

# The Ideal Learning Environment

## Task 1

In order of me to determine how I would coach a certain group, I am going to investigate the different types of presentation of skills, guidance, teaching styles and practice conditions.

### Guidance

“Guidance is information given to the learner or performer in order to help them limit possible mistakes.” (Wesson et al p 531) Therefore if guidance does not improve ones performance it can not be called guidance. Guidance is usually given to beginners when learning an unfamiliar skill. Information can be passed on in several different forms

- Visual guidance

Can be given in a number of ways including; demonstrations, video/film, poster/charts or Slides. Visual guidance is especially important in the early stages of learning, where the learner can get an overall idea of the skill. Demonstration gives a 'Real life' instant picture and can focus attention on performance cues. The demonstration must be accurate or else the learner may pick up poor technique.

- Verbal guidance

Verbal guidance is often used to reinforce a visual display. So the learner can gain an overall picture of the skill and have verbal instructions to go with it. Verbal guidance can be given from the touch line to help an individual or team perform better, such as organising tactics. However it is important that the learner does not become totally reliant on verbal guidance, as they will be unable to think and act for themselves when in a game situation. Verbal guidance is thought to be more effective to advanced performers, having more experience they can transfer the verbal comments into actions.

- Manual guidance

Manual or mechanical guidance as it is sometimes called, involves physically moving or restricting a performer's movements in some way. For example, the coach supporting and guiding the movement (a forward role in gymnastics) or by the support of a device such as a trampoline belt

or a swimming armband. The aim is to reduce error and fear, and is good for beginners, youngsters and people with special needs.

### Teaching styles

- Command style

This style is when the teacher has total authority, there is little consideration given to individual learners as they are generally treated the same way. It is seen to be a behaviourist approach, by telling the learner what to do and not allowing any questioning as to why. This style could restrict the learner's development especially if it is an open skill which requires the performer to think for themselves. Therefore the command style would be more suited to teaching a closed skill where the performer does not have any "options".

It also helps establish: learner control, clear objectives, rules and safety procedures. It is useful when working with beginners, large groups and dangerous situations.

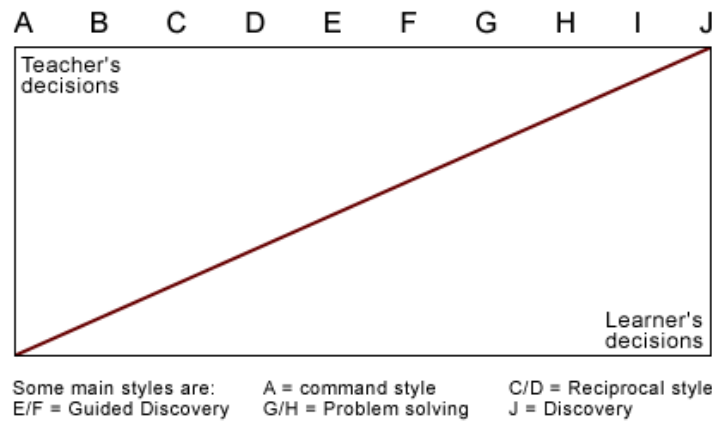
- Reciprocal style

This style encourages interaction between learners, they will usually be told what to do, then sent away to practice in pairs. One will be the performer and the other the observer. The observer is encouraged to give feedback to their partner, thus developing a greater understanding of the movements and passing this on to the partner.

The teacher needs to monitor the practice carefully and ensure that correct techniques are being used. The learners must be of a mature age to sensibly get on with the practice and try to help their partner.

- Discovery learning

This style of teaching involves getting the learner to 'discover' what methods are best suited to perform a certain skill. The learner is helped by the teacher by providing appropriate information, cues and questions. If the learner is doing something completely wrong, the teacher will stop them and show them why that way is not effective, then encourage a better way. In this style the learner is thought to gain greater personal satisfaction together with a more positive self image.



[http://www.longroad.ac.uk/accreditation/subject\\_physical\\_education/acquisition\\_skill/teaching\\_skills/teaching\\_styles.htm](http://www.longroad.ac.uk/accreditation/subject_physical_education/acquisition_skill/teaching_skills/teaching_styles.htm)

Above is the spectrum of teaching styles produced by Mosston and Ashworth. The more the teacher tells the learner what to do; the learner is not making their own decisions. As we go across the spectrum to the discovery style the learner is totally independent on the decisions they make.

### Presentation of skills

- Whole practice

It is thought that skills are best learnt as a whole. Then the learner gets a feeling for the overall movement and transfer from practice to real situation is likely to be positive. This approach should be used where skills have low levels of complexity and high levels of organization. Ballistic skills are also thought best to be taught this way as the movement is very fast and has no time to break it down. For example, golf swing. If a skill is highly complex, simplifying the task enables the performer to experience the whole skill. For example using lighter equipment, or performing it at a slow pace. More experienced performers should be taught by the whole practice.

- Part practice

Part method is used when a skill can be broken down into distinct parts, learnt individually and put together again in a complete skill. This type of practice is effective when the skill is difficult or complex and when low in organisation and can be split into subroutines. Also it is good when mechanics of movement is important. For instance front crawl is relatively low in complexity and low in organisation, all the different actions can be broken down and taught individually. Therefore the separate actions – arm action, leg action and breathing can all be

practiced separately. Someone in the early stages of learning would most benefit from part practice.

- Progressive part

This method involves part and whole methods of teaching. Often sports which have routines such as gymnastics use this. Separate skills such as handstand, cartwheel and forward roll are taught independently then brought together to make the routine.

### Practice conditions

- Massed practice

This type of practice is of a repetitive manner. The skill is practiced until learnt without taking a break. These sessions are good for athletes with high level of fitness and experience.

- Distributed

This practice is interspersed with breaks which can either be rest or another skill. These sessions are good for athletes with lower levels of fitness and experience.

Listed below are different age, sex and skill level groups, I am going to find the best learning environment for each.

A) 7-11 years learning a new skill

The skill these are learning is front crawl,

**Guidance-** visual, verbal, manual

A physical demonstration of the front-crawl action should be used to give the group an overall picture of what front crawl would look like. As well as pointing out key points to the stroke verbally. The use of kickboards and floats would aid the learner mechanically as well.

**Teaching style-** Command

Because the group are of a young age, they might lose concentration. Being quite firm would keep the children focused on the task. Also telling the children what to do and correcting them if they did it wrong would reduce the chance of them doing the skill wrong.

### **Presentation of skills- Part practice**

Because front crawl would be quite complex for a young beginner, it would be best to teach the skill in parts. Breaking the different sub-routines up (arms stroke, legs kick, breathing) and practicing them separately would enable the learner to acquire the skill easier.

### **Practice conditions-distributed**

So the young learners don't lose interest or get impatient with trying to learn the new skill, distributed practice would be best. Having a break every so often will allow the child to think about how they are doing, and to rest ready to have another go.

B) 10-12 years talented group of mixed gender

### **Guidance-verbal**

Since the performer is experienced in the skill, there is no need to give them visual or manual guidance. They can only benefit from verbal guidance; this can be as they are practicing the skill the coach can just point out key aspects of their performance either good or bad. Or shout encouragement to work harder.

### **Teaching style- Reciprocal**

At the age of 10-12 Children should now be able to be told what to do and then go off and do it, without a great deal of supervision. Although the coach would still need to come round and give out coaching points.

### **Presentation of skills- whole practice**

The learners will already know how to perform the skill, so whole practice should be used to get a kinaesthetic feel for the movement.

### **Practice conditions- distributed**

Although the performers are talented they will still be fairly young and would not enjoy or benefit from a massed practice session. Distributed will keep the performers on their toes and ready for the next bit of training.

C) 13-14 years with physical difficulties

**Guidance – visual, manual**

People with physical difficulties may have problems actually physically making a movement which is required for a skill. The use of specialist equipment may be required for the skill to be performed, for example an aesthetic leg.

**Teaching style- Discovery learning**

For a disabled person, it would bring them great satisfaction and confidence if they were able to learn the skill with as little help as possible.

**Presentation of skills- whole**

Allowing the learners to get an overall feeling of the movement would give them a kinaesthetic feel to the skill. Thus then allowing them to apply it in a game situation.

**Practice conditions-distributed**

With the performers being disabled, they might not be physically able to do a great deal. So distributed practice would be best in this case. Also they are still quite young and would find prolonged exercise very tiring.

D) 14-16 years highly talented

**Guidance- verbal**

Being highly talented, they would not need much advice on the actual skill. The only guidance they would benefit from is verbal. Giving encouraging verbal comments could motivate the performers to work harder and get better results.

**Teaching style- Reciprocal**

When practising the skills, working in a pair would be good because they can learn off each other. Helping each other out also would improve one's performance.

**Presentation of skills- whole**

Doing the skill as a whole would reinforce it more, there would be no need to practice the different parts as it is better to do the movement as a whole.

**Practice conditions-massed**

As the performers are at an older age, they will be able to sustain longer, harder training. Also their experience will allow them to do the skill over and over again correctly.

## **Task 2**

The perfect learning environment for rugby training session lasting 90 minutes would consist of;

**10 minutes warm-up-** Involving pulse raising, mobility and stretching. This will prepare the body physically and mentally for the training session ahead.

**10 minute game of touch-** A game of touch rugby allows players to get a feel for the game and rules, without much physical contact which could hinder any further training.

**50 minutes drills-** After a warm-up and a game of touch. About 50 minutes of practising skills such as passing, tackling and scrumming, a demonstration or a walk through of a particular skill or drill would be useful for the players to get a picture of what the skill should look like. All skills are practiced in the whole presentation of skills; this will allow players to get a feeling of the whole movement. Reciprocal style of teaching would be used, allowing the players to interact and help each other. The type of practice would be distributed, to allow players to have a break and to split the session up to do different skills.

**15 minutes game-** Now is the time to put the drills and skills that the players have been practicing into practice. There would be two teams and it would be just a continuous game.

**5 minutes cool-down-** After a hard session, it is important to cool down to reduce the build up of lactic acid. And return the muscles to their normal state.



### **Task 3**

A) To treat an injured person on the sidelines I would follow the acronym S.A.L.T.A.P.S.

**S** = **See** the injury occur

**A** = **Ask** the player questions about the injury

**L** = **Look** at the injury

**T** = **Touch**-Palpate the injured part

**A** = **Active movements** from the player

**P** = **Passive movements** by therapist

**S** = **Strength**- Players movements are resisted by therapist

[www.thefa.com](http://www.thefa.com)

After I have followed this procedure, I will then take appropriate action. Either provide first aid on the field myself, or if necessary help as much as I can and get someone to phone an ambulance.

B) To motivate a de-motivated student I would offer them rewards if they meet specific targets. Also I would give them lots of encouragement, lots of praise and hold back the negative feedback. I would make the session enjoyable rather than boring- involving lots of games. Another thing I could do is put the students into teams, and put the de-motivated student into a more talented team so they will feel success.

C) If I was faced with a physically challenged student, I would treat them the same way as any student, but be sympathetic to their needs. I would try to involve them as part of the group as much as possible ensuring that the student is safe at all times. I would give the group appropriate activities which the physically challenged student could join in. For example if they were in a wheelchair I would not have the group playing football, I would play basketball or badminton - which they will be able to play.

## **Bibliography**

[http://www.longroad.ac.uk/accreditation/subject\\_physical\\_education/acquisition\\_skill/teaching\\_skills/teaching\\_styles.htm](http://www.longroad.ac.uk/accreditation/subject_physical_education/acquisition_skill/teaching_skills/teaching_styles.htm)

[www.thefa.com](http://www.thefa.com)

Wesson, K. Wiggins, N. Thompson, G. Hartigan, S. Sport and Pe 2000 Hodder and Stoughton