TEACHING THEORY

FOR NORDIC INSTRUCTION

INCLUDING

C OMMUNICATION, MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

SECTION 2

TEACHING – THEORY, SAFETY, COMMUNICATION AND MANAGEMENT

Acknowledgements:

In preparing this manual, I would like to acknowledge the work done over the past years of NCIS and APSI by Bruce Wharrie, the first TD Nordic when NCIS joined APSI. His work and the fabled 'Nordic Green Book' was used as a primary reference and guide in preparing Section 1 and 2 of the manual. I would also acknowledge the valuable input by members of the Nordic Technical Committee, with a special mention for Peter Holmes from Latrobe University whose expertise by amendment is reflected throughout the Manual.

2.1 TEACHING - INSTRUCTION THEORY

2.1.1 Instruction Theory - What does it take to become a good Instructor?

A truly excellent instructor attains a high level of competency in all areas of the instructors' curriculum. It takes years of training and experience to acquire these skills but there are several qualities that all great snow sport instructors possess inherently. Some of these qualities are:

- Empathy (Caring)
- A concern for client safety
- Friendliness
- Patience
- Fun
- Genuineness
- Ability to motivate / encourage
- Humility

If you possess these qualities you have the potential to become an excellent instructor because these qualities create the best learning environment. If you do not, then you need to develop and improve these qualities if you want to become an excellent instructor.

2.1.2 Instruction Theory - Instructor Centred Learning

The effectiveness of classic teaching and learning theories has been challenged over the last years. For many, the perception of a teacher is one who is teacher centred. That means, the teacher is the boss, they decide what should be learnt and how it will be learnt, and they are the only one who knows anything about the subject. Back in the 1970s this would have been a good instructor.

2.1.3 Instruction Theory - Student Centred Learning

More recently we have discovered that a good teacher is definitely not teacher centred but student centred. This means the focus of the lesson depends predominantly on the goals and wishes of the students and the instructor's role is to fulfil those goals the best way possible. This is a huge improvement.

2.1.4 Instruction Theory - Subject Centred Learning

More recently still, experts are realising that a good teacher is subject centred. In a student centred system the students' wishes may be taken care of, but the teacher still decides how the whole learning process takes place, which inhibits effective learning.

Subject centred without pretence of superiority. One of the challenges a teacher has is to understand how each student learns, and what works best for each student. Both teacher and student have to learn how to move into and within the learning segment, making it a shared learning experience. The teacher continuously watches with great curiosity how the student learns and takes to the subject, and how the students are able to help each other with the learning process.

2.1.5 The Instructing Dilemma

As soon as the teacher assumes they already know how the students should learn, they will do nothing more than interfere with the learning process. There is an extraordinary story, a true story, that to us sounds utterly preposterous, but that proves that teachers all too easily interfere rather than promote learning.

> *In 1978 Georges Joubert conducted an experiment to test how effective their teaching system was. He selected two groups of students that were as closely matched (age, sex, background, etc.) as possible. Both groups of students had never skied*

before. One group was given an instructor (considered one of the finest in the country); the other group was not given an instructor. The only exposure to the sport the group without an instructor had was the odd skier that skied by on the terrain they were skiing on. Both groups skied on exactly the same type of terrain and the experiment lasted a whole week.

To start with, the group with an instructor progressed more quickly. By the middle of the week the group without an instructor had caught up and by the end of the week the same group was MUCH better than the group with an instructor.

How on earth could this be? There are some very clear reasons for this outcome and as you read them you will understand why.

The group with an instructor obviously progressed more quickly to start with, because they were shown how to perform the basic manoeuvres, while the other group had to go through a process of trial and error to figure out how to "ski".

Once the group without an instructor had figured it out, however, they progressed far more quickly. This is why. The group bonded better and more quickly. They had a fantastic time laughing at each other, making fun of each other and all inhibitions were lost. Everybody had a go, without fear of embarrassment or failure. Because the group bonded so well, they were constantly helping each other. Every time one of the members discovered something they would instantly show the others and share the movements and associated feelings. The entire group was experimenting with all sorts of movements and feelings and sharing them with everybody (including feelings and experiences from related sports). They were constantly watching each other and giving each other specific feedback. Each individual developed a high level of intrinsic feedback, that is, they learned how to give themselves feedback. The group must have skied and practiced at least ten times as much as the other group.

The group bonding also allowed for great interaction and discussion about each other's learning styles. On one occasion, a group member was standing still at the bottom of the run having a laugh swinging their backside from side to side. Everybody joined in and from it, rhythm and shorter turns were discovered.

By the end of the week the group without an instructor was not only far better, they also skied and moved more naturally while the other group looked rigid and contrived.

What is the moral of the story? Are we better off without instructors? Certainly not! We simply have to be careful that we refrain from making the mistakes that the instructor made with his group. For example he:

- Failed to create a fun, relaxed and comfortable learning environment.
- Was more instructor centred, rather than student centred, in his teaching style and therefore failed to find out vital information about his students.
- Failed to teach people how to learn. (i.e. teach people how to become aware of the changes they experience).
- Failed to give his students enough practise and experimenting time to gain a feeling for the learning segment.

2.1.6 Instruction Theory – The Instructing and Learning Equation

A simplistic yet effective way of understanding is through the instructing and learning equation, which states:
Effective teaching and learning is a result of student and subject centred teaching + outcome based objectives + experiential learning style + service driven attitude + learning partnership methodology.

Furthermore, the successful teaching of skills improvement can be a result of the following:

Skill instructed ▸ Dependent upon: Lesson quality.
▾
Skill acquisition ▸ Dependent upon: Time available, Suitable terrain/surface, Physical and Mental capabilities, Ski equipment, Weather, Ski Companions, Amount of practice.

2.1.7 Different Approaches to Skills Instruction

- Teach a New Skill on Old Terrain.
- Teach an Old Skill on New Terrain
- Combination: combine several basic skills = intermediate skill.
- Cross-pollination: combine basic skills with an intermediate skill = another intermediate skill.

2.1.8 The Instructional Process

The instruction process involves the following during each and every lesson:

- Repetition of a Movement Pattern
- Monitoring
- Evaluating
- Amending
- Trying a different approach when you see the current one is not working with everyone

2.1.9 Fundamental Skiing Skills

Fundamental skills = movements (balance + rotary + edge control + pressure control) + timing + anticipation + kinaesthetic feedback

Balance

- Now = existing action + body compensatory position.
- Future = anticipated future action + body compensatory position.

Rotary movements

- Body – angulation movement.
- Leg(s) – turn/twist ski/s with whole or part of leg(s).

Edge Control

- Static – dependent on anticipated and experienced snow-ski interaction. (e.g. side stepping)
- Dynamic – dependent on anticipated and experienced snow-ski interaction. (e.g. snowplough)

Pressure Control

- Leg – transfer of pressure through leg and foot and toes to ski then snow (e.g. diagonal stride).
- Arm – transfer of pressure through arm and pole to snow (e.g. double poling).

2.2 TEACHING – THE LESSON INGREDIENTS - "THE NINE LESSONS ESSENTIALS"

2.2.1 Lesson Ingredients - Introduction to 'The Nine Lesson Essentials'

The Nine Lesson Essentials is a structured teaching system that APSI recommends to teach a lesson. Successful teaching depends on how well you understand and apply a system to all your lessons. Failure to do so, such as in the case of the Nine Essential approach, missing one or two of the nine points, can result in a lesson of lesser quality and fewer returning students. A lesson simply cannot function well without a systematic approach. The Nine Lesson Essentials presents a good framework for this which is why we recommend and teach it.

The nine lesson essentials are:

1. Introduction
2. Identifying students and their Goals
3. Planning the Lesson
4. Presenting Information
5. Demonstrating
6. Practicing
7. Movement Analysis
8. Feedback and Correction
9. Lesson Summary

It takes considerable expertise to understand how to apply the nine lesson essentials correctly. The "introduction" and the "summary" are the only points that are covered **once** during the lesson, while the others are repeated any number of times. You are constantly evaluating the lesson, which means, the situation, the students and yourself, to decide which point to revisit. It could be point two to confirm that the students are happy with the lesson so far, or point (3) to re-plan the lesson, (4) to present something new, (5) to re-demonstrate, (6) to give them more practise, or (7) to analyse their

skiing again. Keep looping back and repeating the appropriate points until the time has come to summarise the lesson.

2.2.2 Lesson Ingredients - The Introduction

At the start of a lesson, students are often nervous or intimidated (especially if it is their first lesson) and observe you intently to find out what sort of person you are. It is essential that you display the important instructor qualities (e.g. empathy, friendliness, patience, etc.) of a good teacher, and not just during the introduction, to elicit the students' trust. You should display a manner that shows the students that you are human and not some "skiing god" who is too cool for your students so that they are comfortable opening up to you. Without trust and a feeling of confidence in your abilities, the lesson may not be set up for success.

An exact sequence is dependent upon time limitations, location, weather, topography, group composition, situation management, ski school protocol, etc. however, the following exhaustive list of things to cover in the Introduction is given as a guide on what you might include.

- Be early or on time – Planning to be five minutes early will allow leeway for unforeseen circumstances. Clients do not appreciate paying to wait for a ski instructor.
- Professional Identification – Ski school or business jacket with a nametag.
- Introduce yourself.
- Establish a logical starting point
- Officially start the lesson
- Elicit and remember the students' names.
- Introduce your students to each other - names, where from, staying at, occupation, previous ski experience, and lesson expectations.
- For a first time lesson give a lesson overview.
- Cover Safety and Risk Management.. Delineate Boundaries of Activity.
- Be aware of the danger of ski pole tips.

- Mention Hydration.
- Appropriate clothing for activity, weather and snow environment.
- Disabilities and Medical Conditions (Diabetes, Asthma, Dicky Knees).
- Be alert to potential hypothermia victims. Particularly observe potential "temperature intolerant" persons because of their quickness to become hypothermic. (Generally, thinner people are potentially more at risk to hypothermia due to less insulating body fat.)
- Ask the students what they would like to learn or get out of the lesson. Based on this, you give a lesson overview. For example: "Learning to snowplough turn is important because……."
- The Learning Contract – A subtle and fun contract with the students that learning skiing involves practice both during and AFTER the lesson.
- Develop the lesson's aims and objectives from the students and explain the how and where of the lesson.
- Equipment – explanation or visual check of necessary and recommended equipment required for the safe and easy enjoyment of the sport
- Stretching

2.2.3 Lesson Ingredients – The Introduction - Introduction Activity

Think of a fun and unique way to get students to introduce themselves.

2.2.4 Lesson Ingredients – The Introduction - Identifying Students and Their Goals

This point involves asking lots of open questions and active listening to learn as much as possible about your students. You will need to utilise all your communication skills.

Finding out what the students' goals are is absolutely crucial to the success of the lesson. Every student has goals and if you fail to discover these, the chances of providing a successful lesson are slim, as

are the chances of convincing them to return for more lessons. Some ways you can ask the students about their goals:

- What are you keen to get out of the lesson?
- What would you like to work on today?
- What are your goals for the lesson?
- What would you like to learn today?

2.2.5 Lesson Ingredients – The Introduction - Developing a Lesson Plan

Once the goals have been established you decide on an appropriate lesson plan and propose this to the students. The plan must include the how's and where's of each activity. If the plan is accepted unanimously the lesson continues. If the plan is not accepted by all, you need to re-discuss the plan until all the students are satisfied. It could be that some of the goals are not realistic or that some of them can be met the next day or later in the week.

The process of asking the students how the lesson is going MUST be repeated regularly. It not only shows that you care for the students but it also prevents unfortunate situations where you think you are on the right track but the students do not.

2.2.6 Lesson Ingredients – The Introduction - Identifying the students

If students were identical, you would use the same teaching approach for all of them. Even though this is obviously not the case, many instructors make the mistake of applying the same "standard" lesson every time they teach, with little regard for each individual in the

group. The best teachers, on the other hand, find out exactly what sort of students they have, and draw from their vast knowledge, understanding and experience to construct (together with the students) the most appropriate lesson.

- What you need to find out about your students throughout the lesson (it may take more than one lesson):
- Where they are in the scale of sportiness and what is their fitness level?
- Do they take part in skiing related sports such as roller-blading, waterskiing or surfing, etc.?
- Where are they in the scale of aggressiveness? Are they gung-ho or timid?
- How do they learn? You MUST ask each student how he or she learns the best. If they are unsure, help them become more aware of the learning styles. This is essential for knowing how to focus on each student to help optimise his or her learning.
- How motivated are they to learn? You may need to help motivate them to enjoy the sport.
- Have they had lessons before? Many? What did their last instructor teach them?
- What sort of personality are they? Do they like to be pushed? Or prefer to be gently coaxed along?

As you can see, all of these points will greatly influence how you teach and how the students learn.

2.2.7 Lesson Ingredients – The Introduction - Planning the Lesson

Having received confirmation from the group that your broad lesson plan is satisfactory, you can go about planning the details of the lesson. The following points have to be considered throughout the lesson:

- What and where is the most suitable terrain?
- How are the snow surface conditions? (e.g. icy, ungroomed, slushy, trail debris, snow cover)

- What is the weather like? (e.g. temperature, wind direction, flat light, hail, rain, sunny)
- Lesson length. (e.g. 60 minutes, 90 minutes, half day, full day, multi-day)
- Group composition.
- Safety Considerations.
- Learning styles appropriate to the group.
- Teaching styles and teaching tactics.

2.2.8 Lesson Ingredients – The Introduction - Presenting Information

It is somewhat of a challenge, even an art, to be able to explain skiing in a clear and simple way. An inexperienced instructor easily falls into the trap of making the explanations too complicated, confusing or long-winded. The following key points will help you to deliver good explanations:

- You must remember that many skiing / boarding concepts may be completely foreign to your students. Before they can even hope to attempt a new task you have to give them a mental image or picture of the learning segment. A demonstration obviously serves this purpose extremely well, but when explaining the task the best way to create an image is to use clever analogies. Try and come up with all sorts of analogies for all the concepts that will appeal to the different students in your group.
- Keep it short and simple (K.I.S.S.). Avoid talking too much. Three sentences is a good aim.
- You need a very thorough understanding of the mechanics of skiing. The more knowledgeable you are, the more simply you can explain skiing to your students.
- Use everyday words to express yourself.
- The explanation has to be appropriate for the age group that you are teaching, for example, a 3-year-old, 14 year old or an adult.
- Spend time rehearsing the explanations to yourself or fellow instructors to ensure they are clear and concise.

- Practice explaining the same concept as many different ways as you can think of, because not all students comprehend in the same manner.
- Use your poles to draw diagrams in the snow to compliment your explanations.
- Technical terms are often convenient to use and fun for the students to learn. Use technical terms when appropriate, but first explain to the class what they mean.
- Always explain WHY when you teach a certain aspect of skiing. A survey showed that one of the biggest complaints in beginner lessons was that the students had no idea why they were being taught certain exercises or steps.
- Check to see if your students have understood the explanation using open questions. Be alert to students with a confused look.
- Confident presentation. (i.e. smiling, direct)

2.2.9 Lesson Ingredients – Demonstrating

- Demonstrating is as critical as explaining.
- Demonstrate clearly and cleanly so that the students can easily see the task you are asking them to do.
- Demonstrate from different angles if possible.
- Focus the students' attention on the important part of the demonstration.
- Exaggerate when appropriate (correctly and/or incorrectly), to emphasise a part of the technique.
- When skiing with your students demonstrate the same techniques your group is striving to make, not advanced turns for your own practice.
- Demonstrate the skill suitable for the terrain.
- Demonstrate the skill efficiently.
- Demonstrate the skill correctly.
- Explanations must match the demonstration and vice-versa.

- Short explanation of how, why and where.
- Limit explanations to three sentences.

- Refer questions after one practise run if possible.
- Style and technique appropriate to the group.
- Visually elegant, efficient, practised and precise.
- Not too flashy, perceived and truly achievable by most if not all members of the group with practice.
- Focus client attention with accentuated body movements.
- Relaxed physical form so as to promote the perception that nordic skiing is easy, comfortable and achievable.
- One or two passes depending on technique, weather, clients, and terrain.
- Demonstrations passes include:
- Coming toward clients.
- Going away from clients.
- Across in front of clients.
- Angled across and towards group.
- Angled across and away from group.
- Verbal cues during demonstration. (For auditory learners.)

2.2.10 Lesson Ingredients – Demonstration - Choice and Use of Terrain

The choice of terrain for each activity as well as the general area for most of the activities is paramount to a successful lesson. Also monitor the appropriateness of the terrain and quickly, if possible, move to a more suitable area rather than having a bad lesson due to inflexibility. Some of your students may also be able to assist in knowing or finding the best terrain.

The choice of terrain must take the following issues into account:

- Risk and Safety Management.
- Being able to set spatial and temporal lesson boundaries.
- Select and advise the most suitable skiing terrain to suit skier's ability and be appropriate for the technique being used. For

many techniques this means having appropriate forward speed capability. This is extremely important for downhill techniques where downhill speed dictates the skills being used.
- Group readiness.
- How to get there.
- Legality of using the area.
- Hard snow – ski hard and Soft snow – ski soft. (For both of these the objective is to float across the surface of the snow – to caress it for optimal glide.)

2.2.11 Lesson Ingredients - Slow Demonstration and Explanation

- Clear and precise body language.
- No more than three steps at a time.
- Words to match action.
- Correctness of demonstration and explanation.

2.2.12 Lesson Ingredients – Practicing

There are many factors that influence the learning process. It may take one, two, three or more attempts before the students gain a feeling for the task, depending on its difficulty. After each attempt the level of understanding and feeling improves, until there is a breakthrough. Research shows that the learning process is optimised when the students are allowed freedom to experiment with the task and its related movements and feelings. Not only that, the more ways you can show them to perform the task, the more success you will have targeting the different learning styles. Allow the group to share their learning experiences with you and the rest of the group.

This is also the time to enhance the practice and learning with different teaching styles and class handling methods. Have them pair up, behind each other, shadowing each other, skiing / boarding down by themselves, in fact in as many different formations as you can think of.

Practice in varied conditions. Studies have shown that deeper learning occurs if a skill is practiced in a wide range of conditions. Keep

confirming with the group that the balance of teaching and practising is correct. You might be enthralled with what you are teaching the group but in actual fact they would much rather be skiing and practising more. Or vice versa.

2.2.13 Lesson Ingredients - Movement Analysis

Skiing, whether a snowplough turn or a dynamic diagonal stride, is made up of an appropriate blend of the four skills (See 2.1.9). Therefore, to analyse a skier you need to analyse how the individual skills are performed and how appropriately they are blended. Successful analysis can only happen if you:

- Have a good understanding of the skiing skills.
- Understand the movement analysis system.
- Possess a clear picture in your head of the correct movements of all the technique being taught.

There are several possibilities for positioning yourself to analyse the students. You can watch from below, from above, and from the side, ski right behind, or ski next to the student. Each of these angles gives you a different perspective and can provide you with vital clues about their skiing.

2.2.14

REFER TO THE NORDIC INSTRUCTIONAL MANUAL FOR AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW OF MOVEMENT ANALYSIS

#Use at least two viewing positions to do movement analysis – side, in front, behind....

For downhill techniques watch the first couple of turns to determine:

- What sort of turns the student is making to both sides.
- The overall coordination and attitude of the skier.
- The body stance.

Watch the next sets of turns to determine how the other three skills are performed.

- Stance
- Edging - watch the ski performance and angulation (knee, hip and overall inclination).
- Rotary - watch the legs and upper body to see where the turning force originates from and how it is performed (e.g. smoothly or jerkily).
- Pressure control - watch for smooth or jerky movements and whether the skier is being thrown around.

Prioritise the areas that need improvement.

If it is poor enough to prevent the other three skills from being performed properly, work on the stance first. Work on the edging skill first if the stance is okay, but the skis are so flat that the skier has trouble making turns (lower levels), or if the other skills are good but the skier is ready to improve the controlled skidding (later and faster, stronger, upper levels). Work on the rotary skill first if the stance is okay and there is sufficient edging but the turning force originates from the upper body (lower levels).
For flat techniques watch the first few minutes to determine:

- What sort of glide length the student is making on each ski.
- The overall coordination and attitude of the skier.
- The stance and balance maintenance.
- Rhythm of body motions

- What sort of follow through with body, arms and legs is happening.

Watch the next set of runs to determine how the other skills are performed.

- Poling – angle of, planting location, follow through, holding of
- Weight Transfer – synchronized with ski powering action, synchronized with poling and upper body movements
- Pressure Control - watch for smooth or jerky movements and whether there is excessive and inefficient upper body movement.

Prioritise the areas that need improvement.

If stance is poor it may prevent the other three skills from being performed properly, so work on the stance first. Work on the rhythm skill first if the stance is okay. If the stance is okay and there is good rhythm, work on adding power or increasing rapidity of movement to the skill.

For uphill techniques watch the first climb to determine:

- The stance, looking direction and balance maintenance.
- Backward slippage.
- Weighting style on each ski.
- What sort of glide length the student is making on each ski.
- The overall coordination and attitude of the skier.
- Rhythm of body motions.
- What sort of follow through with body, arms and legs.

Also watch for the other skills that are performed.

- Poling – angle of, planting location, follow through, holding of
- Weight Transfer – synchronized with ski powering action, synchronized with poling and upper body movements, use of hip weight transfer.

- Pressure Control - watch for smooth or jerky movements and whether there is excessive and inefficient upper body movement.
- Uphill ski placement – angle (if applicable), distance up the slope.

Prioritise the areas that need improvement.

Work on the correct body position appropriate for the slope angle, particularly if it is poor enough to prevent the other skills from being performed properly. Work on the rhythm skill first if the stance is okay, followed by ski placement and weight transfer. If the stance is okay and there is good rhythm, ski placement and weight transfer, work on adding power to the movements or increasing the rapidity of movement to the skill.

2.2.15 Lesson Ingredients - Feedback

Feedback is the information a performer receives about the performance of a skill, either while they are performing it or after the skill is completed. Feedback can either be external, from an outside source (e.g. instructor or fellow student) or internal from the individuals sensory systems. The instructor's aim is to use external feedback to help train and develop the student's internal awareness. This is the only way true learning can occur. In other words we are not teaching the students skiing, we are teaching them how to learn to ski.

Remember that a true learning environment is one where the instructor is not the only "teacher". The students are learning, but you are also learning how your students learn. Encourage students to share feelings and ideas with each other. The manner in which we deliver the feedback has to be based on the following principles:

- Positive and Encouraging
- Simple
- Accurate

- Specific

The principles also include the following styles:

- Individual and/or group feedback
- Correction of obvious weakness
- Setting appropriate tasks
- Student satisfaction
- Video analysis and feedback

2.2.16 Lesson Ingredients - Positive and Encouraging Feedback

FOR EVERY POINT OF CRITICISM, GIVE THREE POINTS OF PRAISE

"Praise, praise and more praise." Always start by giving the students positive feedback about their skiing, including individual skill accomplishment (e.g. Point out skills that are improving as compared to the start of the lesson or assurance of progression towards accomplishment of a skill). This is followed by advice on how to improve or progress to the next level. Feedback is NEVER meant to degrade or humiliate, but rather to help and encourage the students to improve so that they enjoy the sport even more. REMEMBER: there are times when you need to allow the students time to practise and experiment with very carefully selected feedback and lots of encouragement.

2.2.17 Lesson Ingredient - Simple Feedback

Do not bother giving feedback if it is not simple. Nobody, not even a world cup skier, responds to complicated feedback.

2.2.18 Lesson Ingredient - Accurate Feedback

Accurate feedback depends on how good your analysis is. If you see exactly what is incorrect you can give accurate feedback. If you are not sure, the feedback becomes vague or simply wrong.

2.2.19 Lesson Ingredient - Specific Feedback

Rather than saying, "well done, that is good", be more specific about what exactly is good such as arm position, bent knee, supple body position, leaning back, etc.

2.2.20 Lesson Ingredient – Correction

The mistakes need to be prioritised and then worked on ONE at a time. Refer to an early point of the nine lesson essentials (identifying the students) to help decide how to approach the correction. It is crucial that you consider these points (i.e. athletic or not, attitude, personality, learning preference, etc.) carefully because they will greatly influence how you correct your students. Use the following tactics into consideration when correcting someone's skiing:

- Use terrain that is easy for the student.
- Use appropriate snow conditions.
- Use a variety of appropriate exercises to help correct the skills.
- Use appropriate speed and rhythm.
- Demonstrate clearly.
- Make sure their equipment is sound.
- Check that they understand your feedback.

2.2.21 Lesson Ingredient - The Lesson Summary

If you give a good lesson but fail to include a summary the lesson is far from successful. Reasons for giving a summary are:

- Client Learning Technique.
- Product Promotion and Repeat Clientele.
- Professional Development.

The summary format is dependent upon:

- Time available
- Location

- Weather
- Clients
- Your Personality

Some different summary formats are:

- None. (No summary.)
- Instructor telling.
- Around the circle with each telling.
- Each client – telling two items learnt.
- Q . "What do you feel was the most important thing you learned in this lesson?"
- Printed Pamphlet with Promotion/Marketing information.
- Written list of techniques, perhaps on a business card.
- Combinations of above.

The lesson should conclude exactly where the lesson officially began. The following points need to be covered in the lesson summary:

- Checking for overall lesson understanding
- Briefly review the lesson progressions and techniques covered during the lesson. Use the Active Recap Method - In a circle, ask each participant what skill/exercise learnt sticks in their mind, verbally repeat and if possible get everyone into static or dynamic position.
- Confirm which goals and objectives were and were not met. Provide a plan for a future lesson to cover the goals that were not met.
- Discuss all the improvements made.
- Where to from here. Repeat the plan for the next lesson.
- Give them some things to work on after the lesson and suggest where they should practice.
- Next Step - During summary explain what the skills just learnt could lead to e.g. telemark running to the basic telemark.
- Ask for customer feedback on lesson style and content and areas of lesson improvement.
- Advise clients of resort information that may be useful.

- Sell what's next in the skill

progression.
- Sell yourself and your ski school as a valuable resource for skills attainment and information.
- Thank them and invite them to come back for another lesson. (Business Card)
- Business Promotion - promote your ski school, have rates and pamphlets handy.
- Warm down exercises.
- If asked, advise clients of where to ski.
- Officially close the lesson.

2.3 TEACHING - ACTIVITY TECHNIQUES

Use the following techniques to improve student activity, lesson ownership and learning responsibility:

- Let's all try this together".
- Monitoring the understanding feedback signals.
- Develop "Mini-Lessons" for more complex techniques. Break things down to basic skiing skills that can be worked on in isolation then in combination.
- Logical progression from one skill to the next.
- Balanced information and practice.
- Drills and activities need to contain some form of enjoyment if possible or appropriate.
- Manageable amounts of practical and theoretical information.
- Adequate and appropriately timed breaks e.g. morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, snack and drink rests/stops.
- Ensure adequate rest periods. (Depending on length of lesson.)
- Balance direct instruction with initial practise opportunity.

2.4 ACTIVITY JUSTIFICATIONS

All ski lesson components must be justifiable, such as:

- Safety skills
- Skill building block
- Fun and enjoyment
- Clients' needs
- Clients' aims and objectives

You may need to justify your actions to:

- Your clients.
- Your fellow Instructors.
- Your supervisor.
- Your employer.
- The APSI.
- The Land Manager.
- The law enforcement agencies including Police Search and Rescue.
- The Coroner.
- The Judiciary.
- Your partner
- And to yourself.

2.5 GROUP MANAGEMENT

2.5.1 Group Management - The Challenges

Each group attending your ski lesson provides one or more of the following challenges:

- Injuries and the possible requirement for first aid.
- Lost Client.
- Incompatible personalities causing friction between group members or between yourself and group members.

- Late arrivals.
- Children in an adult group.
- Inappropriately dressed clients.
- Inappropriate or incorrect Equipment.
- Inclement Weather.
- Busy Meeting Places.
- Busy Teaching Areas.
- Problem Clients.

2.5.2 Group Management – Objective

It is your job to manage the challenges presented into a quality lesson product for each client.

2.5.3 Group Management - Training and Result

Group management is one of the most important aspects of your lesson.
Quality group management can be learned through training, experience and analytical observation.
The prominent result of good group management is a high level of real customer service.

2.6 SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

2.6.1 Safety Considerations – Introduction

It is up to us as instructors not only to teach the techniques of skiing, but also to educate and inform our students of all related safety aspects. In each lesson, devote some time to educating your students on the facets of safety. Use rest stops or warm-up times for these discussions.
Regardless of how you enjoy your snow sport, always:

- Show courtesy to others and

- Be aware that THERE ARE INHERENT RISKS in all snow recreational activities that common sense and personal awareness can reduce.
- Snowsport risks include:
- Rapid changes in weather
- Rapid changes in surface conditions
- Collision with:
- Other people
- Hazards such as Rocks, Trees, Stumps, Bare spots, Signs, infrastructure, Vehicles (Grooming Machines & Snowmobiles.)

2.6.2 Safety Considerations - Responsibility Codes

THE ALPINE RESPONSIBILITY CODE

Regardless of how you enjoy your snow sport, always show courtesy to others and be aware the THERE ARE INHERENT RISKS in all snow recreational activities that common sense and personal awareness can reduce. These risks include rapid changes in weather and surface conditions, collision with other people as well as natural and artificial hazards such as rocks, trees, stumps, bare spots, lift towers and snow making equipment.

KNOW AND OBSERVE THE CODE BELOW IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY.

- Know your ability and always stay in control and be able to stop and avoid other people or objects. It is your responsibility to stay in control on the ground and in the air.
- Take lessons from professional instructors to learn and progress.
- Use appropriate protective equipment to minimise the risk of injury.
- Before using any lift you must have the knowledge and ability to load, ride and unload safely.
- Observe and obey all signs and warnings. Keep off closed trails or runs.
- Give way to people below and beside you on the hill. It is your responsibility to avoid them.
- Do not stop where you are not clearly visible from above. Look uphill and give way to others when entering/exiting a trail or starting downhill.
- Always ensure your equipment is in good condition and use suitable restraining devices to avoid runaway skiing/boarding equipment, even when riding chairlifts.
- Do not ski, board, ride a lift or undertake any other alpine activity if your ability is impaired by drugs or alcohol.
- If you are involved in, or witness an accident or collision, alert Ski Patrol, remain at the scene and identify yourself to the Ski Patrol.

The Nordic Specific Responsibility Code

- Always ski in control.
- Give way to skiers coming downhill
- Keep left and ski in the preferred direction.
- Give-way to other skiers when entering a trail or starting downhill.
- Do not obstruct or walk on ski trails.
- Ski only on groomed or marked trails that are within your ability.
- Do not ski alone in remote areas.

2.6.3 Safety Considerations - Codes of Responsibility Summary

These are the main points to adhere to when skiing and should be known by all skiers. It is our job to educate our students on the safety points during lesson time. There are other considerations also worth mentioning:

- Never ski alone, or let someone know before you go.
- Never mix alcohol, drugs and skiing for whatever reason.
- Educate your students to observe all trail signs. Knowing the signs will assist them on the terrain and trail selection.
- Educate your students on varying snow conditions. A change in snow conditions can considerably change the difficulty of a trail or route. Explain to students the differences in snow conditions and the effect this has on trails and slopes. A trail or slope skied in perfect conditions can become very difficult if the snow turns to ice.

2.6.4 Safety Considerations - Warming Up

Weather conditions, skier ability and age should be considered when warming up. In the cold, perceptions and reactions slow down. A student will be more aware of their cold hands and feet than the task at hand. Do warm up exercises to raise body temperature and increase blood circulation – then introduce a short stretching program to increase the muscles range of motions and elasticity, and reduce the risk of injury.

2.6.5 Safety Considerations – Fatigue

Fatigue will occur from over-exertion. The body's sensory mechanisms are dulled, creating imbalance. Thus fatigued skiers are more prone to injury. Signs of fatigue are:

- frequent falling
- lack of coordination

- changing in speech pattern
- puffing or fast breathing
- lack of responsiveness
- perspiration

The instructor must check students' fatigue levels at regular intervals. Beginners will tire more easily because their inefficient movements put extra strain on their muscles. When athletic or talented students tire easily, look more closely at how they are skiing. Is their technique efficient?

2.6.6 Safety Considerations – Exposure

Exposure can be fatal. It is the rapid failure of the body to conserve heat. Watch out for the warning signs – weariness and reluctance to carry on, clumsiness, loss of judgement, collapse; shivering may be absent. The combination of fatigue, poor insulation (from wet or thin clothes) and cold, wet, windy conditions can lead to death.

2.6.7 Safety Considerations - Cold Can Kill

The moment you begin to lose heat faster than your body produces it, you are undergoing exposure. Two things happen: you voluntarily exercise to stay warm, and your body makes involuntary adjustments to preserve normal temperature in the vital organs.

A decrease in body core temperature to a point which normal muscular and brain functions are impaired is known as hypothermia. If the core body temperature falls, muscle, brain and circulatory failure occurs.

Physiological mechanisms act to maintain body temperatures in a cold environment by:
Constriction of blood vessels in the skin and extremities. This will result in a decrease in blood flow, which leads to a decrease of temperature in the skin to a level close to the environment. This will help reduce heat loss.

Shivering. This helps produce heat; however it burns up more energy which leads to exhaustion.

2.6.8 Safety Considerations - The Stages of Hypothermia

- Steps ranging from Mild to Severe
- sensation of numbness, shivering, minor impairment in muscular performance
- slight muscular un-coordination, weakness, slow stumbling pace, confusion, apathy
- gross muscular un-coordination, stumbling, mental sluggishness, slow thought and speech
- shivering stopped, severe muscular un-coordination, unable to walk, incoherence, confusion, irrationality
- muscular rigidity and semi-consciousness
- un-consciousness
- death

Therefore, “Be alert for early signs and symptoms”

- fatigue
- apathy
- shivering
- paleness
- slowness
- confusion
- weakness
- forgetfulness
- slurred speech
- lack of coordination
- person feels ‘cold’ or ‘strange’
- behaviour change unusual or irrational

Treatment:

- remove from cold environment

- remove wet clothing
- body heat – body-to-body contact / huddle together - this is the best way
- use blankets
- insulate body, especially head
- hands in armpits
- give conscious and alert person sips of lukewarm drink and something to eat
- seek medical aid
- DO NOT rewarm person rapidly – it may cause shock or death
- DO NOT put body parts in water
- DO NOT give alcohol or cigarettes
- DO NOT massage or rub extremities
- DO NOT encourage exercise if tired
- DO NOT expose person to hot air or radiant heat as it may cause burns

Things to remember

- Hats: the majority of heat loss is through the head. Young children have a larger head in proportion to the body compared to adults, therefore a greater percentage of heat is lost through the head.
- Wind Chill is a magnifying component
- Wet clothing: children also have more surface area to volume compared with adults.
- Redness will return and person will feel pain as warming occurs.

2.6.9 Safety Considerations - Heat Exhaustion

Heat Exhaustion can occur in the alpine environment. For example, somebody wearing too many clothes while using considerable energy can overheat.

Signs and Symptoms:

- perspiration
- person feeling thirsty
- dizziness
- nauseated
- fatigue
- weakness
- feels hot
- redness → pale

Treatment

- Remove excess clothing.
- Rest.
- Give drink – not too much at a time. Too rapid a decrease in temperature can result in shock or hypothermia.
- Seek medical aid

2.6.10 Safety Considerations – Clothing

Australians in general can be ignorant when dressing for the alpine climate. Weather conditions vary considerably in the Australian Mountains. Conditions can change quickly, from clear and sunny to blizzard conditions. Share your knowledge concerning dress sense with your students, particularly relating to being prepared for a day on the slopes.

A brief explanation of the type of clothing that is best suited to wet, windy, cold conditions would include such things as layered clothing (warmer than one thick article). Wool, even when wet is a very good insulator. Always wear a hat, as most body heat is lost through the head. A waterproof and windproof outer shell is advisable. Good quality gloves are important and it is even advisable to suggest that the guests bring a second pair, especially for wet days. Goggles are not recommended except for the worst of conditions as they limit spatial

awareness by limiting peripheral vision. If they are worn, warn students not to pull them up over a beanie. Goggles removed and put over a wet hat or hair will fog.

Comfort accessories such as Buffs, neck gaiters, face masks and hand warmers can all be mentioned.

2.6.11 Safety Considerations - Sunny Weather

As we know, it is not always cold and snowing. As a skiers tan suggests, the sun is extremely strong at altitudes. It is not surprising that sunburn in our resorts is a serious problem. Advise your students about the need for a high-factor sunscreen, and that it should be applied before and during ski time. Carry a tube yourself – at least half your class will not. Ultra violet rays that burn your skin also burn your eyes. Protect yourself and educate your students to do the same. Sunglasses should all offer 100% UV protection. Snow-blindness is a real threat. It may only be temporary, but can be permanent.

2.6.12 Safety Considerations – Children

Check clothing for suitability before their parents leave them. There is not much you can do once the parents have left the area. Everything pertaining to adult safety and comfort also pertains to children, even more so. Make suggestions to unwary parents of the needs of the children whilst skiing, both in and out of lessons.

2.7 THE LEARNING CONTRACT

- Clients should instinctively understand that they play the primary role in learning.
- Some techniques involve substantial amounts of repetition, while other skills require self-analysis and application.
- Some of the biggest skier improvements occur when skiing 'alone' so that there is time to feel and experience the snow/ski interaction and effect of changes in body position.
- Discussions and touring with other skiers can also be useful.
- Watching other skiers of all standards is also a helpful self-analysis tool. (i.e. Skating behind another skater)

2.8 LEARNING STYLES

Client Outcomes are a result of instructor communication + student behaviour + lesson content. Instructor communication can be a combination of audio, visual or physical techniques. These communications techniques are directly connected and related to client learning styles known as VAK.

VAK

- **Visual** = clients learning by visual or watching an action such as a demonstration.
- **Auditory** = clients learn by verbal explanation.
- **Kinaesthetic** = clients learn by physical feeling, doing the action and practising.

Whilst most learning is accomplished by feeling or doing the action, instructors must attempt to include all three learning styles in the lessons. The amount of learning style is dependent upon what is being taught, weather, instructor style and the clients. However, a common worldwide fault of instructors is too much auditory. Three sentences per explanation is sufficient. More do and less talk.

Each lesson's separate VAK amounts must be tailored to accommodate, in the best possible way, the group's individual VAK

requirements with regard to the learning priorities. The learning priorities are:

- Doing (i.e. practise) = Kinaesthetic
- Seeing (i.e. visual demonstrations) = Visual
- Hearing/verbal (i.e. verbal explanation) = Auditory

Therefore for an average group of clients and according to the environment, the amount of time spent on each learning technique should reflect the general learning priorities. However, it is easy to slip into the auditory technique and bore clients. Remember that they want to learn and it is best done with kinaesthetic learning practise.

Another view is to remember the simple 60/30/10 rule of learning as follows:

- 60% of learning is accomplished by learning through doing.
- 30% learning can be attributed through watching.
- 10% is learnt through explanation.
-

Some clients may learn predominantly through one VAK style. Continually monitor client learning styles, and adjust the lesson accordingly so that each client gains the most benefit from the lesson.

The aim is to instruct skiing skills using all the learning techniques, while at the same time monitoring and adjusting the lesson as needed. An example would be a diagonal stride lesson with multiple lanes groomed. As the group practices, the instructor can provide verbal cues such as “look forward”, whilst at the same time skiing just ahead demonstrating the technique.

In addition to VAK, clients also learn differently:

- As individuals.
- Spatially. (According to their surrounding environment.)
- Temporal. (According to the hour, day, month and their life cycle location.)

So the instructor must also adjust the lesson according to the location and progression if needed. However, sometimes a lesson does not work and you feel that you let your clients down. Review the lesson with your fellow instructors or ski school supervisor. Bounce back for the next lesson in a smiling, positive frame of mind.

2.9 IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT BASIC SKILLS

The improvement of skiing competence is a result of correct Basic Skills base + a refinement of Basic Skills through activities, drills and feedback. That means everything we teach our beginner and novice skiers should be:

- Very specific.
- Simple.
- Directly linked to future skiing techniques.

For example: Star turns can be developed into a number of intermediate and advanced techniques.

2.10 PLANNING AHEAD AND ANTICIPATION

Planning ahead is a technique for improved skill use. It involves the interpretation of the terrain and snow surface ahead, combined with the limitations of your own skill level, equipment and fitness.

Great skiing fun = appropriate skills + where to use skills + planning ahead + appropriate terrain

Planning Ahead = anticipation + physical preparation (body and equipment position) + skills timing (when/where to utilise skill)

Planning ahead might include for example, leading into a corner with your hand(s) and arm(s) before step or skate turning

Anticipation is a fundamental skiing skill. We generally learn anticipation from practise, particularly the control of speed, balance

and direction of skis. However instructors can incorporate anticipation into their lesson through logical analysis, experimentation and testing of each technique.

Anticipation = experience/time since experience X mental & physical capability

2.11 YOUR INSTRUCTIONAL STYLE

Each instructor has his or her own particular style. However, as a professional nordic ski instructor, your personal style needs to fulfill the objectives and aims of the both the profession and your supervisor. Utilise feedback, particularly from instructor assessments and clinics and adjust elements of your style accordingly. Experiment, trial and assess different styles within professional limitations.

Your personal instruction style is a result of experienced instruction & learning processes + your personality + personal alpine environment experiences + life experiences (personal background).

2.12 PERCEIVED RELEVANCE OF SKILL

Each client must be able to identify the relevance of each skill being instructed. Consider the following for each skill.

- Where is it used?
- How is it used?
- Why is it used?
- What does it lead on to?

But keep the explanations short and direct.

2.13 KINESTHETIC FEEDBACK METHODS

Each method works differently for different skill levels, clients' experience, location and environment, weather and group size.

2.13.1 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Client/s follows Instructor

- Clients imitate actions and instructions of instructor.
- First client has best view for imitation.
- Other clients tend to imitate person ahead. (Whether correct or incorrect.)
- Distracting for clients trying to watch, follow and imitate instructor while trying to avoid client ahead.
- Excellent spatial control of client/s, especially on down slopes.
- Can work well for flat techniques if enough separate parallel tracks for each student are available. (Except skating – due to space required.)
- Useful for snowplough, snowplough turn, side stepping, step turning, skating, intermediate telemark, intermediate parallel.

2.13.2 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Instructor follows Client/s

- Instructor gives verbal feedback from behind.
- Only last one or two clients benefit, able to hear feedback.
- Excellent for one on one instruction.
- Poor spatial control in groups, better if one on one.
- Immediate feedback and amend movement whilst in motion.
- Weather and instructor voice determined.
- Use for snowplough, snowplough turn, side stepping, step turning, skating, intermediate telemark, intermediate parallel.

2.13.3 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Instructor Parallel with Client/s

- Instructor skis parallel to clients for direct feedback and imitation.
- Good sideways vision imitation whilst in motion.

- Only good for one on one.
- Can be distracting to client looking sideways.
- Excellent feedback whilst in motion.
- Use for diagonal stride, double poling, snowplough, straight running, herringbone climbing, stride double pole.

2.13.4 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Group Method (All participants at one time.)

- Group feedback and verbal cues whilst in motion.
- Spatial limitations.
- Good spatial control of clients.
- Loss of personal feedback.
- Group learning can be productive for some people. (Comparisons)
- Instruction pace not appropriate for everyone.
- Use for warming up/down, stance, star turn, falling and recovery, side stepping, diagonal stride, double poling.

2.13.5 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Single Method (One client at a time.)

- Direct one on one feedback and tuition.
- Information, verbal and physical overload.
- Instruction pace set to client's requirements.
- Use for any activity but give sufficient time for drill practise.

2.13.6 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Part Group Method

- Split into practise groups, instruct one skill or drill to one group, while other group practices. Regularly change between groups.

- Gives time for practise before progressing to next skill.
- Perceived value for money may be less.
- Use for snowplough, snowplough turn, diagonal stride, double poling, step turning, side slipping, basic telemark, basic Christie, basic parallel, stride double pole, skating.

2.13.7 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Paired Appraisal Method

Paired clients give each other feedback.
Clients begin to analyse movements by giving feedback to other clients.
Clients may give incorrect feedback.
Use for diagonal stride, double poling, skating.

2.13.8 Kinaesthetic Feedback Methods - Static Feedback

Instructor gives feedback after drill.
Clients need to be well spaced for instructor to observe and give feedback.
Best if instructor is situated in the middle of drill area.
Best for warming up/down, stance, star turn, falling and recovery, side stepping, herringbone, jumping, kick turn, step turn.

2.14 MOTIVATION TO LEARN

2.14.1 Reasons for Paying for a Ski Lesson

Some reasons why clients pay for a nordic ski lesson:

- Learn how to ski.
- Learn a new ski skill.
- Improve a particular technique.
- Improve overall skiing ability.
- Mix socially and find someone to ski with.

2.14.2 Psychology of Learning - Constraints on Motivation

Some learning constraints on nordic ski lesson clients:

- Health.
- Clothing.
- Weather.
- Distractions.
- Snow surface.
- Late to lesson.
- Ski equipment.
- Over confidant.
- Personal wants and needs.
- Age and gender.
- Personal anxiety.
- Wrong lesson level
- Physical disabilities
- Physical capabilities
- Peer group pressure
- Other skiers or groups.
- Attitude to being taught.
- Unprepared emotionally.
- Value for money perception.
- Language or cultural barrier.
- Commitment to the lesson.
- Unable to understand concepts.
- Instructor's style/appearance/background/gender.
- Lack of confidence. (Practice, perseverance and patience.)
- Perceived personal standard compared to group. (Lowest or highest.)

2.15 SKILLS BALANCING

The skills presented must be properly balanced in tune with clients' requirements. Skills that are too easy will quickly bore clients. Skills that are too hard will make clients frustrated. The type of skill needs to be the next step up in their skiing ability. It needs to be both challenging but achievable. For example instructing a snowplough turn is most appropriate to a beginner skier than an intermediate skier.

Continually monitor the progress of each student during the lesson. Analyse the skills effectiveness and amend it if too hard or too easy.

Set individual goals for each client in your class. For example the slowest learner's goal is to be able to stop by the end of the lesson, or the quickest learner to be able to complete basic step turns by the end of the lesson.

2.16 RECAPS (DURING THE LESSON)

During the lesson regularly recap skills learnt and where it is heading.

2.17 TEACHING - COMMUNICATION THEORY

Concept in instructor's mind

▼

Explanation/demonstration of concept

▼

Reception of concept by client (affected by numerous influences)
Instructor monitoring of clients' physical and auditory reception

▼

Client analysis of concept (including perceived relevance, how to adopt)
Instructor analysis of clients' physical and auditory reception (evaluate, amend and reapply if applicable)

▼

Acknowledgement by client to instructor of concept

▼

Analysis by instructor of correct concept interpretation by client (reapplication of concept if needed)

2.18 WHERE TO PITCH YOUR LESSON

Depending on the professional, business and natural environment, a dynamic decision has to be made at where to pitch your lesson. The dynamic decision means that it is flexible according to its effectiveness in reaching its objectives with your clients.

- Lowest common denominator – good for the slow learners but what about the average and good skiers? They will become despondent, bored and disappointed with the service.
- Medium or average area – good for the average learners but the slow learners become frustrated and give up, while the high achievers still will become bored. Again, disappointment with the level of service to the majority will soon become noticeable.
- High achiever level – great for the quick learners but the slow and average learners are feeling left out and will become despondent with the sport and its professionalism very quickly.

Solution: Pitch your lesson at all levels. With ample practise time, individual feedback and assistance can bring the slower learners up to speed quickly. Meanwhile, give the high achievers some higher level movements to practice or involve them in giving feedback to others. (An important learning style in itself)

2.19 GROUP AND LESSON TYPES

With all lessons it is a good objective to mix and match the terrain and snow surfaces used. A small “follow-me” tour through and around snow-gums and other objects can improve off track skills. These little tours provide opportunities to both teach and immediately practise off track techniques.

Each of the following group and lesson types has different specific needs and wants.

- School groups-Primary. (Winter school program, special excursion.)
- School groups-Secondary. (Winter school program, outdoor education program.)
- Special youth and adult groups e.g. disabled or low physical functioning.
- Education groups. (Tertiary Courses or TAFE)
- Downhill techniques only. (Snowplough, snowplough turn, basic telemark.)
- Friends.
- Adults.
- Children.
- Private/Freelance.
- Adult/children mix.
- Special interest group.
- Raw beginners.
- Novices.
- Intermediates.
- Advanced.
- Skating only.
- Classic techniques only.
- Team Teaching.
- Touring group.

Members of your group may also include the following persons who may present a challenge.

- Highly qualified persons in other snow sports wanting to become multi-skilled.
- Another person working in your organisation.
- Your supervisor or fellow instructors.
- People with disabilities.
- Friends of management in your ski company/business/industry.
- Popular people (Politics, entertainment or sporting.)
- Responsible adult for children, such as a teacher or scout leader.
- Organiser of an adult group who has skied for 25 years but can't telemark or has no weight shift in diagonal stride.
- People who are specialists in other sports.

ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHALLENGES?

.