

Preparing To Teach

Introduction

The old saying “anyone can teach” may possibly have some truth and untruths in it. Sure, almost anyone who wants to try may be able to teach something, but true teachers look for ways to motivate and inspire their students towards further learning. Successful teachers are those who spend extra hours on their own skills, personal attitudes, relationships and spirit. It takes a lot to be a good teacher and it is here that we hope you will find great information to help you in your journey towards becoming one of the best teachers ever!

What we do know is that anyone can learn a new skill if they use the elements of time, intensity and frequency. After all, a brain surgeon did not grow up doing brain surgery all of their life! No, they learned the skill and expertise as an adult. So, if you have an interest, you can learn just about any skill there is to learn.

We want all of our teachers to have the opportunity to learn to be the best at what they do. To become specialists. We know that some will follow through all of the steps and others will give up and move on. After all, not everyone is meant to be the best teacher or to even be a teacher. Some will see that becoming a teacher is a great adventure, others too hard of a burden and too time consuming. You are the only one that can determine which path you will follow.

In the following pages, you will find a lot of information. Some you will already know and wonder why it is you already have this information. Some you will know because you have received it through schooling or training with other companies. But what we hope is that you will find it to be fresh and eye opening for teachers, coaches and instructors.

You will also find an area where you can download a worksheet for each section. After downloading the worksheet, use it to help you go through the materials. After filling out the worksheet, then hand it in to the office for training time. We will make sure that you have a copy for your records/notebook as well.

Welcome aboard our staff and we hope that you find this information very helpful in becoming the best teacher you can!

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The WHOA Factor

Starting to teach is easy if you know a few acronyms to help you get started on the right track. The two important acronyms to remember are WHOA and ARMS. When using these acronyms to remember a lot of information, you will be on the right track to assisting your students on a positive path of learning and acquiring skills that stay in place for a lifetime.

The WHOA Factor is usually the first step for most teachers, coaches or instructors in becoming successful with their students. In using the WHOA Factor, you are demonstrating to your students that you are there to help them learn and that you care about their comfort level.

WHOA FACTOR-

* **Motivate your students to “Want” to learn the skill.**

You can use many different ways to motivate a student. Most depend on the age of the student and the skills that may already be in place (such as a higher level class of students). Very young students can generally be motivated through how fun the skill is, while older more advanced students need to be told why the skill is important and what the outcome is (“a drill to get you into triple pirouettes faster!”)

*“**Help**” your students by offering them information about the skill to entice their curiosity about the skill. If there is a fun history or a similar skill, offer information about that. Tell how you learned about the skill.

*“**Offer**” to demonstrate the skill through action, pictures or assisting them through the skill. Be sure to offer in a positive and pleasant tone of voice as to entice the student to want to accept the offer of the demonstration.

*Apply “**ARMS**” (concepts of learning) to complete the skill and retain the skill for future practice.

ARMS (Concepts of Learning)

ARMS

- ***Association** – Associate the skill or part of the skill to a normal everyday activity or movement. Say to the student, “It is like.....” Attempt to use associations that are age appropriate for the student. Something that they can relate to.

 - ***Repetition** – Repeat the skill several times for the student to have enough time to get the skill down. Then repeat it again in disguise by changing the way they move into the skill, or finish the skill to keep it fresh and new. With young students, a game built around the skill works great.

 - ***Motivation** – You must first always motivate the student to want to learn the skill, then you must find ways to continue to motivate to keep the student on track until the skill is completed and placed in memory. Be creative. Offer small rewards (sometimes known as legal bribes) for completing the skill. Sometimes if the student is shown what the next skill is, if they get this skill down, can be a great motivator and peeks their curiosity.

 - ***Senses** – Apply the use of the senses:
 - “It feels like.....”
 - “It looks like.....”
 - “It sounds like.....”
 - “It smells like.....”
- By using the senses along with association, most skills can be accomplished.

The F.I.T. Principal

Frequency = How often?

Intensity = How hard of intense?

Time= How long?

Some students will tire quickly mentally in trying to achieve a new skill. Today's students are living in an "instant" society and become impatient in learning new skills. This is where the FIT Principal can be applied.

Motivate the student to make a FIT PRINCIPAL CONTRACT with you. Whether verbal or written, students generally understand what you mean when you ask them....

"How often are you going to work on this skill this week?" (or how many times)

"How hard are you going to work at it?"

"How much time are you going to allow to work or practice the skill this week?"

Most students will see the contract, again verbal or written, as a fun challenge to be met. Any skill can be learned when you apply the FIT PRINCIPAL.

Student Characteristics

Students Characteristics are important and a good teacher/instructor/coach will recognize that all student characteristics are age influenced.

STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS

*Health and Physical Fitness

*Age

*Experiences (connected to age)

*Attitude (willingness to learn)

*Education level and language abilities

*Coordination, strength and size

Health and Physical Fitness – The overall health and physical fitness level of a student can be a factor in learning. Nutrition and rest levels are directly connected no matter what the age of the student. Younger students do need more food and rest. Older students tend to be overly busy and forget about proper nutrition and run sleep deprived. All of which can have an influence on how well a student learns. A teacher/instructor should always start their a class out at a lower level of skills and build up to the expected level to check the health and physical fitness levels of each student. Students who are physically challenged may need extra help in learning the skills.

Age – Age is a factor in designing a class plan and skills to be taught. Skills need to be set for a positive learning experience for all age levels. For young children, development skills are best for rapid success.

Experience – Experiences are, of course, connected to age. The older the student, the more experiences they have acquired.

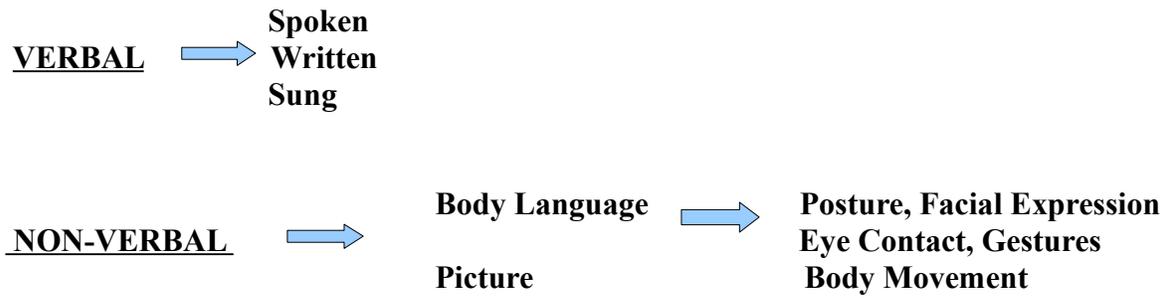
Attitude – Attitude and a willingness to learn is a major factor in learning. It is also a factor that can cause chaos for the entire class and can be age connected when a student decides to be in a non-learning mode.

Education – Education level and language abilities is a major factor to deal with. Never assume or over estimate due to a persons age or ethnic background.

Coordination, Strength and Size – Coordination, strength and size are characteristics to be accessed over time and with each student as an individual. Coordination, strength and size is connected to age to a point, but then becomes very much individualized.

Types of Communication

“A point simply stated is a point easily remembered”



COMMUNICATION

Sender – Person sending or transmitting the idea

Message – The information or idea

Receiver – Person who is processing the information or idea.

Characteristics Of Effective Instructors/Teachers/Coaches

- Professional Appearance and Behavior
- Good Communicator
- Positive Attitude
- Knowledge Of The Subject And Learning Theory
- Class Management Skills
- Compassionate, Patient and Flexible

***Professional Appearance And Behavior** – Profession appearance and behavior includes being on time (arriving no less than 15 minutes prior to a class starting and not when the class time is to start) and *starting* the class on time. It also means being reliable and always putting forth your best effort in every class (i.e never sitting down and watching a class work out....be up and interactive with the class). Your appearance is a reinforcement of the importance you place on teaching and being a role model. If there is a dress code for the students, the teacher is expected to follow a similar code. Wearing appropriate attire and having a professional appearance can serve as a motivator and enhance your function as a role model, thus helping students to learn through the use of senses and motivation. Your appearance and behavior says “teaching you is important to me” to the students.

Behaviors and attitudes that can reflect on your performance as a teacher are:

Proper dress (positive)

Improper dress, including jewelry (negative)

Good tone and pitch of voice when teaching (positive)

Shrieking at the students and using foul language (negative)

Smell of tobacco on clothing, hair, skin and breath (very negative ;no need to share second hand smoke with our students!)

Talking about family matters or boyfriends with students (very negative)

Arriving to teach hung over or smelling of alcohol (negative)

Arriving to teach improperly groomed (negative)

Arriving to teach in proper wear, hair and nails groomed (positive)

Arriving to teach with lessons well planned out (positive)

Arriving to teach first class by no less than 15 minutes prior to first class (positive)

Properly storing all equipment after a class (positive)

Leaving with out turning in attendance and storing equipment used (negative)

Leaving a teaching area without turning off all equipment and securing the area (negative)

***Good Communicators** – Good communicators help to motivate students through appropriate words and actions. Good communication skills include the ability to be an active listener when the student has a question about an instruction that was just given, or happened at the last lesson. Good communication skills also means being an articulate speaker and also taking the time to be sure the message is fully understood by the receiver.

***Positive Attitude** – Positive attitudes are a must for open ended learning. A teachers positive attitude is a motivation for a student to learn a skill fully. A teachers attitude needs to be positive no matter what kind of day the teacher has had or is having with their class. As a teacher, you can affect attitudes towards learning. The teacher can help shape attitudes in a positive fashion by using friendliness, enthusiasm and acceptance of others values. A teacher can set up a student to turn to the negative side by doing the opposite. This is why it is vital that a teacher leaves all person and family troubles at home and attempt to be the best and most positive person that they can be while instructing.

***Knowledge Of Subject And Learning Theory** – Knowledge of the subject and learning theory help to reinforce course objectives and add power and enhancement to learning through the use of motivation, association, repetition and the use of the senses. A teacher must also always be a student who is willing to learn more about the subject and spend personal time in developing a strong knowledge of learning theories. A good teacher also knows that there is always much to learn and much to deliver for and to their students. An excellent teacher realizes that they can never know everything about the subject they teach with out continuing to learn and discover on their own.

***Class Management** – Class management skills are a major tool in being a great teacher. Class management skills include planning (lesson plans), documenting, evaluating and more planning. These skills help you to teach and conduct classes while at the same time serve as a good role model, motivate the learner and provide a good learning environment.

***Compassion, Patience and Flexibility** – Compassion, patience and flexibility are the skills that help a teacher respond to students individual learning differences and styles. These three traits helps a teacher to stay grounded and connected to their students learning progress.

Preparing to Teach Worksheet

This worksheet is to used while covering the materials in “Preparing To teach”. It is not a test but rather a way of making sure you understand the materials read. Please complete the worksheet and turn it in to the office manager who will make a copy for your training file.

What is the WHOA factor and what does each letter stand for?

What is the FIT Principal and how can you use it as a motivator for students?

How can ARMS help with concept learning?

What are they types of communication and fully describe each.

What are some typical student characteristics and why is it important for teachers to have this understanding of their students?

What are the functions of a teacher/instructor/coach?

What are some characteristics of an effective teacher?

List three ways you can motivate a student who is hesitant to try a new skills

List what senses you can use to help motivate a student to learn a new skill.

How can you apply the FIT Principal to yourself in becoming a great teacher?

Name three characteristics that you feel are the most important in being a great teacher.

