

Foreword

Up until the time that the United States Parachute Association created the Basic Instructors Course (BIC), they included in the Instructor and Jumpmaster Certification Course documentation a standalone document called *Fundamentals of Instruction*, part 160.5.

The information in this USPA document was taken from chapters of the FAA document *Aviation Instructors Handbook* and customized with examples from skydiving rather than flight instruction. *The following excerpts are key points of selected chapters from these documents*, edited by Gary Peek.

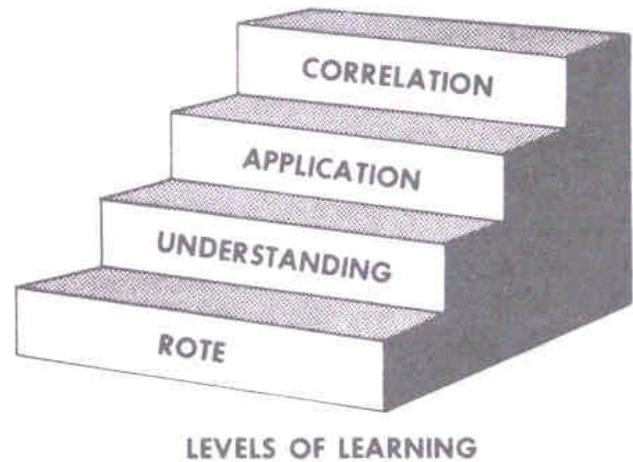
Chapter 1. The Learning Process

The “Laws” of Learning:

1. Readiness- Students learn best when they are ready to learn and don't learn much if they see no reason to. (If you have not explained why they should learn something.)
2. Exercise- Those things most often repeated are best remembered.
3. Effect- Learning is strengthened when accompanied by a pleasant or satisfying feeling, (and visa versa).
4. Primacy- Being first creates strong impression. (The thing you learn first.)
5. Intensity- A vivid, dramatic, or exciting learning experience teaches more than a routine or boring one.
6. Recency- The things most recently learned are best remembered.

Levels of Learning:

1. Rote- Student can repeat the actions demonstrated but does not understand what they are doing.
2. Understanding- Student understands the result of their actions.
3. Application- Student has the skill to apply what they have learned to perform the action consistently.
4. Correlation- Student can combine the actions with other learned actions to create complex operations.



Retention:

Forgetting is caused by-

1. Disuse
2. Interference (another experience has overshadowed it)
3. Repression (caused by unpleasant experience while learned)

Remembering is enhanced by-

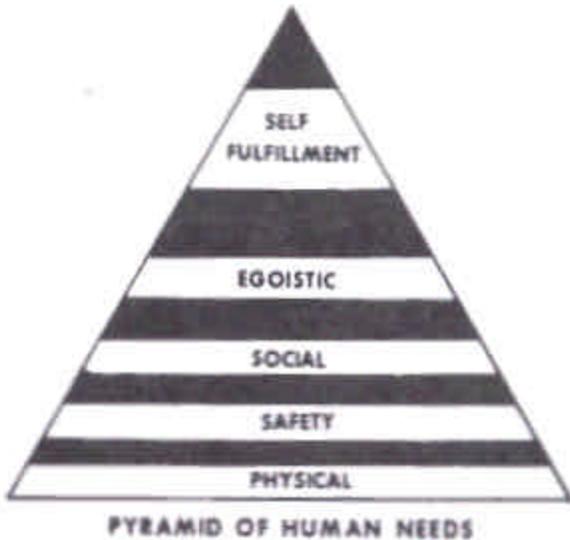
1. Praise
2. Learning with as many of our senses as possible
3. Meaningful repetition

Chapter 2. Human Behavior

Human Needs:

All of the needs lowest in the pyramid need to be met before the higher ones can be met. Notice how many needs come before the one we most often think is the result of our instruction. (Self fulfillment, or feeling good about what they have learned.)

Students need to be comfortable, feel safe, feel accepted, and have reasonable self esteem before learning can take place.



Defense mechanisms:

1. Rationalization- If they cannot learn they may make excuses for why they cannot, or do not need to.
2. Flight- If they are frustrated they may escape the situation mentally (daydreaming) or physically.
3. Aggression- They may get angry and be aggressive in subtle ways. (ask irrelevant questions, etc.)
4. Resignation- They may lose interest and give up.

The Instructors Role:

1. Keep students motivated
2. Keep students informed (of how they are doing)
3. *Approach students as individuals* (my emphasis)
4. Give credit when due
5. Criticize constructively
6. Be consistent

Chapter 3. Effective Communication

Barriers to Effective Communication:

Buzzwords (my topic) - We continue to hear many instructors use expressions that students probably do not understand. This is because these expressions or buzzwords are used so often among experienced skydivers that they become habit.

Teaching steps:

P. Preparation- *An extremely important part that is often bypassed!* (my emphasis, plus examples are mine):

Instructor must prepare the environment, the training aids, the lesson plan (often memorized), and *the student*.

1. Put the student at ease. (Ask them about them self, tell them about yourself.)
2. Find out what they already know. (What they know might not be quite right!)
3. Ask them how they think they have been doing so far. (Their performance on previous tasks) *Remove any doubt from their mind that they will perform perfectly the task you are about to teach them!*

P. Presentation (lecture or demonstration/performance):

Instructor explains and demonstrates

A. Application:

Student demonstrates while Instructor evaluates and corrects (Correct very subtly and gently.)

E. Evaluation:

Instruction re-evaluates what the student has learned after practice (In some cases this is a small part of the teaching process.)