches, view and review the match, analyse the team's performance and share the recordings and findings with your players.

Contact us for more information.

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