



TRAIN THE TRAINERS COURSE 2013



Course Timetable

Friday evening

20 mins	Intro to the course	AR
30 mins	Mountain skills - purpose, syllabus, how to teach it. Approach to teaching navigation.	DG
60 mins	What makes someone a good instructor and how to create a good environment for teaching	AR

Saturday

9 am	How people learn	DG
10.00	Instructing methods	AR
10.30	Coffee	
11.00	Communication skills	AR
12.00	Questioning and giving feedback	DG
13.00	Lunch	
13.30	Giving a presentation	AR/DG
14.00	Indoor presentations	
18.00ish	Finish	

Sunday

9am	Working with people with disabilities	AR
10am	Evaluating students learning	DG
11.00	Outdoors for presentation	
3pm	Anything not finished, post course assignments	

Introduction

During the last one hundred years the field of training and education has changed tremendously and continues to do so in a rush to keep up with new ideas and adapt to new technology. This intensive two day and 1 evening course is neither long enough nor detailed enough to turn you into a 'professional' coach or a 'qualified' teacher. However, during the next few days we are going to present you with some ideas and techniques that you can take into your future instructing and even pass onto students that you train. We are aiming to stimulate you to look at your own teaching and further into the world of instructing, teaching and coaching. There is a huge amount of information on the web, some of it useful and some not so useful. There are lots of theories and bandwagons to jump on so accept nothing as fact and be critical of everything you read including this booklet!

We have selected the less obvious ideas and information to present to you, but also the things that we have found to have helped us the most in our instructing.

The course is a prerequisite to becoming a provider of the MS scheme but it is also designed for anyone who wants to improve their instructing and for those that train and assess other instructors.

This course is not the end it is the beginning!

The truth is that we are only just scratching the surface of the process to becoming a great instructor. Learning for you will really start when you begin putting the things learned on this course into your instructing and then analysing your own performance and that of others. To this end those of you that are going onto provide courses for MI/BOS will be required to take on post course assignments and observations. This is a tough course and we are going to cram a huge amount of information into a two day course. So stay alert and ask questions, but remember the "experience is not what you do but what you do with what you have done".

The views in this document are those of one or both of the presenters and should not be associated with MI.

What will you know by the end of the course?

At the end of this course you may be able to:

- The BOS requirements of an ML
- What makes someone a good MS provider and identify your weaknesses
- Understand how people learn!
- Be more aware of your responsibilities
- Learn how to adapt your own personality to gain rapport with your group
- Identify and deal with conflict situations
- Have a greater range of instructing techniques
- Describe and demonstrate how to develop skills
- Communicate effectively using verbal skills and body language
- Understand the pros and cons of a different demonstration and presentation styles/aids
- Identify the importance and purpose of questioning and feedback
- Differentiate between active and passive listening
- Have a greater understanding of impairments and disability

Coaching Ireland and the Adventure Framework

In 2006 the Irish Sports Council and the Irish Adventure Sports Training Trust established the 'Irish Sports Council Adventure Sports Working Group' to review Adventure Sports Training in Ireland. MI already fulfills many of the recommendations regarding quality assurance, CPD and the creation of an instructor database but one of the key recommendations from this review was the need for a national training and accreditation framework – 'The Adventure Framework'. This Framework classifies and identifies instructor capacities at various stages of the instructor pathway. It also adapts the 'National Coaching Development Programme' coaching capacities and adapts these to the instructing environment of the hills cliffs and mountains of Ireland.

MI is an active participant in the 'Adventure Framework' and through the hard work of MI members, on the 'working group' and those who took part in subsequent discussions with Coaching Ireland, a process for the development of those Instructors who

train the instructors (providers of ML, MPA, SPA and WGL) has been agreed.

The 'bottom line' is that there is no change in the pathway for someone to become a BOS 'Provider' of SPA, MLA, WGL and MPA. There is however currently an additional training course that is designed to develop the knowledge, skills and experience of MI providers to the same standards as coaches in other adventure sports and across other sports.

The ‘CP’ approval process for Mountain Skills (MS) 1&2 training

The following steps explain the process to become a BOS approved CP of MS 1 & 2 and MSA.

Step 1
Hold an ML, IML, MIA, MIC or BMG for a minimum of twelve months
Demonstrate continued development as an ML, IML, winter ML or MIA through personal and/or work activities
Have current experience leading groups of a variety of abilities and ages in a range of Ireland’s hills and mountains.
Step 2
Attend a BOS ‘Train the Trainers’ course
Step 3
Fulfil the post “Train the Trainers’ course observing and assisting requirements outlined below:
Observe: 2 x MS1, 2 x MS2 and 1 x MSA with more than one CP and at different locations. The MSA and at least 1 x MS 1 & 2 observations must be completed after completing the ‘Train the Trainers’ course.
Step 4
Complete the CP application form (available from the MI office or by download from www.mountaineering.ie) and send with a non-refundable €100 fee, for each course that approval is required, to a maximum of €200 to: The Training Office, Mountaineering Ireland, Sports HQ, 13 Joyce Way, Park West Business Park, Dublin 12.
The non-refundable support fee will apply each time you make an application to become a course provider or renew your application.
Step 5
The application will be processed by the training office and presented at the next BOS meeting for approval.
Step 6
If approved, two copies of the three-year CP agreement, signed by the Chairperson of BOS, will be sent. You should read and sign one copy, then return it to MI’s Training Office.

What makes someone a good Instructor and trainer?

Tomorrow we will examine at learning and methods of instructing so now we will focus on you, the instructor.

What should we call ourselves?

Mountaineering in all its guises has a very small element of competition; there are no rules books or referees. The skills required for hill walking are simple yet the experience and judgement required to be safe are huge and often underestimated by those who are starting out and as soon as we make the cross over into rock climbing the skill and judgement level rises sharply.

The term teacher/coach/instructor/leader/tutor has been discussed at a number of meetings I have attended, but the reality is, it doesn't matter what you call yourself - teachers coach at times, coaches instruct at times and instructors lead at times. In fact they are pretty much interchangeable terms in the world of adventure training and any debate is a semantic one.

How to get the sparkle

Can you remember the teachers from your school days that had that extra sparkle and whose lessons held your attention right to the end? Or maybe you can remember the talented scout leader or instructor who put you on the road to success or maybe the provider that trained and assessed you for your MLA inspired you?



For most of them the magic did not come easily, but the one thing the good ones had in common is that they were knowledgeable,

experienced, enthusiastic and talented leaders of people and they understood the importance of planning and preparation.

More than thirty years ago 1975 Weir described a coach as 'A leader whose role is to create a suitable framework in which a student can develop the potential that is inherent'.

But what is leadership?

The traditional view was that "leaders are born, not made"; a forceful personality allied to technical skills was sufficient. Nowadays, it is widely accepted that leaders of that type are definitely limited in their effectiveness and can be a total disaster. Scott and Shackleton provide a fascinating contrast in leadership style and effectiveness, despite coming from similar naval backgrounds and leading similar bodies of men. Both were "strong" personalities, both were respected, but only Shackleton was liked by his men. However, although it is important for forceful personalities, the "natural" leaders, to develop their people skills, it is also possible, indeed common, for less forceful personalities to become effective leaders in situations where their experience and technical skills give them added confidence.

Research into leadership has evolved over the years from the 'Trait' theory to the 'Contingency' or learning theory.

The trait theory developed by Carl Jung in the 1920's and lasted until after the Second World War was based on the premise that all great leaders had certain common genetic traits such as intelligence, confidence, motivation to succeed and responsibility and would be great leaders in any situation i.e. they are born. It was this theory that led to the development of 'Myers Briggs Type assessment of personality and the categorisation of people into: judging, feeling or perceiving personalities or some other such nonsense.

Today this theory has been discounted yet it is still pedalled by many people who make lots of money from assessing people's personality. Today empirical research has shown us that there are no inborn, genetically determined traits; all of our traits have been learned at some point from the moment we were born and could listen and see and it is more likely that successful leaders share

certain common behaviours. Research has identified two essential behaviours of good leaders:

- **They are considerate** – caring respect for feelings and ideas, mutual trust and so on between leaders and those being led.
- **Initiating structure** – the ability to organise, create a structure and define roles within it.

Leadership skills in the context of a MI instructors are not the same as management skills, which is concerned with planning, organizing, recruiting etc. so we will look at what it means for you to be an inspirational instructor.

Here are some of the things that a good instructor will do.

They will:

- Have a purpose for your session that matches the student's needs
- Plan and prepare your sessions
- Communicate effectively
- Have confidence in your ability to lead and teach the group i.e. be technically competent
- Care for individuals and the group
- Accept responsibility
- Have feedback and reviewing skills
- Vary the way that you lead and teach

Technical competence breeds confidence

Whenever we are in charge, or care, of other people we hope they are good at their job for our safety may depend on it. This applies to any situation, a bus driver, surgeon or leader. Whenever the going gets tough we depend on their skills and expertise, the people we are instructing will expect us to be good at our job.

It is therefore up to you to ensure that you have the technical competence so the trust, which the group has in you is not misplaced. You must develop your technical competence to such a level that it is automatic and you do not need to devote all your attention to it. You must be able to focus on the group.

Certain skills immediately come to mind such as first aid and other earlier points.

By becoming technically competent you will increase your confidence and confidence is the key to good leadership.

Experience

“Experience is not what happens to you.

Experience is what you do with what happens to you”

Aldous Huxley 1932

Experience in the activity and experience at instructing. Being technically proficient is not enough in itself. Without experience to back it up you may not know when to apply your technical skills. The problem with much of your work is that you do it in isolation and rarely get to work with others...if you get the opportunity to work with other instructors take it.

Experience is being able to do the right thing at the right time and to learn from your mistakes and realising that what worked with one group may not work with another...cassette in head.

Awareness

One of your most vital qualities of a good instructor is the one of awareness. We will look specifically at danger in a moment

Awareness can be divided into three parts

- Awareness of the group
- Awareness of then individual
- Awareness of danger

Group

All groups have desires and needs common to the group. They will have their own aims for the day and your job is to understand what they want, is it what they need and do your aims fit with what you are actually doing with them e.g. is a long walk what they really want? How much information do they want to be given? What is the aim of the day? Some of these things you can discover by

asking the group, others you will glean from watching their responses to your instructing.

Individual

Although groups tend to follow common threads e.g. if one is cold the likelihood is all will be cold or if one is hungry the likelihood is that all will be hungry, you must also be aware of an individual's specific needs. Unlike coaches in other sports you have the disadvantage that you will probably only meet them once or twice and will not have a great understanding of their individual characteristics. You will often have people from all walks of life, fitness levels, intellect etc.

Sometimes the needs of an individual will conflict with what the group want and your job is to balance their needs with that of the group - a difficult job.

A good briefing and discussion at the start is the best way of avoiding conflicts so everyone is aware of what you are hoping to do and that it fits with what they want. Have a card that reminds you about the points to cover. A good briefing should inform the students about the day, length, timings, amount of information. A briefing is the best time to find out what the group or individuals want.

An important point about briefings is to also discover fitness and medical conditions and what you expect from the group in terms of safety.

Awareness of danger and responsibility

I want to cover these together

If you are a club walks leader or a provider, even if you are an unpaid volunteer, you cannot avoid the responsibility that goes with it. If you are not prepared to come to terms with these responsibilities then you may need to consider why you are doing it. If you are unsure about accepting responsibility you would be better off enjoying the outdoors with your friends where decisions are made by mutual consent and individuals are responsible for their own well-being.

An instructor/ trainer's responsibilities are on a par with a nurse or a teacher -You may at one extreme have to make life or death decisions based upon your experience and training.

These responsibilities are particularly heavy with children and novices.

Your students (and parents) will instantly and unflinchingly believe that you are the person who is going to keep them safe, give them a good time, and educate them. This trust should not be taken lightly, and accepting this responsibility is an important step towards becoming a talented leader. It takes maturity, training, and experience to exercise that responsibility with integrity.



Your primary role as a leader/instructor and provider is to make learning effective, exciting, enjoyable, interesting and sometimes spontaneous, while keeping risk at an acceptable level.

But what is acceptable?

Which of these is more dangerous?

- Abseil
- wet grass slope
- climbing
- coasteering
- raft building
- horse riding

Acceptable risk is not easily defined and is dependent on a variety of social and personal factors. Perceptions of risk also differ; a student may perceive abseiling as dangerous and a wet grass slope safe whereas from your viewpoint the opposite may well be true.

We should also, remember that the conditions we find challenging e.g. a steep slope or big drop may frighten the 'living daylight' out of our students.

One point to be really aware of is that you cannot rely on your students to react competently in situations where they are under stress, therefore be careful when putting yourself in a position where safety depends totally on the student's actions and reactions.

Part of managing risk is that you put aside your personal ambitions. Your desire to walk is secondary to the needs, desires and safety of the students. However, it is also important that the personal ambitions of the students are secondary to safety.

The skill of an experienced leader in being safe is doing the right thing at the right time i.e. having judgement. This may seem a simple concept but it often takes courage and experience to do it well e.g. 'bailing out' of a situation and having to justify why the group did not complete the walk or session or changing what you are doing.

The process of learning to be a safe instructor involves the transition from recreational walker to leader and depends on training and experience but most importantly self-analysis. Where were we at greatest risk? Could we have done something different?

Risk is frequently thought of in terms of physical injury but we should also consider the psychological effects of what we do. If outdoor activities can be character building they can also be character destroying.

Psychological damage can be inflicted in many ways e.g. forcing the students to do things they do not want to do, making fun of them for the things they cannot do Respect your students ability to say no, they may have a domineering partner or parent and saying no is braver than saying yes. This is a good argument for having optional involvement into and out of anything you do.

Safe leadership is a matter of judgement, what worked well in a given place at a given time may not be appropriate in the same

place at a different time. Judging the situation by rules invites disaster.

Leading in a safe manner means considering the consequences of everything we do i.e. asking the question 'What if' and learning from our experiences.

Safety is an awareness of danger, what is dangerous for one group may not be dangerous for another.

Creating a good instructing environment or Group management or controlling a group

I suppose we could call this section 'gaining control' because without control of the group you are going to find it difficult to *creating the environment to allow them to achieve their goals whether that be a simple walk or learning a new skill*. How much control is needed will depend on the age of the students, their experience, the situation and the level of risk.

The most talented leaders and leaders seem to be able to effortlessly keep a group in good control but it is often the little things that are not noticeable that make the difference.

First impressions and gaining rapport

Part of your acceptance of responsibility is that you are able to gain a rapport with your group and maintain control of them.

Why is this important? Rapport is a difficult concept to describe; it involves many facets such as respect, regard, concern etc.

Developing a good rapport and gaining control of your students actions will allow you to teach in a relaxed manner and when safety issues are involved it will ensure that they listen to you.

First impressions

You never get a second chance to make a first impression.

Research suggests that many of us judge someone within two minutes of meeting him or her.

However politically correct we are, it is an unfortunate fact of life that your physique, attractiveness, height, weight and body odours can all have an effect on how the students think of you. Personal appearance is a matter of individual taste, but what we wear and how we look after ourselves reflect the image we portray e.g. a leader extolling the virtues of keeping fit, yet smoking, may not communicate the correct message. Dirty clothes are fine for a dirty activity but to present an acceptable face to the students try to be clean and tidy when you meet them. This is not a question of fashion, suits and uniforms may create anonymity, but unwashed clothes with tears in them suggest a lack of professionalism and care.

Your initial contact with students sends important messages both about your intended role and also the standards you expect from them.

When you first meet the students introduce yourself and greet each one to make them feel welcome. Find out as many names as possible, people tend to respond better when you use their name. Act in a confident manner because this reflects knowledge, authority, and experience. However, do not confuse confidence as a leader with self-confidence. Confidence with your leading comes from understanding of what you want the students to learn and is often determined by how well prepared you are not what you think of yourself.

Developing a good rapport i.e. a bond between you and your students

Rapport is a difficult concept to describe but involves many facets.

- Think how you would like a leader to treat you and list what they are.
- Why do you think some leaders lose control of their group?

Some of the factors that lead to a loss of control are

- Boredom
- Too much mental effort
- Level of self confidence
- Behavioural problems

- Lack of communication skills-verbosity

To maintain control pick up subtle clues from the students and if the group are bored then change the task.

There are also however, those students that find misbehaving exciting or attention grabbing and may ultimately be beyond your control and the session should be ended.

Our personality traits will govern to some extent how easily you can gain rapport but you can adjust them.

Here are some eclectic suggestions that may help to improve your relationship with your students:

- Just because you find learning exciting doesn't mean everyone does. If you want your students to be excited by your instructing, **smile, be positive and above all instruct with enthusiasm**. The more interested the students are in what you are saying and doing the more attention they will pay and the better they will remember it. Motivation is about creating the right environment. Things that are motivators are challenge, improving themselves, getting pleasure, taking pride. Things that will demotivate students are losing face, fear of failure boredom, too much mental effort, level too hard, lack of self-confidence, behavioural problems and lack of communication skills on the part of the leader.

- **Understanding and fulfilling your students' needs** is the key to motivation. The two most important needs of young people are to have fun incl. excitement and stimulation and to feel worthy including competent and successful. Individuals deprived of esteem worth and status often become maladjusted.



- **Teach by example.** Be as good as your word and communicate with consistency. E.g. telling students that climbing is all about confidence and then destroying their

feelings of self-worth by shouting at them for their errors or telling students off for being late and turning up late yourself may eventually destroy the trust and any respect the students have for you.

- **Admit your mistakes** and anything you do not know straight away, do not try to bluff it, and do not be afraid to say sorry, the students may put you on a pedestal but you are still human.
- The most talented leaders are not domineering or authoritarian. **Be fair, firm, and friendly.** Be positive, and reward good behaviour. Say 'thank you' and 'well done' (in measured doses) or possibly give a pat on the back when someone has done something good.
- The quickest way to make your student's switch off is to use sarcasm, patronise or embarrass them. **Jokes and humour at the expense of a student only comes once a good rapport has been developed.**
- **Patience** comes through an understanding (empathy with) and a compassion for others. It is perfectly normal to feel frustrated when a student is taking an inordinately long time over a simple task, but it is all too easy to forget how difficult it was for you to learn something. If you find this aspect difficult, try to experience what it is like to be a beginner by learning something technical that you are not good at.
- **Pitch your instructing at the correct level.** Set your students expectations at an achievable challenging level so they never feel inadequate because of their poor performance. Success breeds confidence and self-esteem so build on the student's successes praising the smallest efforts at easy tasks to make them feel worthwhile, giving encouragement even after a mistake or failure.
- **Leaders are often seen as a role model** and should therefore try to set an example by helping all the students whether they are likeable or not. Try to avoid stereotyping them.

Students that are easier to teach are not necessarily the ones who need your help. People tend to stereotype others

according to beliefs held about others who have in the past exhibited similar characteristics.

Have confidence in all the students' abilities to learn something (don't judge them too quickly), if you expect good things of them, good things tend to happen. People adopt the role expected of them. Research has shown that when teachers thought students had been selected due to their showing promise those students did better because the teacher worked harder with them and because the children thought they had been greater effort was expected from them. Mix stronger and weaker students you could ask the stronger ones to help the weaker ones.

- **Do not ignore students or put them down, give everyone the chance to speak and treat everyone as equals regardless of age, sex, ethnic origin, religion, or political persuasion.** This does not mean that you treat people the same e.g. a large fit person is capable of carrying more than a small person carries and that everyone climbs the same route.
- **It is useful to continually assess your students, but simply asking them how they are feeling may not be enough.** Try to gauge your students not from their spoken response but through evaluation of the nature of the response, assessment of the overall situation, the student's performance and experience. Just asking "are you all okay" is not enough because students are often unwilling to admit discomfort for a variety of reasons, therefore try to look for clues about the true nature of their condition even when they say they are fine. If one student is cold and uncomfortable the chances are the rest may be.

Discipline

- Identify appropriate and acceptable behaviour and why any restrictions/controls are applied. By being forewarned students will then expect control when they overstep the mark.
- Deal immediately with anything unacceptable in a firm manner and with confidence. Do not plead, even saying please can sometimes sound like a plea.
- Do not communicate the solution, communicate the problem, it is better if the students can see the solution themselves.

- If you do have to be firm with someone it may be better to take them aside than to do it in front of the other students.
- Control can be more effective if you move into the student's personal space because they may then assume, that you are not scared of them but consider the consequences if you are a small person and the student acts unpredictably.
- Have the courage to abandon a session if you lose control of the students.
- Give an ultimatum but carry it out.

How do we learn?

Learning is a latent construct & everyone has their own idea of what it is, how it occurs, and the relationship between teaching and learning:

- I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think – **Socrates**
- Knowing is not enough; we must apply. Willing is not enough we must do – **J. Goethe**
- Learning is not a spectator sport – **D. Blocher**
- I never teach my pupils; I only attempt to provide the conditions in which they can learn – **A. Einstein**
- ... education at the University mostly worked by the age-old method of putting a lot of young people in the vicinity of a lot of books and hoping that something would pass from one to the other – **T. Pratchett**

The characteristics of learning, learning concepts and generalizations, the laws of learning, factors that affect learning, and the transfer of learning are the many things that we need to understand as trainers. The more we do understand the learning process it only increases our chances of creating an effective learning environment and becoming a successful trainer.

What does learning mean to you?

One dictionary definition is: *'The act, process, or experience of gaining knowledge or skill'*

Another definition is: *'Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience'* (Kolb 1984)

The word learning is an encompassing term, which is often used, to describing changes to our thoughts and behaviours as the result of an experience we have had at some point in our lives. How many times did your mum say *"Well that will teach you a lesson"* or *"what did you learn from that experience?"*



This process of us experiencing things and storing them in our memory banks is 'in a nut shell' how we learn. The brain works as a storage device. Information and experiences are picked up and stored as memories that are available for us to recall the next time we encounter a similar event or experience. Some of these events or experiences can be measured, but some such as emotional experiences are harder to measure. Learning is a constant process we all experience from the moment of birth to the day we die.

A novice cannot perform a skill like an experienced professional. No one would imagine this possible. When starting out, we replicate the path followed by the pro. We do all the same baby steps that the pro once did, until we become expert ourselves. No other pattern or procedure is realistic.

Some people may dispute the fact that talented people are born talented. Although blind geniuses might play piano by ear, and child prodigies might compose music, these cases are rare and tell us nothing about how one would educate 99% of students. In short, learning is cumulative. We crawl, walk, run, dance, in that order. So experience is something we gather throughout our lives. We gain it through our actions and what we learn from them. Gaining experience is not a certainty just as learning is not guaranteed. *"Experience is not what happens to you. Experience is what you do with what happens to you"* (Huxley 1932)

It is the same when we are learning to navigate, climb or anything else. The beginner starts at the very beginning and proceeds systematically through steps A, B, C, D, E, F, etc. It would never occur to a rational, sensible instructor to push way ahead, jumping from A to H or M, for example unless the student brought a lot of prior knowledge.

Trying to understand how we learn skills and acquire new knowledge has led to the development of many different theories. These include 'behaviorist', 'cognitive' and many other design-based theories, such as 'constructivist' and 'humanistic'. There the theories of Kolb, Piaget and Dewey, learning styles and adult learning principles...To name a few!

Each of these theories branches off into various sub-theories and disciplines. Before your brain explodes we should remember that they are just theories and the evidence for any of them is often very poor, counter-intuitive, often self-evident rubbish.

These theories are sometimes grabbed at by educationalists to give cudos and status to their work. In reality they are just a means of trying to explain an immensely complex process.

Critics of 'learning theories' claim there is no need for them; that the attempt to comprehend the process of learning through theory construction creates more problems and inhibits personal freedom to learn and teach how we see fit. In truth we have to be adaptable in our learning as we do in life. We can all learn in many different ways and successfully gain knowledge and skills or obtain an award. An example of this would be any person who likes to gain information in a practical way can still obtain an academic qualification through purely theoretical means. They adapt to the context of their learning and identify strategies to assist them in adapting to the new learning medium.

The fact is - nobody knows how we learn; it is very complex. Simply having knowledge doesn't mean we understand it and having a technique doesn't mean we can apply it. Research using MRI scanners is starting to unravel the mysteries about how we learn, but it is a long journey away.

It is not so much that the theories are "wrong", but:

- The evidence base and/or research methodology may be flaky, and/or
- They may have been misinterpreted and generalised beyond their legitimate use, and/or
- They originate from such tightly controlled laboratory settings as not to make sense in the real world.

A word on ‘Learning Styles’ and ‘adult learning principles’

Here I want to give a personal point of view on two theories that have gained a huge amount of popularity in modern coaching and teaching circles. I want to briefly look at the evidence for them and their use to us as instructors.

Learning styles

‘Learning style’ describes how a student consistently responds to and uses stimuli in the context of learning. It focuses on the methods and styles often unconsciously employed by students to learn.

The appeal of learning styles lies in the potential that students may become more motivated to learn if they’re aware of their own strengths and weaknesses as learners. Following from this, teachers responding to the strengths and weaknesses of their students will impact on levels of retention and achievement.

There has been much talk about the way that we take information in through our different senses, smell, touch, taste, hearing and vision. As we grow up, our genes, the environment we grow up in, peer group and parental pressures, language, maturity, financial circumstances, health, disabilities/abilities, values and prejudices will push us towards the person we become and often to our future vocation. So it’s not surprising that we are all different in what we like to do and the way we approach learning and perceive things.

Two of the most popular models are:

Rose 1985

Visual Learners prefer to learn with visual reinforcement such as charts and diagrams

Auditory: Learners prefer to learn by listening

Kinaesthetic: Learners prefer to learn through, moving, doing and touching

Honey and Mumford 1996

Theoretical: Learners prefer to learn by reading and listening to the experts

Pragmatic: Learners like to be able to see the practical application of theory. They like to use deductive reasoning to focus on problems and they prefer situations where there is a single correct answer or solution

Reflective: Learners tend to be imaginative and emotional. They work well in group discussions

Activist: Learners are action oriented. They learn by doing

Proponents of learning style assessment contend that optimal instruction requires matching your instructing to the individuals learning style (meshing).

There are at least 71 widely used and accepted instruments for measuring learning styles each potentially giving a different answer. None have been validated and in 2004 Professor Collfield at the University of London studied them and concluded that "... some of the best known have such low reliability and negligible impact on understanding that we recommend their use in research and in practice be discontinued". In 2009 Pashler found unequivocally that working to an individual's preference in no way benefited the learner.



There is little good evidence to suggest that teaching influenced by the idea of learning styles has a significant effect on achievement or motivation.

Thinking that there are a restricted number of learning styles deceives instructors into thinking the complex world of learning can be short circuited by simple checklists...it cannot. And even if we could recognise our learning preferences, which one do I use at any time.

As an instructor I don't know what it means to practically take learning styles into account. On a simple level we are supposed to take into account the learning styles of individuals – matching or targeting our instructing style to it. What we really do is present things in a variety of ways something teachers have been doing long before learning style theory ever came along. Identifying learning styles typecasts people and there is no evidence that adapting your teaching to particular learning style has any effect on the subsequent learning of a student. In reality teaching styles is a much a myth in the same way that right left brain thinking, personality testing and new ideas such as Neuro-Linguistic Programming and 'Brain Gyms' are.

Adult Learning Principles

Based on the idea that children and adults learn in different ways Knowles came up with six characteristics of adult learners and what teachers should do.

- Adults are *autonomous* and *self-directed* - Teachers must actively involve adult participants in the learning process and serve. **This applies to children**
- Adults have accumulated a foundation of *life experiences* and *knowledge* - Learning should be connected to these experiences and should draw out participants' experience and knowledge relevant to the topic. **This assumes that experiential learning is proven yet there are times when it is inappropriate.**
- Adults are *goal-oriented* - They usually know what goal they want to attain and the course should help. **Do They? Why did you come on the course? Are kids not goal oriented?**
- Adults must see a reason for learning something. **Surely everyone would learn better if we could see a reason inc children and sometimes the reason is not obvious.**

- Adults focus on the aspects of a lesson most useful to them in their work. They may not be interested in knowledge for its own sake. **Just nonsense**
- Adults need to be shown *respect*-. Instructors must acknowledge the wealth of experiences that adult participants bring to the classroom. **Well woopedy doo**

They are all laudable statements, but generally they state the obvious and are simply assumptions made or guidelines given by one person - Knowles. Without examining it in detail much of what he says is at odds with Piaget and other child learning researchers. There may be times when experiential learning is not appropriate - such as when substantial amounts of information are required. We have to ask the question, what is being learnt, before we can make judgements.

In my 30 years as an instructor and educator I have taught and treated children like adults and adults like children. Adult learning principles may be useful to think about should you ever have the luxury of the time to spend getting to know your students and I mean months and years. For us as instructors delivering something over a day or two they are about as useful as a chocolate kettle

There are many reasons why Learning styles and Adult learning Principles have gained prominence and led to the development of trendy training courses, but that discussion will have to wait for another day.

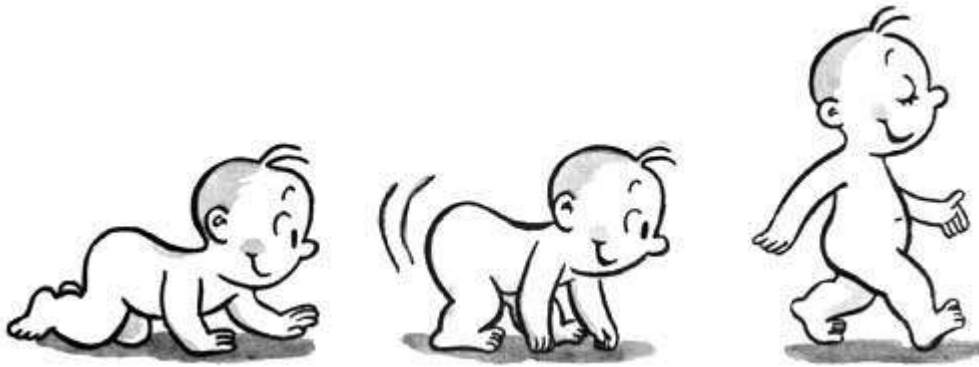
The brain simply works as a storage device. Information and experiences are picked up and stored. The way we use that knowledge is very different for each of us.

So what can an instructor do?

Methods for instructing

Remember learning just happens often without anyone presenting us with information in a structured way. You learned to talk and

walk without formal teaching. So what should our role be?



Learning is a very individual process and must be done by the student themselves . . . the instructor cannot do this for them. You can design the best training program ever, but unless the learners themselves are ready, able, and willing to learn it will not work - “you can lead them to water, but can’t make them drink.” The foremost important factor in learning is the learners themselves and how receptive are they to learning. No two people react to the learning experience the same way. Each learns different things depending on how the situation affects their different needs it is called ‘Adaptive Learning’.

So are instructors defunct, useless a waste of time, should we just put a group in a room with books and videos?

Before we move on there is a study that has looked at the effectiveness of teaching methods. It is a fascinating and illuminating study and well worth looking at if this interests you (www.learningandteaching.info). In 2009 Hattie looked at the influences of many aspects of teaching. He meta analysed nearly one thousand studies. The table below summarises them in order of priority 1 being a very effective method. An effect-size of 1.0 would mean that, on average, students receiving that treatment would exceed 84% of students not receiving that treatment.

Influence	Effect Size	Source of Influence
Feedback	1.13	Teacher
Students' prior cognitive ability	1.04	Student
Instructional quality	1.00	Teacher
Direct instruction	.82	Teacher
Remediation/feedback	.65	Teacher
Students' disposition to learn	.61	Student
Class environment	.56	Teacher
Challenge of Goals	.52	Teacher

Peer tutoring	.50	Teacher
Mastery learning	.50	Teacher
Homework	.43	Teacher
Teacher Style	.42	Teacher
Questioning	.41	Teacher
Peer effects	.38	Peers
Advance organisers	.37	Teacher
Simulation & games	.34	Teacher
Computer-assisted instruction	.31	Teacher
Testing	.30	Teacher
Instructional media	.30	Teacher
Affective attributes of students	.24	Student
Physical attributes of students	.21	Student
Programmed instruction	.18	Teacher
Audio-visual aids	.16	Teacher
Individualisation	.14	Teacher
Finances/money	.12	School
Behavioural objectives	.12	Teacher
Team teaching	.06	Teacher
Physical attributes (e.g., class size)	-.05	School

Many factors can and often do however affect an individual's ability to learn. Our role is vital in engaging our students, enthusing them, explaining things simply and presenting tasks they can achieve and enjoy achieving i.e. structure the sessions so they are achievable by all etc. We have a vital role to play in short circuiting the process of learning by giving feedback and selecting the best route for the person to learn.

The rest of this course looks at how we can best help a learner to learn.

The first thing is to plan and prepare

It takes a very experienced instructor to teach off the top of their head. A successful session, no matter what the subject or where the setting is, will benefit from being planned, prepared and rehearsed. The six P's-Prior Planning and Preparation Prevents a Poor Performance is a useful philosophy to live by. You may not always be on top form so create lists of equipment needed, points to be covered etc. Plan to be flexible, it may rain, only half the students will turn up or double the number will arrive.

The first thing to decide is what is going to be taught, what should the student(s) know or be able to do at the end of the lesson i.e. the objective or goal. For learning to occur try to make the students aware of the objectives of the day and help them to see them as useful and relevant. The objective for a coaching session may be that the students appreciate the importance of good footwork. A climbing session with a group of young people may be that they understand what teamwork and responsibility is all about. Identify the minimum they need to know and what additional information would be useful. Is there time to teach the mechanics or do they simply need to know the underlying principles?

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A structure

Whatever the objective is, the session should have a distinct structure. This can be applied to the whole day and the individual parts.

- A **beginning** where the instructor explains what is to be taught and why.
- A **middle** where you teach in stages and give feedback.
- An **end** that involves a practice and revision session followed by a review where you assess whether they have learnt anything.

The next step is to work out how you are going to achieve the objective. The student may want to build confidence so a long day in the hill doing an easy multi pitch climb may be appropriate. A session on footwork may involve looking at centre of balance and using exercises to focus on the importance of footwork. An introductory session with a group of children may involve some bouldering to introduce movement and some rope work to introduce safety, ending up with a roped climbing session. You may simply shadow a group to improve their judgement skills.

Student Participation and Interaction

A good lecture should include regular breaks for discussion and group activities that required the students to engage with the material and think for themselves (i.e., buzz groups, brainstorming, debates, role playing, plenary sessions, problem-solving, presentation work etc.). This helps to encourage active learning and combat the decline in attention levels as the lecture proceeds. The use of questions at the beginning of the class encouraged discussion and debated from the outset and

In planning a session try to remember that most students can only pay attention to one thing at a time. Attempting to cover everything at once can make life difficult for them. Asking a novice to absorb names, movement skills, rope work, how to tie knots, place runners and put a harness on while they are nervous, is an impossible task. Try not to spend too much time explaining and too little practising. You may have days where you may feel that you have given the students little but to them it may be highly informative.

Is the environment and the conditions correct for teaching? A cold wet student may not learn as effectively as a warm dry comfortable one and it is important to remember that adrenaline is a great block to effective learning. It may be better to scramble, do a big easy route or even visit a climbing wall than to run a performance coaching session when it is cold, windy and raining. On the other hand why be indoors when it is sunny! Try to ensure that you have everyone's attention and that they can all see and hear. Is the sun in their eyes? Are there any distracting noises or activity? Students do not generally listen if they are absorbed in a person abseiling behind the instructor. Climbing walls have many interesting diversions so keep talk to a minimum.

Planning includes:

- Choice of venue
- Safety
- How long do you have?
- Resources required
- Transport
- What are the aims
- How are you going to deliver the session objectives

- Weather
- Ability and age of students
- Staffing

Instructing methods

Here I want to look at the methods we use to present information to students so that they can learn.

There is no answer to the best way to help someone to learn! All things can be taught in variety of ways and most learners will adapt. There are pros and cons to each one, your skill is deciding when to use them.

The way that you will instruct runs along a spectrum from 'Directive' or 'Student Centred' instructing. They are the ends of a spectrum and can be further subdivided for academic interest, but in reality the subdivisions are a progression from one style to the other. The style you adopt depends entirely on you, the subject, the expertise of the students, the complexity of what you are teaching etc., but as a rule of thumb use a style that provides what the student cannot provide for themselves and gives the learner success.



Therefore, ensure your instructing is appropriate; vary how much comes from you and how much comes from the student, even using them to teach to help their understanding. The important thing is that you select the most appropriate for the subject and the student.

- Lecture
- Questioning and discussion
- Demonstrate and mimicking
- Explanation

- Simulation
- Practical experimentation
- Working as a group
- Working alone - Self-study
- Case study
- Lesson
- Watch a video
- Assignments and projects
- Role play
- And many, many more!

If the subject is tedious, maintain the group's attention by changing the sensory channels they are using: listen, look, listen, look, touch, listen, and talk. Pass things around to break up the session. Try to stimulate everyone - start with a lecture, then a discussion and note taking, follow this with a practical session and then maybe a video.

Once you are at ease with instructing it pays to be innovative, because experimenting will keep you stimulated and help to make your sessions lively and fresh. Some of your experiments will be successful and some may not come up to your usual high standards, but your students will probably not realise it.

Adventure is an activity for which success is not predetermined and you can share in the unpredictable nature of it with your students especially mature ones. To help you try not to work in isolation, always strive for a better performance, network ideas and discuss views with other instructors even if they are novices, they may have a different way of looking at things that you had not considered. If you are working with other instructors make sure you co-ordinate with each other and teach compatible things. It is usually best if you are working in a group for one instructor to assume leadership and take charge of coordinating the day.

How to give a good demonstration

A good demonstration should be

- Short
- Correct and clear
- Achievable by the student

Directive instructing

Directive/autocratic instructing places the emphasis on the instructor. Techniques taught most effectively by a directive approach are those where there is a defined correct and incorrect way of performing the skill. It may be that an incorrect action could lead to injury and often better mastered in a safe environment before moving to a realistic one. It may be something specific that has to be done to avoid a hazard e.g. belaying. Time pressures can also impose the need for a directive style of instructing. Demonstration and mnemonics like IDEAS or EDICT, which describe methods of teaching, are all examples of directive teaching although they can be adapted to be more flexible.

The EDICT and IDEAS mnemonic

The EDICT model is exactly that a model for you to hang your ideas on. They are useful when you are tired or new to instructing.

EDICT

Explanation – Explain the new skill, be clear and accurate

Demonstration – Demonstrates the skill

Imitation – students copy the demonstration

Correction – Instructor corrects technique

Task – Instructor sets a task to help students practice the new skill.

IDEAS

Introduce – Why do the skill and what does it achieve

Demonstrate - Demonstrates the skill

Explanation - Explain what you did, be clear and accurate

Activity – set a task and correct

Summarise – go over the task to bring out the salient points

Other instructing tools

There are many ideas out there improving your instructing. The EDICT and IDEA model can be extended to include some or all of the following techniques. Look at each of these techniques as tools, available to you instructor if the job requires them:

Part learning and whole learning

- *Part learning* involves breaking a skill down into smaller pieces, coaching those individual components and then reassembling them again. This can be useful for complex skills, which often seem overwhelming for the novice student.
- *Whole learning* means attempting the entirety of a skill from the start. It is important to allow students who naturally imitate good demonstration to attempt a whole learning approach. In other words, it is sometimes important to avoid over-coaching students who have a 'natural' talent.

Shaping

The shaping method is like part learning when a skill is simplified by omitting some of the parts. The simplified version is practiced and gradually the elements left out are re-introduced to eventually make the complete skill. This can be easily integrated into the student centered approach.

Experimenting with extremes

Probably most applicable when teaching movement skills, but may be useful elsewhere. Rather than explain the correct technique it is sometimes better to present students with several extreme variants to experiment with and allow them find the optimum solution e.g. how should you hold a compass? By



experimenting, navigators

can better understand the mechanics involved when selecting a suitable place for the compass than if they were just given the answer from the start. **Student centred instructing or learning by doing or experiential learning** 'Student Centred' instructing places greater emphasis on the student and is not just dependent on what the instructor is telling them, it is learning by experience. The content, pace and rate of learning are dictated by the student's needs. This style lends itself to teaching principles and

theories like judgement rather than hard facts and figures. Students are taught in an environment where exploration and discovery is encouraged and they can compare and think about what they are doing.

This style requires the instructor to have a broader knowledge of the skills and a deeper understanding of what they are teaching. It is also heavily dependent on quality feedback between instructor and student. It has the huge drawback that it is time consuming and may be harder for the instructor because they must concentrate. It is best used where safety does not depend on the student's decisions or performance unless they are experienced enough to deal with the consequences.

It is a useful style to experiment with when you have time, but be careful using it because you think it's easier to give the students a task and stand back drinking coffee.

Imagery/visualisation

Use of positive visualisation is well tested in sport. This can be a simple aid to explanation – “imagine the compass is attached to you when you turn to find a new direction” Or it could mean a complex visualisation for high performance competition – e.g. a climber working through each of the moves on a climb.

Imagine improving a technique without moving a muscle. Studies have demonstrated that the brain is not always capable of distinguishing between something that actually happened and something that was imagined. One theory is that when you imagine a movement, electrical impulses travel to the muscles the movement would require, therefore providing ‘kinaesthetic’ feedback.

Picturing yourself executing a perfect performance can therefore help your brain to enhance that skill. The term imagery is better than visualisation because you are not just seeing yourself, but using all your senses to recreate an experience in your mind. The more accurately you imagine climbing well, the better you can become. The use of mental training and in particular imagery is the single most important characteristic that sporting champions have over their less successful competitors so practice it.

Imagery is not daydreaming about the great climbs you want to do, it is an acquired skill that requires the same effort and discipline as working out in a gym. It takes time to become good at imagery so do not be dismayed if you lose concentration after one movement. It is, however, a short cut to better technique, so next time you are daydreaming about a climb, try to direct it so you climb with style. Experienced climbers will find it more beneficial than novices because they have clearer images to follow but it is still useful skill to practice when starting out. It is also useful when you have to have an enforced break from climbing maybe due to injury.

First relax, then concentrate and stay alert. Look at a problem or a climb and imagine yourself doing it. This can be done either by looking through your eyes and seeing yourself doing it or by imagining someone else doing it. Use all your senses, not just sight. Try to imagine scenes in explicit detail, e.g. krabs clinking. Where will your hands go? Which way will your body shift? Feel yourself doing the moves. Use photographs or video to improve the mental picture you have of yourself climbing. Use it to practise a difficult section of a climb you want to do.

The moment just before you to sleep is a good time. Be realistic; it is no good imagining yourself climbing the hardest route in the world, just picture yourself climbing at your best. Above all, create positive images of yourself dealing with problems on a climb; eliminate images of failure and don't let any negative thoughts enter your head. Work daily to change negative images to positive ones. Lots of 5 or 10minute sessions are best. Enjoy it - if you are bored, stop.

Communication skills

This is potentially the most important part of the course and may help you in life generally..it did me.

The way you communicate can affect how the students view you, their respect for what you are teaching, and therefore the success of your teaching. Good communication takes practice and planning and it is worthwhile taking the time to measure the response you get with differing ways of communicating.

Video yourself working or get a friend to watch you and comment on the communication skills used.

An important skill that can help your instructing or any aspect of life for that matter is to communicate with a positive approach.

A **positive** approach emphasises praise and reward; it can affect the student's view of themselves, their motivation and their ability to learn. So when they are performing poorly, do not be negative, emphasise the positive things in their performance, acknowledge contributions from the group giving praise and positive responses. Explain where they have gone wrong but do not labour the point.

Some examples of positive talking:

- Give directions positively: Put your kit in the mini bus rather than don't leave your kit lying around.
- Avoid confrontation: Unless we clear this up we can't go to the pub is a threat. When we have cleaned up we can go to the pub sounds more positive.
- Resolving a conflict: try asking what happened it is less threatening than asking why did you do it.

A **negative** approach uses criticism and punishment to eliminate undesirable habits. It is rarely successful. It may work with self-confident students but when it is used frequently it ruins the learning process by creating negative emotions causing caution and defensiveness about trying things in case they fail.

Communication is not just about the leader's ability to speak, it is a two-way process.

Active listening

A positive correlation has been shown between those leaders who are poor listeners and those that fail to develop a good rapport with and have less control over their students. Listening is so much harder than talking. Some instructors are so busy teaching that they never give others the chance to speak or when they do speak, and receive a different answer to the one expected, or no answer at all, blindly carry on. Being a good listener will show that you have time for your students, respect them and care about how

they feel. Most untrained listeners hear less than twenty per cent of what is said to them.

The jargon for this is 'Active Listening'. It provides the talker with the proof that you have understood what they have said.

Improving listening skills

- Recognise the need to listen
- Concentrate on listening
- Search for the meaning of the message rather than details
- Avoid interrupting your students
- Do not anticipate what they are going to say or put word into their mouths
- Respect their views
- Respond constructively

People resort to a wide variety of verbal and non-verbal behaviour in order to maintain a smooth flow of communication

Verbal and non-verbal behaviour

Leaders/Instructors spend a lot of time interacting with others. What sort of verbal and non verbal behavior goes on while two people are having a conversation.

- Dave and I having a conversation. I want you to find as many non verbal and as many verbal but not words signals that we use.
- **List verbal and non-verbal behaviour**

Elements of speech

The way that we talk can also affect the effectiveness of our teaching. Who would you rather listen to, a voice that sings or a monotone one? Young people switch off from a 'teachers voice' quite easily and it can be more effective to adopt a conversational tone from the start.

Elements of speech that are important to effective communication are:

Tone of voice: This can convey anger, joy, or boredom. Varying it can add clarity to what is said and may help to maintain the interest and attention of the students. Listen to the radio and examine how some presenters make their voices sing by raising and lowering the tone.

Pitch of voice: Try not to shout or whisper, pitch your voice at a level that obliges the students to listen. Do not be afraid to raise or lower your voice for effect.

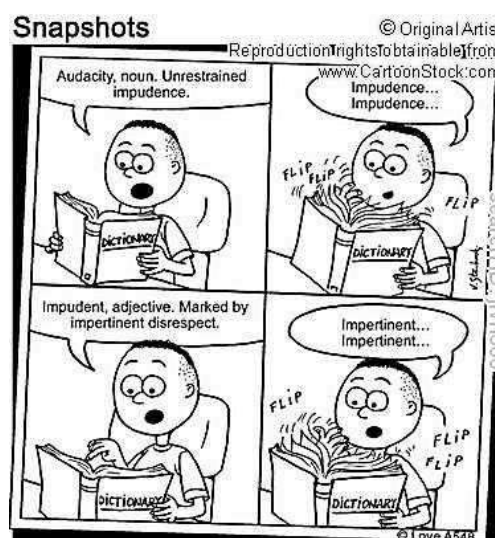
Emphasis: Emphasising certain words may help the listener to understand the message.

Speed of speech: Students tend to listen more attentively if the speed of your speech is varied. Increasing the speed will create anticipation in the listener but do not be afraid to pause, especially when things are new to the group. It may seem like hours to you but the listener may welcome a rest and it will only feel seconds to them. Avoid filling the pauses with unnecessary “hums” and avoid repeating the same phrase repeatedly e.g. “OK” or “All right”, because after a while no one will take anything you say seriously.

Pronunciation: The constant mispronunciation of words or names can become annoying. Newsreaders pronounce words correctly because they have practised them.

Content: You will be more effective if the students can understand the meaning of the words you use.

Figurative language: Figurative speech that uses metaphors, simile, and hyperbole can make what you are saying interesting, but be careful not to offend anyone, and make sure the listener understands when you are exaggerating.



Humour: Talented Leaders use humour to maintain attention and interest. A smile and a pleasant manner work wonders, but for some leaders trying to be funny is very difficult and can result in a

loss of credibility as their attempts at humour fall flat. The key to being witty is to judge the tone of the conversation and the relationship that has been built with the students.

Body language

Just as a leader or student can communicate thoughts using words, they can also communicate positively and negatively through their body language. The faces they pull the amount of eye contact they make and the gestures made with their body can all have a profound effect on the success of their instructing. It has been estimated that seventy per cent of our total communication is non-verbal. If you doubt this try different body languages to see the effect it has on people and watch other leaders for the responses they are getting from their students.

Remember however that although your body language has a profound effect, a student's manner or someone or something else other than you might cause their distress. The student's body language also needs to be put into the context of the session. They may be about to embark on their first lead and be nervous or they may simply have had a row with someone. In addition do not think that you can be as familiar with the same person as another leader has just been, they may have met the student many times before and have a closer relationship with them.



There are seven main individual elements of body language to consider:

Facial expressions: The face is a spontaneous communicator, often when a leader least wants it to be. Facial expressions can communicate likes and dislikes, emotions such as despair and frustration. Ensure that your facial expressions reflect what you are saying and do not give a contradictory message. Above all-look alert, awake and happy...even if you are not.

Eye contact: Do not be afraid of eye contact, but try not to focus on one person or the other extreme, look at the floor. Looking into a student's eyes shows that you are being attentive and concentrating on what is being said and vice versa. Shifting your eyes around may not inspire trust and the opposite, a piercing stare, might be a sign of aggression. Watch other people's eyes and see what feelings they provoke in you. The only time to avoid eye contact is when you are reprimanding someone because the student could in this situation interpret looking directly into their eyes as a challenge. Instead look between their eyes. There is also the possibility that too much eye contact may make the student think you fancy them.



Posture: How you move, sit or stand and position your limbs may reflect your attitude to someone. Sitting with your hands between your legs is a defensive posture and putting hands on hips may be seen as an aggressive stance. Leaning towards someone or sitting with legs apart and arms unfolded displays warmth. Students may clearly display dislike by turning away; arms folded and leg crossed. An erect posture and a purposeful walk may be interpreted as a confident self-assured person but a stiff, tense or rigid posture may express anger. Keep moving it keeps the students eyes moving and helps them to concentrate but try to avoid distracting body movements. Students who stare at the ground may be scared or intimidated.

Gestures: Certain gestures can replace the need for words, possibly totally if the student does not speak English. For example, a wave acknowledges someone's presence, and a fist beat on a table shows you are anxious. Try to avoid continual subconscious

gestures that can be distracting, such as scratching the face, stroking of hair and even worse fiddling with your crotch.

Proximity: Being close to a student may inform them how you feel about them and how you view them, are they friends or foe? Proximity is often affected by how formal the session is. When barriers and distance are reduced a leader will often be able to communicate more effectively so get into the group. There are certain situations however where personal distance may need to be maintained. A female student may feel threatened if the male leader is too close, or you may want to stay behind the desk if reprimanding someone. It may be useful to bring yourself down to the height of the students by sitting or kneeling.

Touch: It is very rare that you will have to touch someone. Be aware that some people may be naturally reserved. A pat on the back or a brief handshake is acceptable to most people but an over intimate touch such as a hug may threaten or cause someone to distrust the relationship. Be careful touching any child, even when helping them to put a harness on and especially when alone. Ask their permission first and if possible have another adult present. However do not be paranoid give a hug to a child if it is needed unless of course you have been given a reason not to.

Here are some of the common signs of body language that people express and what they may mean:

- **Students willing to listen:** Rub hands together, lean forwards, rest chin on hands, look at the leader and nod in agreement.
- **Students showing friendliness:** smile, make eye contact, are still, use non-threatening gestures such as handshakes or a pat on the back, initiate conversation, use humour in their speech, are polite and courteous.
- **Anxious students:** Place their hands on your arm, fidget with themselves, look intently at you, shift their posture all the time, and talk to their neighbour.
- **Frustrated or rejected students:** Use aggressive downward movements, tighten their clothing, raise the tone of their voice, and withdraw from conversation.
- **Threatened or confused students:** Fold their arms, frown, withdraw eye contact, become verbally aggressive, and stand their ground.

Tips for better communication

- Capture the students' attention
- Check pitch, tone and level are comfortable and interesting
- Match non-verbal messages with verbal messages
- Improve your listening skills
- Use appropriate language for the students.

Questioning is at the heart of good instructing

Why ask questions?

1. To discover what a student already knows
2. To evaluate the success of your teaching
3. To increase motivation
4. To allow them to express thoughts and ideas
5. To get a different point of view
6. To build a relationship
7. To manage a group
8. To avoid misunderstanding
9. To persuade
10. To Clarify

Put the wrong information in and you will probably get the wrong information out. The same goes for communication – ask the wrong question and you will not get the answer you want e.g. ask a novice “how did that work out for you” and they probably can't tell you, ask an expert and they can dissect it for you.

Consider the following when posing questions:

- Keep questions brief
- Give them time to answer. Wait 5 – 10s with a group, avoid answering it for them because they will think you are going to do the answering for them. If you don't get an answer rephrase it or reassess your teaching.
- Be sure the question is sensible and covers a single point.
- Use a language the student understands
- Use questions to get someone's attention
- Avoid closed questions or follow it with a request for an explanation
- Ask questions they can answer

- Don't ask questions that will cause embarrassment
- Thank people for their answer
- Give positive feedback to a wrong answer "I can understand how you came to that, but...."
- Ask people to add to the question
- Don't focus on one person ask throughout the group
- Listen and be interested by nodding and making eye contact
- Match your body language
- Plan and prepare questions
- Don't interrupt
- Get others involved
- If you get a weak answer ask another to funnel them to a better answer.

There are several types of question you can ask:

Closed - These have a single word, yes /nor, or very short answers. only requires a yes or no answer, useful when you are looking for commitment e.g. do you want to do the climb. e.g. are you okay? Or "how many years have you been climbing"? They can be used to test your understanding – "So if you orientate your compass blab la, it will be the wrong way round is that correct"

Open – Longer answers, they start with "what, how or why". They ask for the student's knowledge, opinions or feelings. They are good for developing conversation, finding more detail and finding opinions. Tell me or describe are also open questions e.g.

"what happened during that leg"
 "Why did you turn right at the wall"
 "How did you take that bearing"

Funnelling - This involves asking a general question and then honing in on a point in each answer.

"Have you reached the destination"
 yes
 "How many legs did you do"
 3
 "Were any of them long"
 yes
 "How long was it"

300m

“What bearing was it”

280

“Was there an uphill section”

Yes there was

“what do you think that was telling you”

They are useful to hone in on a specific area that allows the student to recognise something for themselves . It is a good way of maintaining the students confidence.

Leading questions - Try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking. It usually starts with an assumption.

“So we have gone a long way past the stream do you think.....”

Or by adding a personal appeal

“that was easier wasn’t it”

You can phrase thing to get the answer you want e.g.

“Shall we go in this direction rather than you can go in direction A or B? the latter gives you three choices A/B or neither.

They must be use dwith care as they can be dishonest and manipulative.

Rhetorical questions - Useful to engage people as they are drawn into agreeing. They don’t require an answer e.g.

Didn’t john do well”

Giving Feedback

You will do a lot of instructing, organising, and encouraging but you will also spend a lot of time giving feedback. Using it well is an art like all communication.

Students have built-in mechanisms that tell them how well they did. They can see the results, sense movements that caused the results, and form perceptions about how they think they

performed. MS providers can provide additional information to give students more detail about their performances. This helps them narrow the gap between what they perceived about what they did, what actually happened, and how they can improve.

Effective feedback will motivate students, reinforce good performance and discourage poor ones and help your students to learn how to correct errors quickly. Providing essential information at just the right time can accelerate their progress.

When we are instructed we receive different types of feedback by different people and they come in different forms.

The main types are:

- Intrinsic Feedback
- Extrinsic feedback
- Positive Feedback
- Negative Feedback

Extrinsic Feedback -This is feedback from another person. E.g. teacher, coach, friend or someone watching you and telling you how you are performing.

Intrinsic Feedback-This is feedback that comes from the performer to see how the skill was performed.

Positive Feedback- When a skill is performed correctly giving a successful outcome. The student then knows what to repeat for the next time that they do that particular action. This can make the student is more motivated. This type of feedback is essential for beginners. An example of this would be if a mountain skills student performed a good leg you would tell them well done they used the map well and picked out the features well. Used too much however can leave a student confused when they know they didn't do it well. Make sure it is constructive.

Negative Feedback- This is more than just picking out a weakness in the student's performance. It includes what the student should do to correct the fault. This feedback must be used carefully because it can easily demotivate the student, to a student who is well developed in their skills this type of feedback is vital to tune their techniques. E.g. a coach telling a student that their

walking on a bearing is off because they should hold the compass firmly locked.

Feedback Tips

- 1. Motivate students** with supportive, informative statements soon after performances. A common technique is **positive-negative-positive**.
- 2. Provide meaningful verbal information** about what happened to supplement an athlete's perception of performance.
- 3. When using videos, point out specific features** that you want students to notice. This prevents overwhelming them with too much information to process and keeps them focused on the most relevant points.
- 4. Rely most on positive reinforcement** about performances. Negative reinforcement and punishment are less effective.
- 5. Offer reinforcement intermittently**, rather than after each attempt. Allow students time to learn and process independently at times to avoid dependence on coaching.

Giving a talk and making a presentation

NERVOUSNESS!

Guess what? You are not alone at being nervous.

First of all it's a normal reaction for us all. This is especially true when you are just starting as a new trainer, and it's your first time standing in front of your students, and watching all those faces looking back at you. We all have been there and experienced those same nervous feeling. Some of us are just more nervous than others.

The first step in controlling your nervousness is to know and understand your subject. Lack of knowledge and confidence about your subject is a very hard thing to hide.

Keep your confidence in "yourself" high by practicing your presentation as much as possible?

- Visualize the whole presentation in your mind.
- Go through each step of the presentation in your mind much like reading a script.
- Make sure everything that you will use during your presentation is ready and organised.

You will frequently have to present information to a group. Often the presentation format is informal and in an environment where it is difficult to use classic teaching techniques – explaining how to use a compass or showing students the difference between boot designs. On other occasions, the presentation will be in a more formal, classroom format – explaining how hypothermia, explaining a club's child protection policy etc.

An instructor should have confidence in public speaking and be able to deliver an interesting, informative short presentation on mountaineering topics.

Lectures and resources

The beginning and the end of the lecture are most likely to be remembered.

There are theoretical elements to any climbing course that may need to be taught before the students can practice them and although unremitting verbal explanation is a bad way of teaching, a stimulating lecture can be superb. It may be a lecture to one's peers or a to a group of students, it may be indoors or outdoors. It may last a few minutes or one hour. Whatever the audience, wherever and how long it is, there are a number of ways in which an instructor can make the presentation more effective.

The best lectures are those that are prepared, planned and rehearsed. To start with, establish why you are teaching through this medium and then set clear objectives by considering what the audience wants to learn. Consider what you want from the session. Do you want to increase their knowledge, persuade them of a new point of view, or improve their understanding? Once you have considered the purpose and set objectives, consider the size of the audience. With a small audience, it is easier to include them in the lecture. Do you know them? What do they already know?

Try to make the content interesting, concise, clearly understandable, and presentable in the time available to achieve the objectives. Start by welcoming them, identify yourself and what you hope to achieve and why. If they have been with you the day before or in an earlier session recap on what they have already done. Give an outline of the session and what is expected of them and give them the opportunity to ask questions. The introduction can be bold, simple or a question but never apologetic. Do not overload the audience; follow a sequence where each point builds upon the last. Vary the format whenever you are speaking to the same students. Frequently review what you have said during the lecture. If the audience is yawning get them to do something related to your lecture or pose a question and split them into groups to discuss the answer. If the lecture is on fitness then get them out for a short run in the fresh air to measure heart rate changes.

Late arrivals, projectors breaking down or even people fainting are things you may have to deal with. Remember with all of these events, you are in control. It is your responsibility to manage it carefully. Do not speak through a temporary disturbance such as a plane; wait for it to pass.

Here is a summary of the sort of things you should consider to make your presentation easier.

Check list for giving a talk

- Present the image you want the audience to see.
- Decide what you want the audience to learn
- Research & know your subject
- Define any specialised vocabulary
- Practice the presentation and make it interesting, concise and presentable in the time available. Use cue cards
- Be dynamic and make a dramatic entrance
- Make the visual aids effective
- Present information, clearly in simple language and a logical sequence
- Repeat important information in a variety of ways
- Keep it short 20-30 minutes is the maximum attention span of most people
- Avoid mannerisms

- Position yourself to create the correct effect.
- Avoid distractions
- Arrange the audience
- Clean the room
- Maintain the room at a comfortable temperature
- Don't introduce distractions yourself such as hand outs
- Use question and answer techniques. Pose-Pause –pounce. Ask the question wait to allow all the students to consider the answer then pick one. If they cannot answer choose another. If no one can answer it you need to go over it again.
- Learn to use visual aids
- Arouse curiosity
- Avoid ambiguity
- Vary tone pitch and rate of delivery
- Be friendly and polite
- Dress appropriately
- Resist verbosity
- Rehearse the talk
- Use body language

Don't

- Arrive late
- Rush
- Mumble
- Speak in a monotone
- Read the talk totally
- Apologise
- Fidget play with pens etc.
- Fix your gaze on one or two
- Use jokes unless they are good or really bad
- Talk about things you do not understand
- Show off
- Ridicule your audience

The use of resources can enliven the talk making it more enjoyable. Visual aids and handouts can provide structure. They can also help you remember things, clarify things to the students, speed up the grasp of complex problems and hold the attention of

the students. Remember the instructors themselves can also be the visual aids.

Advice on the use of visual aids.

- Make them relevant and accurate
- Only use when needed.
- Make them have impact
- Keep them simple and focus on key information not sentences.
- use co-ordinated colours to add to their appeal, but beware of people with disabilities
- Keep them neat and legible.
- Most importantly do not overload them with too much information and write in large letters.
- Only display the visual aid when referring to it.
- Speak to the audience not the visual aid and point to the transparency not the screen when drawing their attention to the information.
- Do not stand in front of the image.
- Visual aids can be used to support the presentation but not vice versa.
- Overuse of visual aids is very monotonous and counterproductive.

Types of visual aids.

Direct aids

Direct aids are those that can be directly written on such as white boards, blackboards and flip charts. They are useful for displaying data, key words and phrases, summarizing and recording points raised by the students. The size, legibility and organization of your writing however limit their usefulness. Notes can be made in pencil, as the students will not be able to see them.

Projected aids

These include overhead projectors (OHP) and slide projectors. The advantage of projected aids is that they enlarge the images and can be used repeatedly. A well-prepared slide or overhead can add a strong visual impact to any presentation.

An OHP uses acetate sheets that are written on and then projected onto a screen. They have the advantage over a board

that you are facing the audience more often. They can also be prepared by photocopying or via a computer printer using special sheets. They can be structured so that they can be laid on top of each other to create a final image or sections can be hidden and revealed slowly. They are superior to writing and when used with a computer the spelling is more likely to be correct.

Slides are a visual aid that can be made from images on computers but if you are photographing them yourself make sure they are well lit and use a tripod to keep the image sharp. One problem of a slide projector is that it is more difficult to quickly backtrack to an earlier slide and the room must be blacked out

Videos

It has long been recognised that the standard of public tennis improves during the Wimbledon championships because of the impact of television. Videos of top climbers are just as effective in illustrating how top climbers move.

Videos can be used to demonstrate a technique or provide feedback.

It is bad practice to show hours of tape to emphasise a single point or simply to entertain. Switch off between unnecessary bits, and pose questions before and after the video. Practice any techniques shown, as soon as is possible.

A video recorder can also be used to allow the students to analyse themselves as many times as they like and in slow motion. It cannot however do the coaching for you. Simply filming a student climbing may not teach you or them anything.

General advice.

- Have someone do the filming. The role of instructor and cameraman is difficult.
- Get as close to the action as possible.
- Do not use zoom lenses because the more you zoom the steadier the camera must be.
- Carry a lens cloth and tripod or monopod.
- Turn the microphone off to prevent embarrassing comments being captured. You can always commentate later.
- Choose what to film carefully to limit the amount they have to watch.

Handouts

Handouts can be used to communicate technical information or to remind the audience of essential points. Typed ones, bearing only the essential points and attractively presented are more likely to be read. It is important to consider when to use them. Handouts given before a talk can act as a guide, but the listener may then ignore what is said. Given at the end, they may not be read at all. A compromise is to hand them out during the talk, but forewarn the audience that this is going to happen. Reiterate the key points before distributing it and then allow some time for it to be read. It may be better to put the handouts away before continuing. They can also be used to write notes on.

Guidelines for effective presentations: A good presentation has two things – style and substance. One is no good without the other. In other words, the content must be accurate, relevant and current (substance) and it must be presented in a well organised, interesting and engaging way (style).

Getting good content

Research extensively, in books, magazines and websites. Check to see if the information is recent:

- Talk to experienced instructors
- Test textbook theories yourself

Presentation style

- Organise material and break it down to make it easy to understand
- Approach topic from perspective of your students
- Choose presentation format to suit the topic (slides, props, indoor or outdoor etc.)
- Prepare teaching aids to help bring the topic to life
- Use questioning to engage students
- Consider ways to actively involve your students in the learning process
- Set a time limit and stick to it
- Plan what you will say and when – use notes if necessary
- Practice at home, on friends and family
- Be aware of annoying mannerisms you may have and try to avoid using them (for example, repeating words like “ok”, “right” or “you know”)

- Speak to your students – don't mumble or shout at a crowd, communicate.
- Adopt a neat, organised approach to the material and encourage students to do likewise.
- Be polite and well presented.

Instructing people with a disability

What is a disability?

According to the Disability Discrimination Act, a disability is “a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities”.

Disabilities can include:

- physical or mobility difficulties – for example a wheelchair user
- sensory impairments – for example someone who has hearing or visual impairments
- learning difficulties – for example someone who has dyslexia
- medical conditions – for example diabetes, epilepsy, sickle cell anaemia
- or mental health difficulties (which should not be confused with learning difficulties) – for example depression, eating disorders, anxiety

Things that may be affected include:

- Mobility
- Manual dexterity
- Physical co-ordination
- Continence
- Ability to lift/carry/move everyday objects
- Speech
- Hearing
- Eyesight
- Memory
- Ability to concentrate/learn/understand
- Perception of the risk of physical danger

Not all disabilities are visible – some may be unseen for example diabetes, asthma, epilepsy.

Not all disabilities are permanent or permanently in the same state – they may fluctuate.

Not all disabilities have been there since birth – 7 out of 10 people acquire their disability during their working lives.

The symbol for a person with a disability person is someone in a wheel chair, an obvious expression of someone's disability, but it is much more likely that on your courses you will come across students with less obvious disability.



What do I call them!

The biggest problem with terminology is that it can become a barrier to communication. Don't avoid talking to people with disabilities because you think you might say the wrong thing. This is more of a barrier to inclusion than not knowing all the current terminology. Listen to the language the individual uses and adopt it. For example, if someone describes themselves as blind, it is usually fair to assume that you can refer to them in the same way.

Make sure you communicate directly to the person with a disability and not to their advocate. Even though they may not be able to respond to you, they may understand everything you say. They have a disability and are not inherently stupid!

***Do not make assumptions
about people and their
abilities.***

It is important to remember that all people are individuals. Two participants may share the same disability, but their abilities may totally differ.

Put the person first – change the following:

- The disabled woman
- He's retarded
- The autistic girl
- She is confined to a wheel chair
- Handicapped parking

- Normal people

There may be some of you here with a disability...I have no idea, but I hope that we have tried to accommodate them. We should also remember that a disability may not be permanent, it can be temporary, and it is then unlikely that you will tell people about it. For example - When you are in a meeting and you can't hear the speaker, do you ask the speaker to speak up? You may not want to interrupt, or draw attention to yourself --especially if you appear to be the only one who is having a problem!

Approaches

It is a good idea to ask yourself – “How would my walk, lecture, seminar, presentation, exercise, handout, or wording be experienced by” a

- Dyslexic student with reading difficulties;
- Deaf student who lip reads;
- Blind learner;
- Student with high levels of anxiety;
- Person
- Mobility difficulties;
- Learner with Asperger's syndrome?

This can be daunting but eventually becomes an instinctive process. When you prepare your outdoor sessions, your handouts, your web page and other materials, assume that there will be students who cannot hear well, read well, see small print, or quickly grasp numerical functions. Prepare your lessons accordingly. Your "regular" students will not be inconvenienced if you use large print, or show captioned DVD's, and it might help them learn

Learning Disability: *An inability to learn a certain task or in a certain way. Usually associated with lower cognitive (mental processes) function. People learning disabilities often require more time to process information and may require*



information in a variety of formats. Repetition and revisiting topics can help.

Autistic Spectrum Disorders: *A developmental impairment that affects the way a person is able to communicate with, and relate to the people around them.* They share three main areas of difficulty communication, social interaction and the way they think. This can cause people to have high levels of anxiety which we may need to consider when we go out walking or climbing.

- People with autism have difficulty using and understanding gestures, eye contact, facial expressions and body language. To assist understanding, speak in a clear, consistent way and give the person time to process what has been said.
- Using photographs, pictures, signs and positive language to explain the day's activities can help to reduce anxiety.

Deaf/Hearing Impairment: *A degree of impairment in the ability to detect or understand sounds.* There is a vast range and degree from a slight, temporary hearing loss through to people who have been born profoundly deaf.

- People may wear hearing aids, sign or lip read. They may also have an associated speech impediment.
- If people are lip reading, make sure they can see your face and speak as you normally would. Consider your position in relation to the light source so that the lip reader can see your face clearly.
- If people sign, they will often have someone acting as a designated signer. Learn basic signs to build a better rapport and relationship.
- Eliminate as much outside noise. Modern aids can filter this background noise. Wind noise may be considerably amplified by older hearing aids.
- Some devices lie on the side of the skull, just behind the ear. This may affect the fit of helmets or tight fleece hats. They are expensive and need to be kept clean and dry.
- If you need to write things down try to use diagrams with key words and phrases.
- Clear demonstrations are most effective in passing on information.

Blind/Visually Impaired: *A degree of impairment of visual capacity, including low vision or no vision.*

Vision can be affected in many ways: Examples of visual impairment include; reduced depth perception, blurred vision, reduced visual field (tunnel vision) and photophobia (sensitivity to light). Care should be taken not to distract working dogs.

- Do not *assume* you know what a person can see, *ask them*.
- Some people may need assistance in dark or unfamiliar areas.
- The scenery may be stunning so take time to describe the surroundings. This helps a person to gain a 'feel' for the place and to create a mental map.
- Tactile maps can help people to navigate. We can make these ourselves using standard art supplies such as glitter pens. Consider the amount of detail needed.

The Sighted Guide Technique

This refers to a method by, which a visually impaired person and a sighted person can walk together safely and comfortably. The blind person holds the elbow of the sighted guide. By walking half a step behind and sensing what you are doing, they can respond to the terrain as appropriate. Tell them about any specific obstacles that are coming up. Once you have grasped the technique you will be able to negotiate many areas with ease.

Planning and Risk Management

It is important to factor any disabilities and associated health and medical conditions into the risk assessment process. Careful planning can design an activity highlighting someone's abilities and strengths. It is particularly important to obtain information about any medical conditions and a declaration from the participant, their supporter or medical practitioner that they can safely take part in the activity. But one must also understand that the participant may not understand the stresses put on them.

Walk a route, imagining it through the eyes of the people we are going to be with, and thinking how the terrain may affect them. Where possible plan *with* the person, not *for* them. It is important to have thought about a range of options: Is there a shorter version if you are walking slower than anticipated? Are there escape routes?

In all of these situations, it might take one or more people to assist participants over an obstacle, and other group members may need supervision at the same time. A consent form for the activity should include specific questions about:

- ✓ Medical details and medication (not just a description of the disability).
- ✓ Information about the person's health and personal care needs.
- ✓ Information about the level of support needed and who will provide it.

Support workers themselves may not be comfortable with the terrain or understand safety guidelines. They are just as much a part of your overall responsibility.

Toileting

We may feel toileting is a taboo subject. However, to save inevitable complications it is important to gather this information in the planning stage. This will also put people's minds at rest. Questions to the individual or carer such as, 'Do you have any personal care requirements we need to be aware of?' may well be a good starting point.

Supporting people whilst walking

When people first start hill walking they may be unsteady and lacking in confidence. Start using paths and tracks within people's capabilities, allowing you to get a feel for their skill and confidence levels. Evaluating differing abilities can be difficult, but do not assume that everyone will need additional support.

For many people, the use of walking poles can increase their independence by providing additional stability and support. People may find poles difficult to use, so it can be good to introduce them on easy terrain where a person is already comfortable walking. Then this skill can



be transferred to more difficult ground.

Many of the techniques that can be used to provide physical support are the same as those already familiar to us e.g. Offering a hand, holding onto a rucksack and spotting.

Creating Power Point or overheads or handouts

Design slides with accessibility in mind. Think about

- Colour
- Contrast
- Amount of text
- Avoid capitals for all letters
- Size and type of font all affect the legibility
- Arial or Verdana work best at min size 30 mixed case and in bold rather than underlining or italics work effectively
- To emphasise words, either enlarge the print or put it in bold. Avoid underlining
- Ensure a contrast between text and background and avoid using colour alone to convey meaning e.g. red for danger
- Use cream as a background

Using videos

Check whether it is captioned to assess its accessibility to deaf and hard of hearing students and its soundtrack to assess whether it is going to be useful to partially sighted students. Having deaf or blind students does not preclude the use of videos. In fact, video can increase the accessibility of the session. see: <http://www.skillsforaccess.org.uk/articles.php?id=151>

Organise a glossary of any terms with which students may be unfamiliar. There may be no sign language for the term and deaf learners who lip read may not recognise the word. Dyslexic students will value seeing the spelling of the word and hearing it spoken in the session. It is best practice to give BSL/English interpreters a copy of any lecture, outline of the session and handouts in advance so that they know what they are interpreting.

Procedures for a seminar or small group activity

- Make the task clear both in writing and orally
- Ensure everyone is involved
- Talk through with groups any practical difficulties that might arise from having a diverse group and ways of addressing those difficulties.
- If reporting back is part of the exercise, give the option of reporting back orally or visually. Usually dyslexic students' oral skills are stronger than their writing. Their contribution to a group discussion will be much greater if they do not feel pressured to produce a written account of the discussion.
- Offer to take notes of the plenary and distribute them through Blackboard or other electronic means.
- If flip charts are used as one medium for feeding back, make sure you feedback orally.
- Check with the student whether and/or how they would like the rest of the group to know about their requirements – if those requirements will have implications for the group members e.g. a deaf learner working with an interpreter may want the rest of the group to know the ground rules for working through an interpreter.

Presentations

- Use a microphone as part of a loop system – however small the group or room.
- Face the group when presenting so that there is a clear view of you. If using PowerPoint, slides or notes, continue to face the audience. Try to maintain that stance throughout so that your lips are visible.
- Avoid standing with light directly behind you.
- Use focused lighting if the room is darkened.
- Use clear, unambiguous language. If you are going to use acronyms, explain what they mean at the outset. If you are going to use or introduce terminology, write it down and give a definition or ensure the audience knows what it means.
- Speak clearly and deliberately to allow note taking.
- Pause to allow clarification.
- Have short intermissions for review of material, individual reactions, questions.
- Describe diagrammatic materials or demonstrations.

- Lip reading is an exhausting activity

Disability Specific Information

It would be unreasonable to expect any instructor to have an encyclopaedic knowledge of all disabilities. The following are some frequently used terms that you may well come across. These are general guidelines to help describe the terms people use to define the disabilities that others experience. Where you are working with people with specific disabilities or medical conditions it may well be a good practice to print out a description of the condition and its implications to brief leaders and assistants.

- **Autistic Spectrum Disorders** - www.autism.org.uk
- **Behavioural Difficulties (Including Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD)** www.sebda.org
- **Cerebral Palsy (CP)** - www.scope.org.uk
- **Cystic Fibrosis** - www.cftrust.org.uk
- **Down's Syndrome** - www.downs-syndrome.org.uk
- **Multiple Sclerosis (MS)** - www.mssociety.org.uk
- **Muscular Dystrophy** - www.muscular-dystrophy.org
- **Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalous** - www.asbah.org
- **Spinal Cord Injuries (SCI)** - www.apparelyzed.com

Physical Environment

- ✓ If booking a room or venue, check out the accessibility – look for steps, narrow doors or walkways, and uneven surfaces. Audit tool on disk to help with this - checklist
- ✓ Let people know the accessibility of the venue or activities you will be attending or running
- ✓ Ask someone if they need assistance – do not assume that they do
- ✓ Do not lean on a person's wheelchair, and push it only when asked
- ✓ If practical, proceed a student who uses a wheelchair and ensure passageways and doorways are clear of people and other obstructions
- ✓ Good levels of lighting are important for visually impaired students
- ✓ If you meet regularly in the same room, avoid alterations to the room layout where possible
- ✓ Think also about how the transport and equipment you use are accessible to disabled students
- ✓ Do not leave a person with a visual impairment standing alone – if you leave, ask if they wish to be guided to a wall or piece of furniture
- ✓ If you are asked to guide a person with a visual impairment, offer your arm for the person to hold just above the elbow rather than you

grabbing theirs – enables them to walk at your side but slightly behind you

- ✓ Be descriptive and help orient people with visual impairments by let them know what's coming up eg doors or steps
- ✓ Need to think about alternative/flexible/imaginative approaches to enabling alternative means of participation

Publicity and Information

- ✓ Use a sans serif font, in ideally 14 point, with 18 point for titles (or bigger) Helvetica, Verdana and Tahoma are all fine.
- ✓ Use a dark coloured text on a pastel coloured background, with a matt finish. Black on yellow is best
- ✓ Group information logically and avoid using lots of underlining, italics, or capitals
- ✓ Align text to the left
- ✓ Use wide margins, headings, and line spacings
- ✓ Use boxes to highlight important information, and bullet points rather than large chunks of text
- ✓ Websites should follow the same rules. Disk has links you can follow to help you with websites
- ✓ Websites should not have to many moving images or features, and if possible offer a text only version
- ✓ Let people know that information is available in alternative formats – these may include: large print, brail, audio, different colours. University can help you with putting things into alternative formats.

Use of language

Terminology is always changing, and the best people to decide what words are used are the people about whom the words are used – so if you are not sure, ask!

- ✓ Don't use the term "handicap" or "handicapped" as this is derived from cap in hand and has associations with begging
- ✓ Avoid words like crippled, retarded, invalid
- ✓ Some people prefer "disabled" and some prefer "with disabilities"
- ✓ Avoid referring to disabled people as a homogenous group eg "the disabled"
- ✓ Avoid referring to people by the condition they have eg "diabetic" – instead "person with diabetes"
- ✓ Avoid attaching labels to people with or without disabilities – if you call people without disabilities "normal" you are implying that disabled people are standard deviations. Given that we are all different and unique, "normal" has no meaning.
- ✓ Avoid words with negative connotations for example "sufferer" or "wheelchair-bound" – wheelchair user.

Communication

- ✓ Speak to someone who uses a wheelchair at eye level if possible. Use the same eye contact, tone of voice and volume as you would with any other person
- ✓ Talk directly to someone with a disability, not to a colleague, interpreter, friend, or assistant
- ✓ When talking to someone with a speech impairment, listen patiently – do not interrupt or finish sentences for the person unless they look to you for assistance
- ✓ Do not pretend that you understand what someone has said if you don't – ask them to repeat themselves or write down a word if you are not sure
- ✓ If appropriate, summarise a conversation to check that you have understood what has been said and what actions are to be taken
- ✓ When approaching someone who is visually impaired, introduce yourself, and always say when you are leaving them
- ✓ Offer to read written information for someone with a visual impairment, if appropriate
- ✓ When you address someone with a visual impairment, make sure that you refer to them by name.
- ✓ Continue to use sight related words and expressions
- ✓ Keep noise levels as low as possible
- ✓ Before speaking to a student with a hearing impairment, attract their attention unobtrusively by moving into their line of vision
- ✓ When speaking, face the person and make sure you are well lit, so that they can see you lips, and do not put anything in or over your mouth, or move around too much
- ✓ Speak clearly at a normal rate – do not shout or exaggerate your speech or gestures as these will distort your lips
- ✓ Communicate in writing if necessary, make copies of notes available, and use visual forms of information where necessary
- ✓ In a group of people, do not speak all at once or leave a person with a hearing impairment out of the conversation

Extra Information

Instructing/coaching and the law

I do not want to get into the deep legal arguments but to look broadly at your legal responsibilities and to give you a hand out looking at the nitty gritty. We are looking at civil law, criminal law deals with the rights and obligations between society as a whole and the individual and imposes sanctions against breach of the rules

Civil law is concerned with the rights between legal individuals or parties (which can be organisations or businesses) and regulates any breach of those duties and responsibilities by an award of compensation. The overall system is one of loss distribution essentially to decide who, if anyone is responsible when something goes wrong and if they are responsible for what type of loss

We have looked generally at being a safe instructor but what are your legal responsibilities and obligations to your students. There is none more critical than negligence.

Duty of care

Individual instructors owe a duty of care to those whom they coach and instruct and accordingly must at all times act reasonably towards them. In addition, they also have a duty to act responsibly towards others involved in the sporting activity including parents, volunteers etc. How can you satisfy this duty?

Standard of care

A coach is expected to possess the same general intelligence and ability as other reasonable coaches of similar training and experience. Accordingly the standard they meet is that of a reasonably competent instructor working at the same level in the same activity. If this standard is not met and negligent advice is given that leads to injury or loss to a student they (or insurers) may have to compensate for that athlete.

It is essential to understand that the standard is not fixed. As medical and technological developments progress, individual instructors are expected to keep abreast of relevant changes and modify their coaching practices accordingly. E.g. warming up exercises used 10 years ago are now thought to be potentially damaging to the spine. Such discredited exercises should no longer be used, by doing so you are making yourself vulnerable to an allegation of negligence.

While inevitably the standard of care will vary subject to the particular circumstances and depend on type of activity, the number and age of the participants, their skill level, weather conditions and a host of other factors, guidance is available from a number of sources.

Written standards

You should at all times strive to comply with accepted written standards including governing body guidelines, technical regulations, facility safety procedures, tournament guidelines, journals and manuals. Activity centre guidelines.

Whilst not necessarily conclusive, coaches who disregard accepted written standards may have difficulty disproving an allegation of negligence unless they can demonstrate that in the particular circumstances it was not appropriate or not possible to follow the written guidelines.

Unwritten practices

Conventional practices of a particular profession are often seen by the courts rightly or wrongly as indicators of reasonable behaviour. Therefore a failure by an instructor to comply with custom and practice may be construed as lack of care. Bear in mind however that common practice may be thought to be foolish e.g. Official waving a flag by jumping onto the track. The organisers and official were deemed negligent.

Case Law

European law is based on precedent. Judges will apply the decisions of previous cases reached in similar circumstances. Judges often broaden the parameters of previous decisions.

NGB and other supporting bodies should aim to inform instructors of cases that may impact on their own coaching practices. Using newsletters, legal advice workshops, or journals.

Common sense

Merely following written standards or customs may not be enough. Negligence may follow where you are operating in unusual or especially risky situations

e.g. rugby teacher –high kick (15 yr old)-high tackle.

The teacher was negligent in failing to realise that his advantage in weight height etc. put then student at risk. This decision is based on common sense yet it is not difficult to envisage that this particular leader may not on the spur of the moment have recognised the danger. There is sometimes a fine line between enthusiastic instructing and culpable negligence.

How do you protect yourself?

One way of doing this is risk management

Risk management can be looked at in two ways:

- Risk management designed to prevent a potentially damaging accident occurring
- Risk management designed to mitigate the consequences of liability once an actionable incident has occurred e.g. insurance or consent forms.

10 commandments

It is obviously preferable to avoid the prospect of a negligence claim arising: These tips may help

1. Properly supervise activities (additional care may be necessary where a participant is young inexperienced or known to be awkward, aggressive or easily fatigued)
2. Properly instruct on techniques
3. Ensure incorrect techniques are corrected

4. Ensure you inform students especially those things that are pertinent to safety
5. Give appropriate warnings on the risk of particular activities
6. Ensure that activities which require an increase in skill level strength or conditioning are taught progressively
7. Ensure students displaying injury are not encouraged to carry on.
8. Discourage violent actions at all time
9. Ensure equipment is not only issued and used correctly but also checked frequently for deterioration.

By following these guidelines you will significantly enhance your prospects of avoiding negligent actions

