

## Role Reversal...To Teach Is to Know

Everyone has experienced the following situation: You're attending a seminar, an educational class or a business presentation, passively listening to the speaker, teacher or facilitator. Suddenly, he or she starts to point to audience members to answer questions about specific topics and information from the presentation.

As you sit there, listening to your fellow attendees answer questions, you say to yourself, "If I knew he was planning to quiz us, then I would have listened much more carefully." Regardless of whether you're asked a question, you are certainly more focused on the speaker than you were before the question-and-answer session.

What this nearly universal experience teaches is that the pressure to teach forces the teacher (or speaker or facilitator) to be much more focused on the subject of his presentation. It also reveals how some of those listening to his presentation (the audience) are not as focused on the subject, and approach the process of acquiring knowledge from the speaker with a passive attitude, which, as the example reveals, is not conducive to learning.

Such an experience also reveals the importance of including a Role Reversal module in your G.O.L.D. Team Leadership Development Program. Simply put, it is an opportunity for your G.O.L.D. Team members to teach teachers how to teach and, quite possibly, benefit more than the instructors they are teaching.

Role Reversal sessions can benefit your school and instructors and indirectly your students, as your instructors develop better and more thorough teaching methods and techniques.

- Each G.O.L.D. Team member improves his or her understanding of the materials, as



he or she prepares to teach other instructors.

- Each G.O.L.D. Team member is able to explain the "Why" of each topic.
- Each G.O.L.D. Team member is challenged by a healthy dose of pressure to "practice what he or she preaches" by consistently using the same techniques on the floor that he or she is teaching other instructors.
- By articulating the materials being taught (and often for the first time), veteran G.O.L.D. Team members are better able to understand the rookie team member's perspective when he or she first starts teaching students.
- G.O.L.D. Team members are provided with the challenge to aspire to an additional level of advancement, a "trainer of teachers."
- School owners have the opportunity to step back from the process, observe it more carefully and determine those parts of their leadership development programs that need attention and improvements.

Adding a Role Reversal module to your leadership development program may seem like a challenge, but, of course, achieving anything worthwhile is always a challenge.

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# BLACK BELT LEADERSHIP

GUIDANCE ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

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Let's start with an easy "phase-in" plan, so you're able to develop a more qualified G.O.L.D. team that also has the potential to train future G.O.L.D. team members when they join the team.

**Step #1:** Critically review how you communicate the materials you teach to your G.O.L.D. Team members. If you are in the habit of "telling" them, then start to change your style to "tell, then ask."

This is the method used in the example at the beginning of this report. This method purposely creates a gap of time between when you "tell" team members a bit of information and when you "ask" them to repeat the information with questions. As mentioned, earlier, not only does this method force teachers to know their material and be focused on it, but also forces the audience (team members) to listen more closely.

This method benefits your team members as noted above. When you ask them to articulate aloud the teaching concepts you are teaching them, then you are gradually improving their understanding of those concepts and preparing them to use those same concepts in their classes more effectively—and that benefits your students!

Just a slight change in your teaching style will create more opportunities for your G.O.L.D. Team members to learn, advance and improve your school's classroom presentations.

**Step #2:** Divide your team development sessions into a number of segments, if you don't already do so. Delegate the responsibility to teach those segments to G.O.L.D. Team member that show promise. For example, a one-hour leadership class is divided into four, 15-minute segments.

Start this step by asking just one team member, the one you think is ready, to teach one of the segments in a week. Provide the student with at least a week's notice because you want him or her to have the best possible experience, which will be achieved if he or she carefully prepares and practices the presentation.

Here is another opportunity to remind yourself that you and every other rookie instructor experienced the awkwardness of being able to perform a technique, but not being able to articulate it.

You want your team member to excel during his or her first "teaching teachers how to teach" class, so you must plant the seed of success and nurture it throughout the week. Make sure he or she is doing his or her "homework." Ask to see an outline of his or her presentation by the second day. Help him or her finalize it. Tell him or her to practice for two days, and then present it to you as a "dress rehearsal." Help him or her make improvements and adjustments, so he or she is able to practice a final version for another day.

Don't rush the implementation of this step. Too many school owners do just that, so when a new idea or program, such as Role Reversal, doesn't seem to work the way it should, they lose focus and jump to another idea. You must prepare your team for success!

**Step #3:** Watch carefully how the "new teacher" presents the material during his or her first class. Following the class, meet with him or her to review your critique of his or her performance and explain how to improve it.

Observe and review his or her presentation, according to the following criteria:

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- Voice tone and quality: Did he or she communicate with a voice of confidence and authority?
- Body language: Did his or her gestures match the message he or she was presenting?
- Accuracy of material: Did he or she teach the material that you taught him and her?
- Examples to illustrate the teaching points: Was he or she able to provide depth to the content with clear examples?
- Audience participation: Was his or her presentation interactive?
- Ability to answer questions: Was he or she able to field questions in an intelligent manner?
- Time management: Was he or she able to time his or her presentation, so the message and the question-and-answer session weren't rushed and he or she didn't end too soon?

It's not enough to simply give your "new teacher" the old, "good job, keep working" feedback.

Make sure you observe, evaluate and discuss each point above. Score each on a scale of one to ten. Give the team member an overall observation grade also on a scale of one to ten. This will highlight the specific portions of his or her presentation and teaching method he or she must improve if he or she wants to be considered a trainer of teachers. Just as you do with your martial arts students, be more concerned with preparing your team members to teach other instructors in 6 to 12 months, rather than preparing or expecting them to start teaching teachers tomorrow, or even next week.

Assign your "teacher of teachers" in-training to prepare to teach the second of your 15-minute leadership development sessions, which will be an entirely new set of materials. Help him or her to prepare, and observe, critique and review him or her after the second session. Continue to rotate him or her through all four sessions, preparing different sets of materials and reviewing his or her presentation with you. Once a G.O.L.D. Team member has experienced teaching all your leadership development sessions, he or she will be better prepared to teach the accompanying materials when assigned to teach again.

As you acquire more experience with this process and your team members respond positively, select other members to prepare and teach leadership development sessions.

Developing G.O.L.D. Team members' potential is a great and fulfilling experience for school owners! Teaching team members how to teach teachers is even more exciting and rewarding. Including a Role Reversal module as part of your leadership team program means you are starting to benefit from your school's real potential.

Ask yourself, "Who is more important to the growth of my school and the advancement of my students: the instructor who is able to teach 10 students or the instructor who is able to teach 10 other instructors or G.O.L.D. Team members how to teach?" There is only one answer for the school owner who wants to succeed.