

HISTORY

The certification of ski instructors began in Europe at the end of the First World War. As skiing became more popular and the demand for instructors increased, certification programs gained greater acceptance. Most of the examinations for instructors were conducted by the government, and were quite difficult.

In 1925 the Association of Tyrolean Professional Ski Teachers was organized, and both Austria and Germany established Professional Ski Teacher Associations. For the first time, certified teachers were given the “right to teach skiing.”

By 1937 there were a number of European instructors teaching in the Eastern United States. Some of these, like Benno Rybizka and Sepp Ruschp were qualified European professionals.

Because there was a problem with the qualifications of some who were teaching skiing, and because no one was responsible for qualifying instructors in the United States, the first committee for the certification of ski instructors was appointed by the United States Eastern Amateur Ski Association in 1937. The first certification exam was held in Woodstock, Vermont in 1939. (The first instructor actually certified in the United States was Roland Peabody.) Other divisions of the National Ski Association followed suite and a number of comprehensive certification programs started across the country with the USEASA program as a model.

During the period covered by the Second World War there was very little done relative to certification of ski teachers or skiing as a recreational sport. This was, however, an important period for the development of skiing in the United States. A large number of young men were introduced to the sport and to the potential for skiing in the Western half of the country through their involvement in the Tenth Mountain Division.

After the war there was considerable activity in several areas of the country to organize effective instructor certification programs. In 1947 the Southern Rocky Mountain Ski Association conducted examinations and issued the following statement: “Through the combined forces of public opinion and Forest Service cooperation, unqualified instructors were effectively kept from our ski areas during the season. Also, our tests are slightly different from those given by other divisions. We are looking forward to the day when a standard national certification procedure for ski instructors can be established.”

Some early exam experiences were not dissimilar from those we hear about in the present day. After a Southern Rocky Mountain Ski Association, Ski Instructors Exam held at Berthoud Pass, Colorado in 1948 the following comment was made: “Of the 21 candidates who took the exam, 3 passed (Gordon Wren, Jack Snoble and Will Schaeffler). Results were protested; reason – too strict of an exam.”

Bill Lash, in his history of American Ski Instruction printed in the 1964 addition of The Official American Ski Technique, says: “It was because of pressures by USFS officials in 1947-50, that certification received interest by National Ski Association divisions. The Forest Service required

. . . that the ski school director and instructors teaching on forest service land be certified by the National Ski Association or one of its divisions. The Forest Service issued the request – the ultimate responsibility fell to the professional ski instructors.”

A significant development in the history of PSIA took place in 1950-51, when the Rocky Mountain Ski Instructors Association and the Intermountain Ski Instructors Associations formed organizations independent from amateur associations. This began the move away from NSA and its divisions and toward the formation of an independent ski teachers association.

During the years from 1951 to 1960 numerous programs were instituted throughout the country to insure that qualified instructors would be teaching the skiing public. (In 1952 there were 355 Certified and Associate Ski Instructors in the United States.) Meetings were held between the Forest Service and NSA National and Division leaders. In 1952, Bill Lash wrote a report on the development of the certification of ski instructors in the United States. In his report Bill pointed out the evolution towards a national affiliation of certified instructors. During this period those with a recognized interest in ski teaching were being drawn together, and began to be more prominent in organizational functions across the country.

After years of work, The Professional Ski Instructors of America was organized in 1961 at Whitefish, Montana, by Bill Lash, Paul Valar, Jimmy Johnston, Max Dercum, Doug Pfeiffer, Curt Chase and Don Rhinehart. Numerous others, who have become the legends of skiing, were involved in the process, but could not all be included in the incorporating body. At its inception, PSIA was composed of individual -- not divisional instructor organizations. By the time PSIA was organized there were 1,350 certified and associate instructors in the United States.

In the years from 1962 to the present there has been a continued evolution in leadership, programs, and focus for PSIA. The initial development was centered in the establishment of an independent instructor's organization focusing on member instructors and their need for training and certification. Through the years the demands of an expanding ski industry have required PSIA to emphasize the needs of the greater ski community. In addition to being ski teachers, we are front line public relations representatives, promoters of our ski areas, ski equipment manufacturer and ski shop representatives and models for the ski sport.

The involvement of PSIA with Snowboarding started in 1987 when the snowboard manufacturers and ski resorts approached PSIA with requests to develop training and educational programs for snowboard instructors. The development process started with several informal on-snow meetings at Timberline, OR., where manufacturer-sponsored riders worked with Juris Vagners to gain an understanding of ATS and the basis for the alpine manuals and certification. The first snowboard certification exam was conducted at Arapahoe Basin, CO in 1989. The goal was to select qualified individuals representing as many divisions as possible. Fourteen people attended the exam and were selected to the first PSIA Snowboard Team. They were directed to write a snowboard instruction manual and define a snowboard instructor certification process. Following this event, the first snowboard teaching manual was compiled.

The responsibilities of the Team included development of education and training programs in

their home divisions and serving as goodwill ambassadors for the sport. Certification in the divisions, in the early stages were at the associate level (Certified Level II under the current system), and were conducted by a mix of examiners: alpine examiners working with the fully certified snowboard instructors from the Arapahoe Certification Event. The goal of PSIA Steering Committee was to evolve the snowboard education and certification process to the point where all activities would be under the direction and control of snowboard instructors. This goal was accomplished relatively quickly, culminating in the establishment of AASI (American Association of Snowboard Instructors) in 1997.

THE FUNCTIONAL INGREDIENTS OF EFFECTIVE SKI TEACHING: WHY MECHANICS, WHAT SKIING AND HOW TEACHING

The interrelationship of these key ingredients is critical to successful ski teachers; however, the ratio of expertise in each area will vary according to individual skill levels and interest. Accomplished instructors strive to develop the skills necessary to balance all three ingredients and arrive at the proper “teaching blend.”

This recognizes that excellent teaching is dependent upon a unique combination of knowledge, understanding and experience. The role of assessment, which leads to certification, continues to be a method of measuring an instructor’s knowledge and proficiency in each of the three areas that make up the *Functional Ingredients of Effective Ski Teaching*.

The Why

The *why* explains the mechanical aspects of skiing and snowboarding. Why does a pressured and edged ski/snowboard want to turn? Why is it more difficult for people to ski in deep powder than on machine-packed snow? Why is it easier to start skiing in a wedge? Often, understanding the mechanics and theory behind skiing and riding is easier than skiing/riding itself; although, as skills improve, instructors generally increase and modify their understanding of mechanics. Attempting to teach without first developing a basic understanding of mechanics leads to frustrated teachers and “pretzelled” students.

The What

The *what* in teaching is the sport itself. The *what* energizes even the novice with a rush of adrenaline and is the force behind the industry. Most people enter the teaching profession as generally capable skiers and riders. The task that lays before them is not learning to ski/ride, but learning to ski/ride better. But simply knowing how to ski/ride does not make a person a teacher; teaching is both an art, and a science.

The How

How do we teach? What methods are at our disposal to help a frightened student develop the skills and confidence that will make skiing a lifetime sport? Knowing how to teach means

understanding how, and why, people learn. Knowing how to teach also means understanding how to structure a learning experience to take advantage of a student's strengths. Good teachers help people learn faster while having more fun.

K. Paul Jones "PJ"

L. Education Vice President, PSIA-IM

THE AMERICAN TEACHING SYSTEM

The American Teaching System (ATS) is an integrated teaching system that includes a teaching model, a skiing/riding model, and a customer service model. The ATS is based on the philosophy that the teaching learning process is:

- student centered
- outcome
- experiential
- learning-partnership based
- guest-service driven
- from the heart

Student Centered: implies that the student is the focal point of the teaching and learning process, rather than the lesson content or the instructor.

Outcome Based: implies that there are obtainable objectives and goals for each stage of development. Outcome based lessons have the following philosophical tenants: 1) all students can learn and succeed; 2) success breeds success; and 3) instructors contribute to the degree of success.

Experiential: implies that people learn by doing. Experiential learning implies learning through experiencing (drills, games and exercises in a variety of terrain and snow conditions to create desired learning).

Learning-Partnership Based: refers to the instructor's ability to create a partnership with the students to enable them to succeed. This involves active listening, providing feedback, checking for understanding, and adjusting the lesson to meet the needs of the students.

Guest-Service Driven: reminds us that the student is our guest at the area and that instructors are in the service business.

From The Heart: emphasize the importance of caring about your students. "Students will not care how much we know until they know how much we care."

INSTRUCTOR BEHAVIOR

Instructors bring to the learning partnership a full spectrum of behaviors and strategies that facilitate a successful learning process. These research-and-experience-based principles of learning are accelerants to student achievement. They enable the instructor to increase student motivation, the speed and amount of learning, and the retention and appropriate transfer of learning to new situations requiring creativity, problem solving and decision making.

- Introducing the learning segment
- Assessing the student
- Determining goals and planning objectives
- Presenting and sharing information
- Practicing
- Checking for understanding
- Summarizing the learning segment
- Teaching for transfer
- Extending thinking, learning and performing
- Applied sport psychology
- Accelerated learning principles.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Students bring to the learning partnership a vast conglomeration of experiences and physical/psychological attributes and attitudes that shape their personal learning requirements and environment. This information is crucial for instructors, as many of their decisions about *how* to teach are determined by the specific needs of the student. The content of each lesson may be presented in any number of ways. Knowledge about student characteristics, learning preferences, motivation and attitudes help instructors deliver precise, accurate information when they teach.

The Individual Student Profile

Characteristics and backgrounds:

- Past experiences with learning
- Past experiences with skiing
- Age, sex, nationality, athletic ability and body type
- Intelligence and common sense
- Physical abilities and disabilities
- Psychological factors (positive and negative)
- Range of attention span (focus and concentration)
- Knowledge of other sports
- Participation in other sports

Learning preferences:

- Visual, auditory or kinesthetic
- Watcher, doer, thinker or feeler
- Gifted/disabled
- Group learning or individual learning

Motivation and activation:

- Intrinsic or extrinsic
- Socially oriented or results-oriented
- Function, style, perfection, survival or coping
- Direction (toward or away, inclusive or exclusive)

Beliefs, attitudes and values:

- Willingness to receive information
- Responding with active participation in learning
- Placing value on learning and the results of learning
- Personal organization (bringing together different values to develop consistency)

MASTERY TEACHING MODEL

1. Introducing the Lesson

The instructor is able to . . .

- Establish rapport between self and student's and between students and students.
- Create an open, friendly and supportive lesson environment.
- Describe the service that the student has purchased.

2. Determining Goals

The instructor is able to . . .

- Assess each student's level of ability.
- Ascertain and guide the student's expectations for the lesson.
- Assess the source and level of student motivation.
- Set appropriate goals based upon the student's ability and expectations.
- State goals to the group and individuals.

3. Planning the Lesson (objectives/activities)

The instructor is able to . . .

- Select appropriate terrain and snow conditions.
- Generate a logical progression relevant to group and individual goals.
- Break lesson content into short meaningful chunks that can be mastered.
- Determine the pacing of information, practicing and skiing/riding.
- Utilize the concept of lateral learning to determine objective/activities.

4. Presenting Information (telling how and why)

The instructor is able to . . .

- Present information in a clear and concise manner.
- Make the material meaningful by providing the student with a rationale for activities.
- Recognize student learning styles and utilize the appropriate teaching styles.

5. Demonstrating

The instructor is able to . . .

- Demonstrate the “Centerline Model” and “individual levels,” through efficient movements of skiing/riding.
- Demonstrate from a variety of viewer perspectives (front, back, and side) that give the student a clear, meaningful picture.
- Demonstrate technique/mechanics appropriate for the snow conditions and skill level of the students.
- Focus the student’s attention on the appropriate portion of the demonstration.
- Demonstrate the appropriate mix of skills (pressure, edging, turning, and balance) for the selected task.
- Effectively use role model tapes to create a clear image of achievement.

6. Practicing

The instructor is able to . . .

- Set a practice task at an appropriate level of difficulty.
- Design short practice periods so those students can focus with intent to learn.
- Provide specific and immediate feedback to students.
- Understand and apply principles of reinforcement.
- Guide initial practice and set students up for proper independent practice.
- Utilize massed practice for new learning and distributed practice for old learning.

7. Checking for Understanding

The instructor is able to . . .

- Verify student understanding based on physical behavior consistent with lesson objectives.
- Verify student understanding based on verbal responses consistent with lesson objectives.
- Utilize a variety of question-asking techniques.

8. Summarizing the Lesson

The instructor is able to . . .

- Review the lesson objectives and communicate the degree of accomplishment to group and individuals.
- Preview the next learning steps and encourage further development.
- Establish independent practice guidelines for each student.

[The Teaching Model]

In addition to steps 1-8, the Mastery Teacher utilizes the following educational concepts to enhance learning:

A. Teaching for transfer

The instructor is able to . . .

- Understand the concept of transfer in learning.
- Draw on the student’s previous learning to facilitate present learning (positive transfer).
- Recognize when previous learning hinders present learning (negative transfer).
- Teach in the present to optimize positive transfer to future learning.

B. Extending thinking, learning, and performance

The instructor is able to . . .

- Utilize Bloom’s six levels of cognition to help students think creatively, solve problems and make satisfying and productive decisions with their skiing.
- Utilize appropriate elements of contemporary sport psychology to help students develop mental skills and strategies.
- Model consistent behaviors, attitudes, and values resulting in a more powerful teaching and learning experience.
- Utilize Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs in the teaching process.

Vail Ski School – Steve Still

MOSSTON’S TEACHING STYLES

A style of teaching is “composed of all the decisions that are made during the teaching-learning process to induce a particular style of learning.” Muska Mosston’s anatomy of a teaching style consists of three behavioral variables: pre-class, execution and evaluation decisions. As these variables are manipulated, teaching styles along a continuum are identified.

Other names of teaching styles have been suggested. However, these “other” names/styles can be slotted into Mosston’s continuum. It is thought that Mosston’s spectrum of teaching styles provides a starting point, a beginning framework with which an examination of teaching methods can begin. He begins with “Command” style, which offers minimum student involvement:

1. Command

- focuses on teacher and subject matter
- teacher is only one who may make decisions
- teacher determines the social, emotional climate of the class
- use of demonstration is important

2. Task or Practice

- partial shift of focus to the student
- style manipulates “execution” variable
- task is explained and demonstrated (students start, perform and stop movement on their own)

- independence from the teacher begins to evolve

3. Reciprocal

- style manipulates “evaluation” variable
- involvement of a partner in the role of an observer, corrector, and reinforcer
- student performs as partner observes (immediate observation and reinforcement by partner)
- independence from the teacher begins to evolve

4. Group

- variation of Reciprocal teaching
- promotes interaction and communication among group members
- role of group members: doer, observer, recorder
- use of tasks as in Reciprocal style

5. Individual

- subject matter is manipulated in a manner as to provide learner with full opportunity for self-motivated learning, self-assessment, and decision-making
- self-evaluation

In these first five teaching styles, significant contributions to the growth of the learner occur physically, socially and emotionally. What has occurred intellectually is minimal. Mosston claims that during these five styles, the learner is in a “state of cognitive acquiescence.” For the most part, the learner has been required to use only the lower levels of cognitive operation. Mosston calls for learning situations that stimulate new dimensions of the thinking process. Learning situations that will help the student move out of the “state of cognitive acquiescence,” “beyond the cognitive barrier,” and into potent intellectual behavior, which uses and demonstrates the varieties of cognitive operation are needed.

The next two styles of teaching “ . . . evoke the discovery capacities of the student, strengthen his problem-solving abilities . . .” and offer maximum student involvement. They are teaching styles *beyond the cognitive barrier*.

6. Guided discovery

- focuses on the student
- teacher uses questions or clues arranged in a manner which slowly, gradually, and securely lead the student to the desired result (each step is based on the response given in the previous step)
- teacher waits for answer
- Teacher never tells the answer!
- cognitive acquiescence cognitive dissonance inquiry discovery

7. Problem Solving

- teacher poses problems for student to solve
- student is expected to seek out answer(s) on his own, working within the framework set forth by

the teacher

- single problem may have several solutions
- style seeks to develop the ability to find alternatives, explore them, and select the appropriate ones
- elicits a greater number of levels of cognitive operations

[Learning Style Inventory]

LEARNING STYLES

It is important to note that students don't all learn the same way. There are four learning styles. These are: visual, **auditory, proprioceptive and kinesthetic**. These are more commonly referred to as **watcher, thinker, doer and feeler**. Most people are a *combination* of all of these learning styles though one or two styles may dominate the learning profile. It is important to be aware of your own personal learning profile because **most instructors tend to teach the way they learn** best. Being aware of the different learning styles and your personal preferences allows you to do a better job of teaching students whose learning style may be different from your own. An effective instructor is usually successful at blending various teaching styles to accommodate a variety of learning styles.

What Kind of Learner Are You?

Because we often teach the way we learn, understanding our own learning style helps provide insight into how we teach. Likewise, being able to identify learning style traits in students helps us present our lesson in a more effective manner. For instance, a group lesson may be made up of four people who each possess a different dominant learning style. How do you structure a lesson and provide individual attention in a fashion that helps each member of the class? It's important to note that although most people have a dominant learning style, they often exhibit other learning style characteristics as well.

- A. Concrete Experience (Doer):** People in this category tend to be pragmatic, practical and functional; they are searchers who see a purpose in learning; they are good problem-solvers and work well with others. These learners want to "do" and may become anxious with too much standing around.
- B. Reflective Observation (Watcher):** These people like to get the picture and like to know the purpose of practice. They need to watch others, are good listeners, introspective and contemplative. Good demonstrations are important to this learner and verbal communication needs to be image-oriented to be effective.
- C. Abstract Conceptualization (Thinker):** Such people are analytical, logical, thorough and theoretical. They would rather read than listen to lectures and are often loners or dreamers. At times they are meticulous to a level of obsession. This person has read every ski magazine on the rack and is particularly receptive to technical discussions on lift rides.
- D. Active Experimentation (Feeler):** People of this nature are receptive learners; they learn predominantly through "gut" intuition. They try many things to find a way, tend to be emotional and learn by doing and by evaluating on the way. These people are also "doer" oriented and tend to be kinesthetically aware, picking up movement patterns quickly and being bored with analytical talk.

INTRODUCTION TO MOTOR SKILL LEARNING

Factors Affecting Skill Acquisition

Skill acquisition refers to the process of developing proficiency at performing a specific movement. Many factors affect how quickly the individual develops and to what degree they develop proficiency in a particular movement. These factors include:

1. Capability

- Choosing a movement that is within the skill level of the individual so they can achieve success.
- Capability depends on maturational level, previous experience, genetic endowment and state of physical fitness.

2. Readiness

- Involves both the physical capability and the emotional aptitude for learning.
- People fail because they lack confidence or motivation.
- What you don't have you can't give away.
- Three areas of readiness are:

Physiological: The body's energy system must be primed to activate the best performance.

Mental: An event comes into focus, run through it mentally and allow the body to prepare to respond to the mental image.

Cooperation: without anxiety between the mental and physical.

	EMOTIONAL GAP	
What you are supposed to do (body)	<hr/> <p>(mind) Anxiety Fear Self Doubt Lack of Self Confidence</p>	What actually Happens (body and mind)

3. Motivation

- The person wants to learn.
- You have six students that want to be taught and only one that wants to learn.
- New teaching techniques emphasize *being* or *isness* rather than "try harder." Spiro, 1978.
- The teacher is a "Spirit Guide." Currently there is a new teaching ethic. Teaching switches from competitive - oriented, time - result, physical rewards to the satisfaction that comes from integration between your spiritual state and your physical possibilities . . . The new ethic takes the pressure off winning. It gets to be more and more fun to ski/ride.
- Develop *self-confidence* and *self-image*.
- Combine reward and performance information.

- Performance information does not motivate.
- Good elements of behavior are rewarded.
- Reinforcers:
 - Social: Compliments from instructor.
 - Internal: Watching others be rewarded.
- Increase quantity and quality of performance by:
 - Increasing frequency of rewards.
 - Increasing the quality of rewards.
 - Increasing the frequency of rewards in combination with performance information.
 - Increasing the quality of rewards in combination with performance information.
- Using motivating words and motivating gestures:

Motivators

Achievement
 Acceptance of Others
 Self Acceptance
 Quality of Life

Demotivators

Self Doubt
 Loss of Security
 Fear of Failure
 Pain

4. Goal Setting

- Do your students know what your goal is?
- Can they set a goal for themselves?
- If you don't know where you're going, you may end up somewhere else.
- Your non-choice becomes your choice.
- Set realistic, attainable goals.
- A goal should be stated clearly so that the learner knows what counts as reaching it.
- If the overall goal can be broken into sub-goals, the instructional sequence is enhanced.

5. Form and Technique

- Sound mechanical principles must be followed:
 - Teachers must have knowledge of the skill, visual discrimination, and the ability to retain the image, and use the application of the analytical process.
 - A suggested analytical process is to examine skill in the phases of the turn.
 - With each phase analyze according to the path of action (center of gravity, upper body, lower body, extremities).

6. Learning a New Skill

- First, the student must form a mental concept of the skill.
- Effective verbalization and demonstration must be provided.
- Use a perception check to discover whether your students understand your instructions.
- Ask for questions.
- Avoid competition.
- Use rhythmical and verbal cues.
- Concentration
 - Concentration implies an effort to tune out all stimuli that can distract you from your goal.

- Physical follows mental, to win, to achieve, to change, you must expand the mental scope of your vision. The body will follow through.
- Center attention on activity - they do not “try harder,” its automatic.
- Concentration is an attraction to something.

7. Practice

- Groups - keep groups as small as possible when learning a new skill.
 - Establish rapport with the group and have group members establish rapport with each other.
- Over-learning is required for retention.
- Length of practice session - keep session short, but long enough to learn the skills.
- Distribution of Practice - distribute skill learning through the lesson.

8. Progression

- A logical progression of motor learning is based on the degree of difficulty
- Progressions follow:
 - Stationary to moving.
 - Wide to narrow base of support.
 - From awareness of position of body parts to space awareness (terrain changes), to rhythm, timing and fluidity (quality of movement).
 - Gentle to steep terrain.
 - Large muscle control to small muscle control.
 - Familiar to unfamiliar.

9. Feedback and Reinforcement

- Help modify the learning process and maintain the receptiveness to learning.
 - Avoid giving too much information at once.
 - Try to reduce the fears of failure and of injury
 - Be aware and sensitive to the problems of those who may do things differently. The near-sighted individual, the heavy set skier, the awkward adolescent who is dealing with a changing body, the individual who feels uncomfortable attempting a new skill, the tense individual.
 - We sometimes think - and we are wrong - that listening is a natural process such as breathing and that we are born with it.
 - We sometimes think - and we are wrong - that we listen just the same way we hear.
 - We sometimes think - and we are wrong - that all members of any lesson are listening to us in the same way.
 - In teaching and learning, remember that feelings are important to the learning and changing process, that mistakes are also a vital part of learning, and try to recognize improvement, even when it may seem minimal.
 - When people begin to make errors they lose their playfulness and a great deal of energy is expended. Make a challenge to find possible solutions.
 - With a beginner, progress from continuous to intermittent feedback.

10. Transfer

- The effect that previous practice or acquisition of movements, skills and concepts has on the ability to learn new skills

11. Part vs. Whole Learning

- Whole method is the process of learning the entire skill in one dose.
- Part method is learning parts separately until all parts are learned and can be combined into a unified whole.
- The whole-part-whole method is most effective with complex skills as skiing.

12. Stress and Anxiety

- Challenging rather than threatening situations are preferred.
- Use relation techniques followed by visualization methods.
- A good sense of humor relieves stress.
- Learning will diminish with occurrence of anxiety.

Principles of Physical Development

1. One-sided movements are easier than two-sided movements.

- It's easier to move one body part at a time, and it's easier for body parts on one side to do the same movements.
- If two sides of the body are moving at the same time, the student will often attempt to keep the extremities duplicating movements.
- Cross-sided and opposition movements are more difficult.
 - In skiing and riding, the upper body does something different than the lower body, and one side of the lower body is experiencing movements and sensations that are different than the other side.

2. Motor control develops in cephalocaudal and proximodistal directions.

- Cephalo (head) caudal (foot) direction indicates that we control movements from the head down to the feet. For instance, we gain control of the muscles, which support the head before those of the trunk and legs. Proximo (center) distal (periphery) direction implies we also control movements from the midline of the body (center) outward to the extremities. Thus, control movements from the trunk to arms, hand and fingers, and from the hips to legs, feet and toes. These two directional sequences occur simultaneously.

3. Large muscles are controlled before the small ones.

- For any aged skier, however, the large muscles are easier to move into proper body alignment, before coordinating the smaller muscles such as the feet (rolling from big toe to little toe, or little-toe to big toe). Movements will also be simple and generalized before becoming more specific and refined.

4. All movement originates from the center of mass.

- Movement originates from the CM where the most concentrated weight is and moves outward to the contributing muscles used in the movement.

- When correcting, first make sure the body is in a well-balanced position with a functional stance. Movements of the center of mass will effect balance, rotation and extraneous movements of the feet and the hands. Correcting the center of mass first will also alleviate other errors in movements.

5. Coordination develops in specific stages.

- The initial stage of learning begins with awareness of what the body is doing. Students often look at their bodies or their equipment while they ski. However, focus downhill is important for good balance. So remember “Look Down the Hill!”
- In the elementary stage of learning attention is on the environment. Skiers gain efficiency in moving and controlling their bodies around the objects or people in the space around them. When objects or people are stationary, it’s easier to move around them than when the objects or people are moving. Lots of perceptual - motor and eye movement sophistication is necessary. Timing, changing direction and speed control develop.
- In the mature stage, movements will begin to gain fluidity and smoothness and appear easy and elegant. A rhythm and fluidity appear when movements are well coordinated, mechanically correct, and habitualized.

6. The development of balance depends on using the body’s balance receptors.

- Balance receptors permit a skier/rider to maintain a balanced position on their tool of choice.
- The three sensory receptors for balance are the eyes focused on the horizon, the soles of the feet and the inner ears.
- Balance concepts are:
 - The wider the base of support, the more stable the body becomes. (In skiing, a wide wedge is easier than a narrow one and an open parallel is easier than a dynamic parallel turn.)
 - The lower the center of gravity, the greater the stability. Learning how to bend knees properly in all movements can help increase stability. It’s a plus on steeper terrain also or when conditions change to very hard pack snow.
- The nearer the center of gravity to the middle of the base of support, the greater the stability. Proper body alignments and posture are important in. Whenever the hip and trunk area move forward or moves away from the center of the base of support. Consequently, the feet will move slower and balance adjustments are more difficult.
- For the greatest balanced position look ahead in the direction of movement, use a shoulder width stance with the knees flexed over the toes and the hips kept over the heels. It is a good balanced position, which is the key to efficient flow of downward and upward motion.

Teaching Worksheet

Instructions: Use your own words to fill in this worksheet and develop your personal understanding of the factors, which affect skill acquisition.

Factors Affecting Successful Skill Acquisition

Capability

—

Readiness

—

Motivation

Goals

Learning

a

New

Skill

Practice

Progression

Feedback and Reinforcement

Transfer of Movement Learning

Part Method versus Whole Method

Stress

and

Anxiety

How Do I Teach?

“How do I teach? That is the Question.”

A style of teaching is composed of all the decisions that are made during the teaching-learning process to induce a particular style of learning. Three major behavioral patterns make up a style of teaching: 1. Pre-class decisions, 2. Executive decisions, and 3. Evaluation decisions. By manipulation of these behavioral variables we can create alternative styles of teaching.

Teaching By Command Style

It has a long history of use and is perhaps the most prevalent teaching style of motor skills. We are all familiar with:

Step 1: Demonstration

Step 2: Explanation

Step 3: Execution

Step 4: Evaluation

In this style, all three behavioral variables are controlled by the teacher. The role of the student is to respond to the teacher's stimuli.

Teaching By Task Style

(manipulation of execution variable)

In Task, we continue to cling to the command style, but when we reach the component of *doing*, of performing the activity, the student is taught to perform *on his own*.

1. Assemble students near you.
2. Demonstrate and explain task(s) as in command style. (One task at a time is preferable. Later, 2 to 4 variations of a task can be demonstrated so students can select the variation they can perform.
3. Designate boundaries of the practice area and point out safety considerations.
4. Instruct students to find *their space* and begin practice.
5. While performance goes on, teacher should *move about*, observe individuals; offer informational feedback to individuals. Contact with *each* and *every student* should be the goal. Especially close contact with the younger student

Note: Command Style demands that *everyone* reach a single standard in order to aid the individualization process, the concept of a range of tasks is very valuable. It calls for presenting the class with several tasks, which permit everyone in the class to participate to his ability.

Teaching By Reciprocal Style

1. All points in Task summary apply in Reciprocal.
2. Designate partners and explain role of doer and observer.
3. Give as much assistance to observer (Little T) as possible without taking over his role. List *specific* things in the performance to look for.
4. Call class together periodically to discuss the task, to answer questions, to share suggestions, and to assure the execution of the style.

Teaching By Small Group Style

This style is a variation of the previous styles. It is not an organizational issue of having the class in small groups, which determines their style; it is rather the process of interaction and communication among the members of the group. This style merely calls for more than two people to partake in the process of participation, observation, mutual correction and reinforcement. This style calls for a specific assignment of the role of each member in the group. In using Reciprocal Teaching, if the number of students in the class is not even so that all can be in partners, it may be advantageous to incorporate the use of “The Small Group.”

Teaching by Guided Discovery Style

In Guided Discovery, we are striving toward a “process-centered” teaching procedure. This style embodies a process of systematically getting to a target. It is actually a process of training students to use selection procedures in making small decisions in a definite sequence.

1. Focus on the student.
2. Use questions or clues arranged in a manner, which slowly, gradually and securely lead the student to the desired result.
3. There is only *one* answer.
4. *Wait* for the answer.
5. Never *tell* the answer.
6. Elicit higher levels of thinking.
7. Cognitive acquiescence-cognitive dissonance-inquiry-discovery.

Teaching By Problem Solving Style

1. Pose problems for student to solve.
2. Allow student to seek out answer(s) on his own, working within the framework set forth by the teacher.
3. Accept all answers that meet the requirements set forth in the problem.
4. Single problem may have several solutions.
5. As student works - wait, observe, and encourage.
6. Elicit higher levels of cognitive operation.

7. Style seeks to develop the ability to find alternatives, explore them, and select the appropriate one.

Mosston, Muska. *Teaching Physical Education: From Command to Discovery*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Books, Inc. 1966.

[Dale's Cone]

Providing Feedback

Feedback is a way of helping another person consider changing his/her behavior. Through feedback we learn to see ourselves as others see us. The key ingredients are care, trust, acceptance and openness.

1. It is descriptive rather than evaluative.
2. It is specific rather than general.
3. It takes into account the needs of the receiver and giver of feedback.
4. It is directed toward behavior, which the receiver can do something about.
5. It is solicited, rather than imposed.
6. It is well timed.
7. It is checked to insure clear communication.
8. When feedback is given in a training group, both giver and receiver have an opportunity to check with others in the group the accuracy of the feedback.

NLT Institute for Applied Behavior Science

Whatever Happened to Individual Corrections?

“Wish he would tell me how I’m doing!” This was the comment made by my classmate as we rode up the chair lift together. Last spring I spent a week skiing in Colorado, since powder skiing was relatively new to me, I decided that the best course of action was to take ski school lessons. I paid my money and “got in line” for the ski-off. (I can’t tell you the relief I felt when I was placed in the top class!) The lessons progressed as ski school lessons normally do and everyone seemed very happy. But, as our lessons continued, the discussions on the chair lift changed to indicate a growing discontentment. My “chair partners” were asking, “Why doesn’t he tell me what I’m doing?” “Why doesn’t he talk to each of us specifically?” One gal told me that she never seemed to know if she was doing it right or not! Another gal summed it up by saying, “Whatever happened to individual corrections?”

The move away from the use of individual correction is evident in our association’s workshops and clinics. This could be an effort on the part of the association to eliminate the embarrassment and anxiety experienced by some students as a result of the faulty manner in which “individual” correction is given. However, it is also evident that to eliminate the use of individual correction is not the answer to this problem. A keener awareness as to the proper use of “individual” correction is the solution. Perhaps an examination of “feedback” can be of help.

“If a person practices without knowing the results of his actions, improvement in his performance is unlikely.” This quote from *Skill in Sport* by Barbara Knapp is based on extensive research in the area of “feedback.” Lindsley reports “a group of radar operators who were not enlightened about their progress on successive trials became less and less accurate as practice went on for six days.” “Feedback” or “Knowledge of Results” is one of the conditions necessary to consider for

effective learning. It is defined as that information provided to the learner in order to affect subsequent acts. The purpose of this article is to discuss “feedback” in conjunction with ski teaching.

Individual and General Feedback

Feedback can be given on an “individual” and “general” basis. “Individual” means those corrections given specifically to one person. “General” means those corrections given to a group of students noting common errors within the group. However, in the latter situation, each performer is expected to consider the instructor’s comments and in the learner’s best judgment, decide which of the instructor’s comments pertain to “his” performance. There is considerable doubt that many students have the ability to be so discerning. From personal participation in ski school lessons, clinics, and workshops, it seems that a shift from using “individual” to “general” correction has taken place. This shift could be viewed as a solution to the problems with the ill use of “individual” correction. It is not! “Individual” correction can serve the learner better than “general” correction. It is more specific and clearly given to a particular individual. This information serves as a guide to the learner in subsequent trials and assists him in analyzing the results of his actions. Although there are those instances in performances when a learner can assess the results of his own actions, such as -- shooting a goal in basketball, swinging a bat at a ball -- the skills in skiing would seem to require assistance from an observer. However, the effectiveness of “individual” correction is dependent upon its proper administration. Extreme caution should always be taken so as not to embarrass or discourage the learner.

“General” correction can also be useful. If many students in a group are making the same error or if time is limited, the use of “general” correction would be the efficient approach. The shortcoming of “general” correction lies in its vagueness. The instructor is counting on the learner to have the ability to know whether or not the correction applies to him. For the most part, confusion occurs and the wrong students change their performance. In light of the information available pertaining to the effectiveness of “general” correction, it is thought that “individual” correction is more conducive to effective learning. Certainly, both “individual” and “general” corrections can be useful and each can contribute significantly to learning.

Positive and Negative Feedback

Feedback can be expressed in “positive” and “negative” terms. “Positive” referring to the use of terms describing affirmative action in the performance. Example: “Push forward.” “Negative” referring to the use of terms stating what should not be included in the action. Example: “Don’t sit back.”

Educators are in support of the use of “positive” feedback because of its favorable effect upon the atmosphere of the class and its beneficial effect upon the student’s attitude toward subsequent learning. Traditionally, we hear, “don’t do this” or “you didn’t do that” to the point that students become so discouraged that they resent and avoid the instructor. Simply, instead of telling a student what “not to do” tell him what he “should try to do.” It is just as easy to say positive things such as “stay on your edge” as it is to say, “don’t slip.”

It is also noted that all too often only the mistakes in a performance are mentioned. Somehow, the “good” is understood and the errors become the main discourse in the feedback. It is unfortunate when a student’s only communication with the teacher is when the learner does something “wrong.” There is a need for instructors to note the achievements of the learner as well as to make more mention of the successes. This is especially important while teaching to behavior behavior changes. This supportive role coupled with the use of positively stated corrections can change the attitude of the student from discouraged to encouraged, from defeated to challenged, from “quitting” to taking future lessons!

Concurrent, Terminal and Delayed Feedback

Feedback can be supplied *during* the action or *after* the completion of the performance. “Concurrent” refers to that feedback given to the learner during the performance. “Terminal” refers to that feedback given when the learner has completed the task. Terminal refers to that feedback given when the learner has completed the task. Terminal feedback can be administered immediately or any time after the task has been performed as long as *no* intervening activities have occurred. Students receiving feedback after the instructor has watched *all* members of a class “ski down the hill” are receiving “terminal” feedback. If the last student is the first to receive feedback, then his feedback is “terminal” and “immediate” – all others would be receiving “terminal” feedback. If students were to engage in subsequent trials before the instructor gives feedback on the original trial, the feedback is referred to as “delayed.”

Feedback given *immediately* upon the completion of a performance is recommended. “. . . Experiments in practical skill agree that the learner should be given as specific and as immediate information as possible.” Since the performer has just gone through “the motions” of the skill, he can reflect on his actions in light of the instructor’s comments. It is especially true in the performance of motor skills that as time elapses, both the learner’s and the instructor’s recollections of the performance become increasingly vague. The effectiveness of the well-intended feedback is further jeopardized when subsequent trials or other intervening activities are allowed to occur before feedback is given. It becomes increasingly difficult for the learner to recall the particular trial to which the instructor is addressing his comments in “delayed” feedback. It has also been noted that “concurrent” feedback can be distracting to the performer. The instructor’s intended helpful cues can interrupt or break the performer’s concentration. Once again, the manner in which feedback is given is extremely important. Certainly, a word at just the right time, when something good is done or an error is made can work wonders! “The closer the exclamation is to the good movement or to the error, the easier it is for the learner to identify the right and wrong actions.”

The use of video taping can be an extremely helpful tool for providing feedback information. It enables the student to see in his performance what he may be unaware of or unable to feel as he performs. Videotapes also enable the instructor more opportunities to view the performance and thereby analyze more extensively and with greater accuracy. “In many complex skills, action is too fast for the detail to be observed by the human eye and other aids to analyze are necessary.” In order to make the best use of videotapes, it is important to view the tapes as soon after the

performance as possible. After viewing and analyzing the taped performances, time should then be provided for the students to try the skill under the watchful eye of the instructor. These trials soon after the visual feedback re-enforce the learning to be gained.

The quality of the instructor's comments is also extremely important in effective feedback. Whether it is concurrent, terminal, or delayed, every effort should be made to say something that will be helpful. Comments such as "try harder" or "do it again" are simply not good enough. Instead say, "in order to flatten the ski, roll the knees down the hill." Instructors need to have considerable depth of knowledge of a particular skill so as to analyze the performance of their students and to give helpful, meaningful recommendations for future trials.

Descriptive and Prescriptive Feedback

Feedback can also be described in terms that are "descriptive" and "prescriptive." In ski teaching, it is referred to as "detection and correction." "Descriptive" refers to the instructor's recommendations for future performances. Example of descriptive: "You turned your skis very sharply because you exerted your pressure suddenly and at only one point in the turn." Example of prescriptive: "Next time, smooth out your turn by exerting your pressure evenly as you form a big letter 'C'." With this information, the learner knows what he did, what he should try to do and how he can go about doing it. An effort should be made to state both "descriptive" and "prescriptive" feedback in positive terms.

In giving feedback, care must be taken not to embarrass, humiliate or discourage the learner. Extreme care in one's choice of words is paramount, especially if "individual" corrections are to be given to a student "in front" of a group of students. Certainly, the best arrangement for "individual" correction is a private-type, one-to-one situation. For example: Instructor has class ski down to him, one student at a time. Each student is given individual, immediate-terminal, positive, descriptive, prescriptive feedback. Other students should be asked to stand away from both the instructor and the student so that feedback to each student can be private.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is thought that the solution to the problem of ill-administered "individual" correction is not to stop using it, but to learn how to use it effectively. Instructors should know that in order for feedback to be most conducive to effective learning, descriptive and prescriptive feedback should be stated positively, immediately upon the completion of the performance, and in a one-to-one, private-type situation. Recommendations for future trials should be meaningful and with substance. It just isn't good enough to tell students to turn their skis, tell each student HOW!

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

All of teaching involves communication skills. Effective communication is perhaps the key to developing a successful student/instructor relationship. There are two types of communication. These are *verbal* and *nonverbal*.

Verbal messages refer to the words that you use to express yourself. It is important that you are clear, concise, positive and consistent in your verbal messages.

Nonverbal messages include:

- Body motion (movements of hands, feet, eyes, tilt of the head, movement of the whole body etc.)
- Physical characteristics (appearance - clean, neat uniform, physical fitness, etc.)
- Voice characteristics (pitch, inflections, rhythm, etc.)
- Touching behavior (handshakes, pat on the back, etc.)
- Body position (the personal space between you and others, where you position yourself in relationship to others, etc.)

Effective communication is a two way process. As instructors, you must create an atmosphere that encourages student participation. **A student who actively participates in the learning process will learn much more quickly and retain more of what is learned than a student who doesn't actively participate.**

Physical Delivery

Do's

1. Use good eye contact.
2. Display poise.
3. Develop good stationary position.
4. Use a variety of gestures.
5. Use facial expressions.
6. Stay within student's ability.

Don'ts

1. Avoid poor eye contact.
2. Don't sway or bounce on hips.
3. Keep hands away from the face and hair.
4. Keep gestures up and away from the body and avoid unrelated hand movements.
5. Never talk with objects in your mouth.
6. Don't break your "speaking character."
7. Avoid adverse facial expressions.

Eye Contact Is:

1. Used to emphasize a point or express an emotion.
2. Used to "read" the nonverbal feedback of the audience.

Necessary amounts of eye contact:

1. 50% or more indicates a speaker is sincere, personal, confident, prepared, and friendly.
2. 15-30% indicates insecurity, dislike, deception, unpreparedness and indifference.

How to Organize Your Class

The way you arrange your class has a considerable impact on the learning environment. There are many ways to organize your class both when communicating information and while moving down the hill.

Line-Up People are conditioned to line up in this fashion whenever uncertainty causes them to seek the autonomy of being "one within the bunch". It is a very formal and controlling style. It allows the instructor to have good eye contact with the students, but they do not have eye contact with each other.

Semi-Circular A rounding of the line usually suggests that the formality is yielding to interest and curiosity. While this formation can be asked for, it is better to let it happen on its own. Then it becomes a signal that the relationships are warming. The instructor is still very much in control of the class, but now the class members can have eye contact with each other.

Instructor in the Center This is often used in the flat working with beginners. Voice projection is limited and the instructor must turn to observe, talk, and demonstrate. On the upside, no one student feels like they are the subjects of the instructor's undivided attention. They can relax and have fun just trying the task.

Instructor in the Group Here the instructor is part of the group. In all previous styles the instructor remained distanced from the group. This style can be highly motivating. It could be especially useful when trying to form an instructor/student team. Like some of the other formations this one would be difficult to do on a steep slope.

Free Form or Huddle This is the least structured looking class formation. This is usually a good sign of the integrity of the class. It is difficult to demonstrate from the middle of a tightly formed group, but this formation can be very effective when talking with students.

How Do You Get Your Class from Here to There?

Call Down This format is popular when trying to observe each student. While it provides the instructor with firm control of the group and a good opportunity to observe, students may find this method intimidating and time consuming as they wait their turn.

Follow Me

This is a classic arrangement often referred to as follow the leader. The instructor should lead whenever the choice of line should be made by the instructor, terrain is hazardous, speed needs to be controlled, or visibility is poor. When conditions are favorable a student may lead. This gives them an opportunity for a leadership role and provides the instructor with an opportunity to watch the students.

Ski By

Ski by is a formation where the instructor skis first and stops part way down the run. The students ski past the instructor stopping at a predetermined location. This may be combined with other styles like call down, follow me, free practice, or small group. This method allows the students to watch the instructor and then gives the instructor a chance to watch the students from a variety of angles. It may be difficult for the instructor to provide individual feedback unless he/she has a very good memory.

Free Practice

When using this format, it is important that the students have a clear picture of the skills/tasks that they should be practicing, and also a specific meeting place. This method allows students to practice at their own pace. The instructor is free to assist students who need extra help.

Small Group

Sometimes called micro-teaching, this method of moving students down the hill will often be used when incorporating reciprocal teaching. The instructor acts as a rover moving from group to group to answer questions, to listen for understanding, to provide feedback, and to keep everyone on task.

Line Rotation

This method is similar to a game of leapfrog (except we don't ski over each other). The first person skis a short distance and stops at the side of the run. When the first person stops, the next person skis past the first person and then stops. Eventually every class member will be standing along side the run. Then the top person starts the process over. This style can provide lots of practice and a good opportunity for watching each other, but it is difficult to use when runs are congested.

Variations on these are created when you have students in pairs (the buddy system) or in small groups.

Finding the Right Hill -- "Terrain Selection"

Look Around You!

Really **LOOK** at the hill you are on or the one you are heading for. Know your goal. What do you hope the class will accomplish in this area you have chosen? Will the terrain help them?

Check List for Terrain Selection:

Choose terrain that is:

- Free from congestion as possible.
- Out from underneath chair lifts.
- has a safe run-out
- is visible to others
- has snow conditions that are suitable for your students
- is the right level of difficulty - not too steep or difficult

Use the Contour of the Hill as an Aid:

- Concave - a shallow dip, which can be used for practicing linked turns against sides of dip.
- Convex - well rounded knoll or ridge. Used for beginning skidded turns since the edges can be easily released on this type of slope.
- Flat slope - for developing the ability to sideslip and experimenting with effects of weight distribution during lateral movements.

Remember!! -- You Will Blow a Good Lesson by Picking the Wrong Terrain.

You need to know the area. Decide ahead of time (when you are planning your lesson) where you are going to teach. Be flexible - snow conditions can change the difficulty of the terrain. Assess the hill again, on the way up the lift. **MOVE AROUND!!!** The class gets bored if you stay on the same hill all of the time (and so do you).

You can accelerate a student's progress and improve a good lesson plan by picking the right terrain. You can halt their progress, make them regress, and destroy their confidence by poor terrain selection.

Safety Management

In any sport, there are certain risks involved with participation – skiing/snowboarding is no different! As instructors, we must create awareness in our students of the risks (and pleasures) associated with skiing and riding. We teach not only skills but also attitudes.

Much of skiing responsibility is common sense if you have the benefit of experience. However, our students may not appreciate the dynamic environment in which we practice our sport. This is why we integrate the concepts of your Responsibility Code into every action we perform upon the slopes. Knowing the risks and following safe, responsible skiing practices can make all the

difference between an enjoyable and a miserable experience.

Your Responsibility Code is Taught Continuously

Responsibility is an integral part of each lesson plan you formulate. Be constantly on the lookout for opportunities to expand your students' responsibility awareness. The examples below are good starters but don't exhaust the possibilities. Keep in mind that each skiing situation is different and provides many chances to bring up this most important topic.

Equipment	Clothing
Student Mental State	Fear/Anxiety
Age and Physical Condition	Physical Handicaps
Approach to Lifts	Off Loading Lifts
Trail/Area Signs	Grooming Machines
Man Made Obstacles	Others on Slopes
Snow Conditions	Bright Light/Flat Light
Blizzard/Rain/Fog	Cold Temperatures/Frostbite
Sun and Wind	Eye/Skin Protection
Warm-up Exercises	Teaching/Practice Terrain
Rules Regarding Race Courses	Suggestions?

EVALUATING YOUR LESSON

1. Are you asking questions that force your students to think about their own skiing?
2. Are you able to demonstrate what you describe so they can really see it?
3. Are you positive in your approach? Patient? Encouraging? (Or do you only dwell on the errors of your students?)
4. Is everyone in your class getting equal time from you?
5. Are you tailoring the lesson to the needs of the group? (Or are you giving students the same canned version you gave someone else yesterday?)
6. Are your students skiing enough? (Or are you talking while they get cold?)
7. Do you look a student in the eye when you speak to him?
8. Do you encourage questions and discussion?
9. Do you let a student learn? (Or do you teach him constantly?)
10. Do you know each student's name in your class?
11. Does a student know when he has done something really well? And could he do it again and again if asked to?
12. Are you enthusiastic? Do you have a sense of humor in class?
13. Do you accept and respect each student without passing judgment on his ability to ski?
14. Do your students feel good about skiing as a result of the class? Do they feel good about themselves?

PACING

How fast or slow did you work with your students in the last exercise?

What was the most diverse group you have worked with and how did you pace that lesson for each student?

Physical

Mental

Full of Energy ----- Lack of Energy

Tasks: Easy ----- Difficult

Percentage of time spent on:

Skill acquisition

Practice

Talking

Fun

YOUR RESPONSIBILITY CODE

The mountains can be enjoyed in many ways. At winter recreation areas you may see people using alpine, snowboard, telemark, cross country or other specialized equipment, such as that used by disabled or other winter recreation enthusiasts. Regardless of how you decide to enjoy the slopes, always show courtesy to others and be aware that there are elements of risk in all winter recreation activities, that common sense and personal awareness can help reduce. Observe the code listed below and share it with other enthusiasts for an enjoyable mountain experience.

1. Always stay in control, and be able to stop or avoid other people or objects.
2. People ahead of you have the right of way. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
3. You must not stop where you obstruct a trail, or are not visible from above.
4. Whenever starting downhill or merging into a trail look uphill and yield to others.
5. Always use devices to help prevent runaway equipment.
6. Observe all posted signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails and out of closed areas.
7. Prior to using any lift, you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.

KNOW THE CODE. IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

This is a partial list. Be safety conscious.

Officially endorsed by: NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION

STUDENT INJURIES

If one of your students is injured in class, or if you and your class are the first to arrive at an accident, your very best judgment must be summoned before you do anything. At the very worst, you may have a life hinging upon your actions. At best, you have a student in pain and a shaken remainder of a class. What you do, and the order in which you do it is crucial. Because each situation is different, your good judgment at the time is all that can determine your course of action.

Remaining with the victim: If the victim is one of your students, you **MUST REMAIN WITH THEM**, until the patrol arrives. If the victim is not one of your students, someone who is responsible must remain with the victim until the patrol arrives (this could be another adult - while you and your class reports the accident).

Summoning the patrol: Accidents should be reported to a lift attendant who will notify the ski patrol by telephone or radio. The report must contain the **EXACT** location. Make sure the individual who does the reporting is clear about the location before going for help. The individual reporting the accident should also be aware that they should use the patrol line for quicker access to the lift operator at the bottom of the lift (do not stand in the public line, when you have an accident to report). Remove your skis or snowboard, or those of a willing bystander, and stand them securely crossed in an X in the snow ten to fifteen feet above the accident sight.

A second method to mark the sight visually for the patrol is to have someone hold their ski poles crossed high over their head near the accident victim.

Who goes for the patrol: A Ski Masters' supervisor, if they happen to be within hailing distance; or a passerby who appears to be a reasonably competent skier or rider who can report the accident to the nearest lift operator; or another Ski Masters instructor who has seen the accident and could, for a short while, merge his class with yours and work their way down to report the accident.

Making the victim comfortable: Do NOT move even the most minor appearing injury. Do NOT remove the victim's clothing or boots. Try to keep the person warm by putting your coat over him. NEVER give food or drink. NEVER administer any medications or over the counter drugs.

First aid before the patrol arrives: Do not administer first aid unless you are dealing with a life-threatening situation, such as massive bleeding, or a person who is not breathing or who has no heart beat. Do not touch blood or other fluids.

What becomes of the rest of the class during this time? Although a special friend may remain with the victim the rest of the class will just get cold and nervous if they stand around the accident scene. Hopefully, a supervisor has arrived or another Ski Masters' instructor with a class has merged the two classes for the purpose described above. If not, try to keep them involved. If the weather isn't terribly cold, let some of them contribute their coats to keep the victim warm (feeling like they are helping will help calm them down as well). Then send them a short distance away and give them something to practice while they hike vigorously up and down. (This is very fruitful in relieving their stress.) Sometimes it is possible to put one of the cooler and stronger students in charge without hurting anyone's ego, but make sure that they remain within earshot.

Above all, remain as calm as you possible can: Your comments and manner can make the difference between a victim going into shock or not, or they can turn a case of mild shock into severe life-threatening shock in a matter of seconds. Even if you don't feel calm, act like you are! Use a quiet, somewhat deliberate voice indicating calm authority. Reassure the victim: "The patrol is on its way. You'll be fine." Use the victim's name in the conversation. Using one's name touches the psyche with empathy.

When you get back to your class: Remember that they won't be performing as well as they were minutes before the accident. Even very strong students will be shaken up and may require a few minutes of confidence building. Devote the rest of the lesson to restoring their confidence, using lots of encouragement. It's better that they move rather than stop for the day.

Follow the above guidelines and wait for the patrol, unless, in your very best judgment the student's life is in jeopardy.

Incident Paperwork

When one of your students is injured in class, you **MUST** complete an Incident Report Form. It is extremely important that you have filled out these forms thoroughly and objectively. If an in-class injury goes to court, it's often three years later or more (possibly 17 years) when your memory of the incident will be only as complete as the form you filled out the day it happened. Only two accidents in 30 years have ever involved us in insurance claims. We have very fine insurance but it does require that we do our very best to accurately and objectively document the incident.

1. **BEFORE** you dismiss your class, make sure that you have the full name, address, and phone number of any injured student or person injured by one of your students while in class **AND** also the same information for **TWO** witnesses to the incident (addresses and phone numbers are on file for all Ski Masters students). The witnesses that you record should be adults, if at all possible. If you are teaching a children's class, you must try to find adult bystanders as witnesses.
2. Notify your supervisor as soon as possible about the injury and make a **SAME DAY APPOINTMENT** with your supervisor to complete the required incident report. Your supervisor will walk you through the detailed procedure to help you fill out the form. Both you and your supervisor must sign completed Incident Reports.

Incident Follow-up

If it is possible, go to the patrol building to check on your student. It is appropriately nice to send a get well card and have the rest of the class sign it the following week if the person has not returned to class. Your genuine concern for the person's well being is extremely important.

Instructor Injuries

These are not allowed. We shoot the wounded! Seriously if you are injured on the job, you should report the injury immediately to your supervisor or the ski school Director. You and your supervisor must fill out an Incident Form

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Great customer service is important and is a keep component that keeps Ski Masters Customers coming back year after year, as well as recommending our program to others.

- Snow sports instructors usually spend more time with the guest than any other mountain employee.
- Customers return to businesses where they get good service - you are instrumental in creating return business. Good customer service can help build customer loyalty.
- Customer service & good teaching are founded on the idea of caring combined with common sense.

Facts about poor customer service -

96% of customers who feel they were served poorly do not complain.

90% of those who feel they were served poorly will not return as your guests.

Each person who feels as if he or she was served poorly will tell at least 9 other people, and 13% will tell at least 20 others.

95% of customers will return if their problem is resolved on the spot.

Surveys asking customers about why they took their business elsewhere. Customer Service Excellence, by Debra MacNeil, Burr Ridge, IL: Business One/Mirror Press, 1994

3% moved

5% developed other relationships

9% competitive reasons

14% dissatisfied with the product

68% an attitude of indifference toward the customer by the owner, manager, or employee

Loyal Customers

- **Give referrals**
- **Expand their business with you**
- **Come to you instead of going to competitor**
- **Willing to pay more**
- **Are easier to serve because they are cooperative & friendlier to you**

How Does Customer Service Work?

Customers come to you to benefit from your expertise as an instructor. Their background and the environment shape their motivations. Similarly, your actions are shaped by your background and your working environment. Your job is to try to understand the customer's needs and motivations, propose a plan to satisfy those needs and benefit the customer, and confirm that your actions have satisfied the customer's needs. Ideally, you not only meet the customer's needs, but you exceed their expectations.

Steps to Customer Service -

Assess the customer's needs - try to understand the customer. You ask questions about their attitudes about the area, lessons, and the sport in general. Also ask questions about their motivation for being at the area and taking lessons, their goals, and their personal needs. Pay close attention to body language as well as their verbal clues.

Propose the plan - Confirm customer needs (restate & ask if they agree), formulate a plan of action that meets the agreed upon needs and benefits the customer, summarize the agreed-upon benefits and confirm that the plan indeed benefits the customer. Ask the customer if it is OK to proceed with the plan.

Provide the service - be ready to reassess needs and motivations as you proceed, and adjust the plan accordingly.

Close the transaction - Review key services and benefits provided, confirm that the customer indeed benefited, and check for unmet needs. If you have time, move to unmet needs.

Follow up - with the customer about the next steps and his or her reaction to the service.

Customer Expectations - Goal Meet or Exceed Customer Expectations

- *reliability* - do the right thing the first time & on time
- *credibility* - product and service claims you & the ski school make have to be honest, and the reputation of the ski school is based on fact not fiction. Employees are trustworthy and handle problems directly.
- *appeal* - premises are clean and free of clutter. Staff is dressed appropriately and conducts business professionally. Product information is easy to find, displayed neatly, and easy to read. Interactions with the customers are pleasant and convey accurate information.
- *responsiveness* - facilities and services are easily accessible. Personnel are helpful and available, and are able to solve problems in a reasonable time frame while keeping customers informed of the process.
- *concern* - personnel treat customers as individuals and emphasize with their concerns.

REASONS FOR MOST CUSTOMER DISSATISFACTION -

unkept promises
rude & inefficient service
conflicting messages or misinformation from employees
feelings of being victimized by the business operations
delays and long waits
lack of communication between parties in dispute
treatment of customers as being uninformed; wrong, defective or inferior product
feelings of being dismissed or discounted by personnel
business integrity or honesty that is questionable

LEARNING TO UNDERSTAND CUSTOMERS

Assessing motivation

Using effective communication skills -

1. Use open and closed questions - Closed limit responses (how many, when, who) open -requires more than yes/no or numbered response (how, why, which, tell me, or describe)
2. Actively listen (maintain eye contact, smile, do not interrupt, articulate clearly, stay focused on the conversation and eliminate distractions, nod in acknowledgment, repeat important points that the customer put forward, probe for additional information, take notes if possible)
3. Provide/use effective feedback
4. Be aware of verbal and non-verbal cues - 20% of your message is communicated face-to-face with words - 45% quality of your voice tone and inflection, balance body language
5. Avoid the use of jargon - keep language clear, simple, and enthusiastic
6. Confirm the proposed course of action or check for understanding.

Negative Body Language - frowning, offering a weak or limp handshake, slouching, keeping your arms crossed or your hands in your pockets, tapping your fingers, glancing at watch or clock frequently, looking up, down or away from your customer

Positive Body Language - smiling, offering a solid handshake, sitting up straight, keeping your arms relaxed and open, maintaining eye contact, leaning forward to listen closely, and nodding your head in acknowledgment or encouragement.

Loyalty Burners - apathy, brush-off, coldness, condescension, robotism, rulebook, run-around.

Loyalty Builders - trust the customer, go the extra mile for the customer, recover when a mistake is made - acknowledgment & solve, show appreciation for the customer, take the initiative to help the customer.

Steps To Resolving Problems -

1. Acknowledge the customer & indicate your availability to help
2. Assess the situation - use questioning skills & listen
3. Affirm your understanding - paraphrase & repeat key points
4. Analyze alternatives
5. Agree on a plan

A guest is not always right, but he or she is still your guest. When a problem is brought to your attention, you "own it" or are responsible for managing it until the problem is solved.

At times you will not be able to resolve a customer's problem no matter how well you practice these approaches. Your customer may be too emotional to cooperate, or the action may exceed your authority or area of responsibility. When this happens, bring others who can solve the problem into the process where appropriate. Know organizational limits, and know where to go when you have reached them.