**Key Points to consider when managing:**

1. Encourage players to keep possession of the ball even if it involves passing backwards. If we have the ball the other team cannot score.
2. Encourage players to move into space when they do not have the ball so that they can provide teammates with options for a pass.
3. Try not to commit too many players forward when attacking as teams can catch you out on the counter attack.
4. When in possession look to attack down the wings to support the striker in the middle.
5. Use the striker to keep possession and give your team the chance to attack in numbers by playing the ball into his/her feet and asking him to lay the ball back into another midfielder. This should facilitate midfielders overlapping him so you have more attacking options when in possession.
6. Goal kicks should be passed short and wide to limit the chances of losing possession.
7. When taking goal kicks, the team should be goal-side of the opposing players (defenders in front of the opposing strikers, midfielders in front of opposing midfielders etc)

**Positioning for 7 a side matches:**

**Formation:** First choice formation should be 1 goalkeeper, 2 defenders, 1 holding central midfielder (protect the defence), 2 wingers (up and down) and one striker.

Formation: Second choice formation should be 1 goalkeeper, 2 defenders, 2 midfielders (one who protects the defence) and 2 strikers. This formation should be used when playing an opposition who attack in numbers as it can produce a successful counter attack.

When playing this formation, the majority of the attacking should come from the two strikers being fed by the 2 midfielders and 2 defenders. The two strikers must work well together with plenty of movement and passing.

**Below are some guidelines to help with the team organisation.**

**2 – 3 – 1 Formation Attacking:**

Figure 1: This diagram shows how the team should organise themselves. Notice the central midfielder has the ball and the right and left sided midfielders are positioned wide to create space for the central midfielder to dribble into or to pass the ball. The striker is positioned ahead of the ball to stretch the play and also to maximise space. The two defenders should provide options for a pass back in order to keep possession.

Figure 2: This diagram shows that the ball has been passed to the right hand side of midfield which has resulted in the left midfielder moving towards the middle of the pitch to provide his team mate with an option for a pass in space. The striker has move towards the right to provide an option straight down the line whilst the central midfielder has moved towards the right and behind the right midfielder to provide an option for a pass backwards so that the team can keep possession. The defenders also move towards the right.

Notice you can always pass back to the defenders in order to keep possession of the ball.

 Option 1

 Option 2

 Option 3

 Option 4

Figure 3: This diagram shows that the ball has been passed to the left hand side of midfield which has resulted in the right midfielder moving towards the middle of the pitch to provide his team mate with an option for a pass in space. The striker has move towards the left to provide an option straight down the line whilst the central midfielder has moved towards the left and behind the left midfielder to provide an option for a pass backwards so that the team can keep possession. The defenders also move towards the left.

Notice you can always pass back to the defenders in order to keep possession of the ball.

 Option 1

 Option 2

 Option 3

 Option 4

Figure 4: This continues from figure 2 showing that the right midfielder passed the ball to the striker. Figure 4 shows that the striker now has three options. He can return a pass to the right midfielder who should be making a run ahead of him or he can pass the ball to the left midfielder who should also be making a run ahead of the striker towards goal. Alternatively if the striker has no options he/she can try and turn to run towards goal to have a shot.

 Option 1 Option 2

 Option 3

Figure 5: This continues from figure 3 showing that the left midfielder passed the ball to the striker. Figure 5 shows that the striker now has three options. He can return a pass to the left midfielder who should be making a run ahead of him or he can pass the ball to the right midfielder who should also be making a run ahead of the striker towards goal. Alternatively if the striker has no options he/she can try and turn to run towards goal to have a shot.

 Option 1

 Option 3 Option 2

Figure 6: This diagram shows the striker in possession of the ball in a central position (edge of the penalty area). The striker has four options. One is he can pass backwards to the central midfielder in order to keep possession. The central midfielder could then spread the play to the left or right in order to attack down the wings.

The striker could pass the ball to the right midfielder (right hand side of the pitch) or spread the play out wide to the left hand side. The final option for the striker is to attack on his/her own if he/she is unable to pass to a team mate.

 Option 4

 Option 3 Option 2

 Option 1

Figure 7: Figure 7 shows how the team should position itself when attacking from defence. Notice the left midfielder is not wide but is not positioned central either whilst the right midfielder is positioned wide on the right. The central midfielder is positioned in between the right and left midfielder and inside his own half. The striker should position himself on the half way line.

 Option 3

 Option 2 Option 1

Figure 8: Figure 8 shows how the team should position itself when attacking from defence. Notice the right midfielder is not wide but is not positioned central either whilst the left midfielder is positioned wide on the left hand side. The central midfielder is positioned in between the right and left midfielder and inside his own half. The striker should position himself on the half way line.

 Option 3

 Option 2 Option 1

**Defending:**

Figure 9: Notice the midfielders have dropped back and are marking a player from the opposing team playing in their area. The left midfielder of our team is marking the right midfielder of the other team. The left midfielder of our team is marking the right midfielder of the opposing team. Whilst the central midfielder of our team is marking the centre mid of the opposition. Our players are all positioned goal side of the opposition (this means between the opposing players and our team goal). It is vitally important that when you are defending you watch the player more than the ball. You still need to know where the ball is but you should focus on the opposing players movement.

Notice the ball is with the opposing teams defenders and our striker is the only player from our team who is closing the ball down.

Figure 10: Figure 10 shows the ball has been passed out of defence and to the opposing teams left sided midfielder. Our right midfielder is now tight to the opposing teams left midfielder and positioned goal side. Our striker should now close the ball down blocking off an option for a pass inside to another midfield forcing him to pass the ball backwards to the opposing team’s defenders in order to prevent the ball going forward. Also notice the left sided midfielder of our team has moved across to the middle of the pitch whilst the central midfielder has dropped behind our right midfielder as cover to protect the defence if our right midfielder is beaten by the oppositions left midfielder. The defenders also move slightly towards the right hand side of the pitch with one defender tight to the opposition’s striker.

Figure 11: Figure 11 shows the ball has been passed out of defence and to the opposing teams right sided midfielder. Our left midfielder is now tight to the opposing team’s right midfielder and positioned goal side. Our striker should now close the ball down blocking off an option for a pass inside to another midfield forcing him to pass the ball backwards to the opposing team’s defenders in order to prevent the ball going forward. Also notice the right sided midfielder of our team has moved across to the middle of the pitch whilst the central midfielder has dropped behind our right midfielder as cover to protect the defence if our left midfielder is beaten by the opposition’s right midfielder. The defenders also move slightly towards the left hand side of the pitch with one defender tight to the opposition’s striker.

Figure 12: Notice figure 12 shows the opposition are in an advance position with the teams central midfielder in possession of the ball. Our central midfielder is shown moving towards the ball to close the opposition’s central midfielder down. Our right sided midfielder has dropped back but is facing his man (the oppositions left midfielder). One of our defenders are tight to the oppositions striker with the other defender positioned behind him as cover in case the striker turns the defender marking him or if the ball is slipped ahead of the striker to latch onto so that it can be intercepted. The opposition’s right midfielder is shown to be out wide but the left sided midfielder from our team has dropped off, towards the centre. The reason our left sided midfielder is not out wide and tight to his man is because we want to keep the middle compact to maximise the chance to intercept a pass. If the ball is played out wide to the opposition’s right midfielder then our left sided midfielder should close the ball down as it is moving. Also notice our striker is positioned on the half way line. This is to provide our team with an attacking option if our midfielders win possession of the ball. Moreover, our striker is blocking off the option for a back pass.

Figure 13: Notice figure 13 shows the opposition are in an advance position with the teams central midfielder in possession of the ball. Our central midfielder is shown moving towards the ball to close the opposition’s central midfielder down. Our left sided midfielder has dropped back but is facing his man (the oppositions left midfielder). One of our defenders is tight to the oppositions striker with the other defender positioned behind him as cover in case the striker turns the defender marking him. The opposition’s right midfielder is shown to be out wide but the left sided midfielder from our team has dropped off, towards the centre. The reason our right sided midfielder is not out wide and tight to his man is because we want to keep the middle compact to maximise the opportunity for an interception. If the ball is played out wide to the opposition’s left midfielder then our right sided midfielder should close the ball down as it is moving. Also notice our striker is positioned on the half way line. This is to provide our team with an attacking option if our midfielders win possession of the ball. Moreover, our striker is blocking off the option for a back pass.

**2 – 2 – 2 Formation Attacking:**

Figure 14: When using the 2-2-2 formation it is important to note that this is a direct tactic, meaning the ball needs to move quickly from defence to attack with a minimum amount of dribbling or passes as too much dribbling or passing will give the opposition time to get back and defend, thereby scuppering any possible effective counter attack. Notice from figure 14, one of the defenders has possession of the ball so to give him an option, one midfielder should move wide towards the near touchline to provide a forward option for a pass (option 1). The other midfielder should move towards the centre of the pitch to give the player on the ball with an option (option 2) whilst one of the two strikers should drop just into his teams half to provide a third option (option 3) for a forward pass. This would leave one attacker in the oppositions half to act as a target man.

 Option 3

 Option 2 Option 1

Figure 15: From figure 15 it is evident that the defender chose option 1, to pass to the midfielder who moved wide towards the near touchline. As the ball is with the midfielder

 Option 1

 Option 2

out wide, this should draw the other midfielder across

towards the ball to provide his team mate with an option

for a pass inside (option 2). Furthermore, one of the strikers

should move across to provide the midfielder on the ball

with an option for a ball down the line (option 1). The

furthest forward striker should play in line with the last

defender and look to make runs in behind the opposing

defence so that he/she can latch onto any long balls from

either the midfielders or the second striker

Figure 16: From figure 16, it is apparent that the ball is now in the oppositions half with the striker from figure 15 who gave his midfield team mate an option for a pass down the line. The midfielder who passed the ball as shown in figure 15 should take up the position of holding midfielder just in front of his defenders whilst his fellow midfielder should make a darting run towards the penalty area and the oppositions back post (option 3). The furthest forward striker should make a run in behind the opposing defenders to provide his striking partner with an attacking option for a pass (option 2). Alternatively if a pass is not on, the striker could run down the line with the ball to create a goal threat and a potential crossing opportunity (option 1).

 Option 2

 Option 3 Option 1

Figure 17: Notice from figure 17, the other defender (not the one from figure 14) has possession of the ball so to give him an option, the midfielder (who moved into a central position in figure 14) should move wide towards the near touchline to provide a forward option for a pass (option 2). The other midfielder should move towards the centre of the pitch to give the player on the ball with an option (option 1) whilst one of the two strikers should drop just into his teams half to provide a third option for a forward pass (option 3). This would leave one attacker in the oppositions half to act as a target man.

 Option 3

Option 2 Option 1

Figure 18: From figure 18 it is evident that the defender chose option 1, to pass to the midfielder who moved wide towards the near touchline. As the ball is with the midfielder

 Option 1

 Option 2

out wide, this should draw the other midfielder across

towards the ball to provide his team mate with an option

for a pass inside (option 2). Furthermore, one of the strikers

should move across to provide the midfielder on the ball

 with an option for a ball down the line (option 1). The furthest

forward striker should play in line with the last defender and

 look to make runs in behind the opposing defence so that

he/she can latch onto any long balls from either the

midfielders or the second striker

Figure 19: From figure 19, it is apparent that the ball is now in the oppositions half with the striker from figure 18 who gave his midfield team mate an option for a pass down the line. The midfielder who passed the ball as shown in figure 18 should take up the position of a holding midfielder just in front of his defenders (option 4) whilst his fellow midfielder should make a darting run towards the penalty area and the oppositions back post (option 2). The furthest forward striker should make a run in behind the opposing defenders to provide his striking partner with an attacking option for a pass (option 1) . Alternatively if a pass is not on, the striker could run down the line with the ball to create a goal threat and a potential crossing opportunity (Option 3).

Option 3 Option 2

 Option 1

 Option 4

Figure 20: Figure 20 shows one of the defenders is in possession of the ball so to give him an option, one midfielder should move wide towards the near touchline to provide a forward option for a pass (option 3). The other midfielder should move towards the centre of the pitch to give the player on the ball with an option (option 2) whilst one of the two strikers should drop just into his teams half to provide a third option for a forward pass (option 1). This would leave one attacker in the oppositions half to act as a target man.

 Option 1

 Option 2 Option 3

Figure 21: Figure 21 it is evident that the ball was played to the second striker, this should then force the midfielder who took up the wide position to sprint forward to overlap the striker on the ball to give him/her a forward option (option 2). The furthest forward striker should then make a run in behind the opposing defenders to provide a second forward option for his/her striking partner (option 1).

If you want your team to be adventurous, the second midfielder could make a third option for the attacker on the ball by making a forward run into the oppositions half and look to spread and open up the play by moving towards the other wing. If this happens, the second striker on the ball should stay back to protect the defence and cover for the two midfielders.

 Option 1

 Option 2

 Option 3

Figure 22: Figure 22 shows one of the midfielders on the ball with three options. Option 1 is one of the strikers who should look to open up the play by moving into a wide position. This may draw out a member of the other team which could create space for an attacking move. The other striker should be looking to make a run in behind the opposing defence (option 2) whilst the second midfielder should provide an option (option 3) on the opposite flank to that of the striker (option 1)

 Option 1 Option 2

 Option 3

**Defending:**

Figure 23: Figure 23 shows how a team playing 2-2-2 should defend. The midfielders need to move together across the width of the pitch so that the opposition’s short pass options are restricted thereby forcing the opposition to try and play longer passes which stand more of a chance of lacking accuracy and potentially being intercepted. Notice one of the midfielders presses the ball on the right hand side of the pitch and his midfield partner has moved across with him. The midfield partner not pressing the ball is shown to be marking one of the opposing player’s options off the ball as are the two defenders. Once the ball is played by the opposing player on the ball, the individual players should look to close down their respective opposing players. Once possession is won, the team should look to play the ball forward as quickly as possible.