

Four Essential Classroom Management Strategies That Every Instructor Should Know

Your instructors, G.O.L.D. Leadership Team members and you work hard to ensure that the children in your classes learn how to develop more self-control, gain self-confidence, benefit from a healthy lifestyle and expend juvenile energy in a positive way. These goals are easily accomplished when the entire class is



motivated to learn, focused on technique and inspired by their instructor's leadership—and all with smiles on their faces.

Very few classes are that perfect, however. Every instructor has had students:

- Unmotivated to learn.
- Unwilling to follow instructions.
- Who did not grasp the leadership qualities they were supposed to acquire.
- Who had yet to learn self-control, and may have whimpered or cried during class.

It's all part of teaching children, who will often act like children. One of your goals, of course, is to help children develop into disciplined, confident adults.

You can accomplish that goal and many others by learning how to respond professionally to disruptive class situations. This report presents four strategies that will empower you, your instructors and G.O.L.D. Leadership Team members to manage the unruly child or crying child, help him or her to rejoin the fun, and

maintain the attention of the rest of the class during disruptive incidents.

It's a fine balancing act between maintaining classroom control and structuring your classes, so you can accommodate every child and their individual needs.

Read and re-read this report until these strategies become second nature to you—fully integrated with your classroom instruction. Challenge yourself to use them wisely. It will reduce your stress, help you develop as an instructor or leadership team member, contribute positively to every child's experience and make every class run smoother.

Learn and use these recommended strategies to control your instructional environment better.

Challenge Your Students to Be Their Best

Challenge your students to be their best, and you will successfully motivate them to excel, retain their attention and earn their respect as a leader.

Create an enthusiasm for excellence with these challenges.

- Kick higher.
- Punch harder.
- Drop into lower stances.
- Maintain extra focus and more.

Distribute appropriate rewards, such as giving students positive feedback, praise and extra privileges, and you'll start to see better discipline and results. Rewards will inspire even your most difficult students to re-focus their energy from distracting the class to learning and achieving.

Try these quick rewards to control students better.

- Give them genuinely enthusiastic thumbs-up.

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- Make positive comments about their efforts.
- Involve the entire class. Ask the student to stand on a chair, extend his or her hand, and have the other students run by and give him or her a high-five for a job well done.

Ditch the “Don’ts”

Use positive statements when directing children and correcting their mistakes. Negative statements often play tricks on the mind, misinterpreting what shouldn’t be done as what should be done. The mind hears “Don’t drop your guard,” but interprets it as “Drop your guard.”

Help your students focus on the right technique or behavior, instead of what they are doing wrong. Avoid using a negative word or phase at the beginning of an instructional statement or correction. Being positive transfers your enthusiasm to the student, which is a boost to his or her energy and willingness to do as instructed.

Example: Two students are sparring, and one of them is holding his guard too low, providing his opponent with easy scoring targets. The instructor’s first thought is to say with some firmness, “Don’t drop your guard.” Instead, he says with a smile, “Keep your guard up.” The instructor has learned to “ditch his don’ts.” He knows that clear instruction of a positive action is what will motivate the student to do better.

Learn to “Ditch Your Don’ts” and your students will better understand the goals of your instructions and will be eager to demonstrate their abilities and exceed your expectations. You’ll have happier students, enjoying the fun.

Keep Your Buts to Yourself

Avoid or eliminate the word “but” from your positive compliment or praise of a student. The mind interprets it as a negative qualifying word, suggesting the student was good, but not as good as he could have been because he didn’t do something correct. Remember, if you use “but,” then you haven’t really “ditched your don’ts.”



Example: An instructor says to a student, “Wow, that was an amazing kick, but your kiai wasn’t loud enough.” The word “but” has negated the whole first part of the statement. Once the instructor learned to “keep his butts to himself,” he change his statement to say, “Wow that was an amazing kick, and to make it even better power breathe super loud.”

Help students feel better about your corrections. They’ll respond with a positive enthusiasm to try harder and achieve. The results can be truly astounding.

Choose your words wisely and students will have a blast in your class, accept corrections happily and improve their performance willingly.

How to Manage Crying Children

As mentioned earlier in this report, children will be children. Any child may still rely on an emotional response, such as crying, to any strange, new or misinterpreted situation. It's the natural defense mechanism they've used since birth. Childhood is when children "unlearn" childlike ways and learn how to be confident, self-reliant adults. You are making an important contribution to that maturing process when you understand and use this strategy.

Start by recognizing why a student is crying.

- Some children may cry because they don't want to be in class.
- Most of them, however, cry because they have fallen and are embarrassed.
- Some may be reacting emotionally to a minor injury, such as a stubbed toe.
- Some children may not have developed the social skills to perform with or in front of a group.
- Other students may be hesitant to be aggressive, when sparring with another child because they've been taught "fighting" is bad behavior.

Learn how to respond to a crying student.

1. Create some privacy for the student; stand between him and the class.
2. Assign the class another drill to do or ask another instructor to take the group for a few minutes, so you have time to work with the crying student.
3. After you've verified that he isn't seriously injured, encourage the child to stand and/or raise his head.
4. Divert the child's mind from crying. Ask him simple questions that make him think for a moment, e.g., "What did you eat for breakfast?" or "What is your favorite martial arts activity?"
5. Use this conversation to re-focus the student's attention on the class and its activities. The sooner he

is a participant again, the sooner he will forget about crying—and learn a valuable lesson in self-control.

6. Demonstrate leadership and class control. Resume your instruction as if there was no disruption. You'll reduce future distractions by showing that compassion and discipline are perfectly compatible human qualities.

These are four practical, proactive strategies you can use to motivate your junior students to focus on your instruction, while they have fun, develop self-control and benefit from the values you teach. You'll also recognize your own professional development, which leads to better classes, happier students who are learning and satisfied parents—and that's good for business.

Drills

The following drills will help you, your instructors and G.O.L.D. Leadership Team members to learn the four class management strategies, the necessary skills to use them and the leadership qualities required to use them successfully.

Give each leadership team member an opportunity to lead a mock class through the drills. Rate each team member on a scale of 1 to 10. Each team member must score at least a seven.

Drill: Challenge Your Students to Be Their Best

1. Create a mock class with at least five students, and run the group through a regular class exercise.
2. Prior to the start of the drill, designate two or three students to perform the exercise incorrectly. For example, they can power breathe softly or kick extra low. Let them be creative.
3. Select one leadership team member to lead the group through the exercise and apply Strategy #1: Challenge Your Students to Be Their Best, when the designated students demonstrate incorrect technique.
4. Rate the leadership team member on how well he or she communicated a challenge to the students, and

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the types of rewards that he or she used to motivate the students to correct their techniques.

Drill: Ditch the Don'ts

1. Create a mock class with at least five students, and run the group through a regular class exercise.
2. Prior to the start of the drill, designate one or two students either to kick or punch with the wrong leg or hand.
3. Select one leadership team member to lead the group through the exercise and apply Strategy #2: Ditch the Don'ts, when the designated students kick or punch with the wrong leg or hand.
4. Rate the team leader on his or her ability to avoid the word "don't" and use a positive statement instead.

Drill: Keep Your Butts to Yourself

1. Create a mock class with at least five students, and run the group through a regular class exercise.
2. Prior to the start of the drill, designate one or two students to do the exercise incorrectly.
3. Select one leadership team member to lead the group through the exercise and apply Strategy #3:

Keep Your Butts to Yourself, when the designated students perform the exercise incorrectly.

4. Rate the team leader on his or her ability to praise the students without using a statement with a qualifying phrase that begins with the word "but."

Drill: How to Manage Crying Children

1. Create a mock class with at least five students, and run the group through a regular class exercise.
2. Prior to the start of the drill, designate one or two students to act upset and pretend to start crying (not too hammy).
3. Select one leadership team member to lead the group through the exercise and apply Strategy #4: How to Manage Crying Children, when the designated students cause a class disruption.
4. Rate the team leader on his or her ability to work with the crying students, re-focus their attention with questions and return them to the class.