

When It Comes to Leadership Training, Repetition Is Everything

What do you sell?

Your G.O.L.D. Leadership Team should know the answer to that question as well as they know their names. The attitudes and beliefs your school promote and teach are some of the most important benefits you offer your community. When it comes to the physical elements of your program, most leadership members could name the techniques you teach at the drop of a hat: "Front kick, downward block, side kick, inside block, front stance..." Can they do the same for the benefits of your program? For the "mental" and "attitudinal" concepts you teach?

If they can, then are they able to describe just *how* these concepts are taught? For example, could they describe how they impart "focus" with the same detail that they teach a knife-hand strike or a side kick?

If they can't (at the moment), then don't worry, because training them to do so is not that difficult. Training your Leadership Team members to become masters of understanding, articulating and teaching the attitudinal benefits of your program is, fortunately, the same process you use to teach them a new technique, form or drill: mastery comes from practice. Repetition is the mother of all skills.

With physical training, no Leadership Team member or student would think twice about doing multiple repetitions of a technique, even if they already knew the movement. During any single training session, they might throw dozens of the same techniques. This is the same process you use to train your Leadership Team to master the "attitudes" on which you want to build your school's reputation.



First, make a list of those attitudes, philosophies and ideas, and then you drill your team until they know them forwards, backwards, sideways—and upside down.

Four Tips to Help You Put This Idea Into Action

1. Leadership Exercise

Begin each Leadership Team training session during the next 60 days with the following fill-in-blanks exercises:

"Our school is known for the way we teach _____."

"Our methods for teaching _____ are _____."

Here's an example:

"What will my child learn here at your school?" (A parent asks).

Leadership Team member responds, "Our school is known for the way we teach courtesy and respect. Our methods start with teaching the *vocabulary* of courtesy and respect, and then we teach your child how to turn those ideas into specific actions and behaviors, such as *polite greetings* and *polite responses* and

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other good old-fashioned manners. We then create dozens of opportunities during every class to practice those behaviors. We help students to understand how to apply the same actions at home, at school and with family and friends. We also *model* courtesy and respect during every class and give constant praise for any and all progress and growth."

2. Practice with Absolute Intensity

Just as martial arts techniques are practiced with an emphasis on quality and intensity, so to are these attitudinal techniques. Your Leadership Team should approach the drills as actors reciting lines. The correct tonality and body language should be practiced with the words. These ideas and attitudes are far too important to be treated trivially, so the best training concept is to follow Vince Lombardi's dictum: "It's not practice that make you good, it's perfect practice."

3. Use a Script, in the Beginning

Write a script with the exact words you want your Leadership Team to say. It's a great tool to make sure they impart the right messages. Remember, a script is a tool, not a crutch. A script is initially useful, but it should not be a substitute for a thorough understanding and knowledge of the material. A script is not a "cheat sheet"; team members must memorize and practice the delivery of the messages. Otherwise, they're missing the point and the power of the training.

4. Practice Regularly

Regular practice is beneficial for Leadership Team members.

- First, it makes them better teachers.

- Second, they become great motivational speakers. Speak the benefits and concepts of mental martial arts training long enough and you'll become an excellent off-the-cuff speaker.
- Third, the better they know and understand the "mental" benefits of the martial arts, the more they become a part of who they are as people. Teach focus enough and you start experiencing better focus. Talk and teach goal-setting often enough and you start to master it.

Use the following statement to help Leadership Team members (and students) focus on how important it is to practice:

"When it comes to attitudinal training like we're doing today, the smarter you are, the more highly evolved and skilled you are, the more you recognize the value of these ideas. For the uninitiated or uneducated person, this kind of training might seem unimportant or even "corny." Ask any champion, however—Lance Armstrong, Michael Jordan or Tiger Woods—and each would cite attitude as one of the key components to his success. I'd wager that the *practice* of the right mental attitude would be the most important component."

Leadership Team Training Assignment

Assign each of your Leadership Team members the following project:

Ask someone to video-record you assisting or teaching a class. During the next available opportunity, view one of the sessions with your team, and have the team critique your performance (positive AND constructive).

Two Leadership Team Lesson Plan Suggestions

Training One: Physical Training

Is it possible to have a higher-quality interaction with parents as they deliver their

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children to class? Do line-ups start smooth and trouble-free? How do you manage students that are late? How can warm-ups be “refreshed?”

The plan: Ask each Leadership Team member to create the “perfect class,” but condensed to seven minutes or less. As he runs the class, using the rest of the team as students, ask him to verbalize continually how he is managing all of the peripheral activities that are occurring in and around the classroom. Ask the team members to critique each other’s performance.

Training Two: Mental Training

Pick one “mental” or “attitudinal” benefit of martial arts training and ask each of your Leadership Team members to give an impromptu 60-second talk on the subject.