



SESSION HANDOUT

AFAA's Top Teaching Techniques

Lisa J. Hamlin

AFAA Master Certification Specialist
International Fitness Presenter

SESSION HANDOUT

Presenter

Lisa J. Hamlin

Schedule

15 min: Introduction

- Responsibilities and Professional Image
- Role and Characteristics of a Fitness Leader
- Class Preparation and Instructional Practices
- Roadblocks to Being a Successful Instructor

60 min: Signs of Overtraining and How to Avoid Overtraining

- Presentation Skills & Instructor Techniques
- Exercise Selection and Evaluation
- Injury Prevention
- Designing a Well-Balanced Class
- Modifications and Progressions
- Creative Class Formatting
- The Importance of Cross Training (Cardio, Strength, Flexibility)
- Music Awareness and Cueing Techniques

15 min: Assessing Your Style

- Final Wrap-Up and Q&A

Session Objectives

- Refine or refresh your skills to provide a safe and effective class for all-level participants.
- Apply AFAA's guidelines to create a well-balanced class that includes the three major fitness components: Cardio, Strength and Flexibility training.
- Enhance your instructing skills and design, demonstrate and lead with confidence.
- Create a class that is enjoyable, so participants feel successful and look forward to coming back.
- Identify and understand group leadership responsibilities.

History & Background

Whether you are a new group exercise instructor or a seasoned instructor, AFAA's Top Teaching Techniques provides all the necessary tools for those who have made it their goal to teach a safe and effective class that is enjoyable. Creating a class that is well-balanced and caters to all-level class participants is the key to a successful class. AFAA's Basic Exercise Standards and Guidelines (BESGs) pertain to all group exercise class formats, including dance, step, cycling, aqua, kickboxing, muscle toning and mind-body. Learn and understand the importance of proper form and alignment, working the major muscles and effective class design (warm-up, conditioning phase and cool-down). Practice and utilize a variety of cueing techniques. Take each and every class participant to their next level in fitness. Open your mind to creativity to create a class that is memorable!

The AFAA 5 Questions™

1. What is the purpose of this exercise?
2. Are you doing that effectively?
3. Does the exercise create any safety concerns?
4. Can you maintain proper alignment and form for the duration of the exercise?
5. For whom is the exercise appropriate or inappropriate?

AFAA FITT-at-a-Glance

The format and design of a group exercise class should reflect sound application of principles of training so that fitness gains are fostered while injury risks are kept at a minimum. AFAA supports the guidelines set forth by the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) for maximum health and fitness benefits with regard to training recommendations.

Cardiorespiratory Fitness	Muscular Strength and Endurance	Flexibility
<p>Frequency: 3-5 days per week</p> <p>Intensity: HR max 64% - 94%</p> <p>Time: 20-60 minutes of continuous or intermittent aerobic activity.</p> <p>Type: Any activity that is continuous, rhythmic and utilizes the large muscle groups (dancing, step, kickboxing, jogging, swimming)</p>	<p>Frequency: Minimum of 2-3 non-consecutive days per week for each major muscle group</p> <p>Intensity: To the point of fatigue while maintaining proper form, typically 8-25 repetitions and 1-4 sets</p> <p>Time: 20-60 minutes</p> <p>Type: Any activity that creates overload to the muscles</p>	<p>Frequency: Minimum of 2-3 days (ideally 5-7 days) per week for each major muscle</p> <p>Intensity: To the end of range of motion (point of tightness, without discomfort)</p> <p>Time: 15-60 seconds (per each static stretch). 5-10 min. segment in a class or a full 60-min. stretch class</p> <p>Type: Any activity that focuses on elongating muscles and moves joints safely through a full range of motion</p>

Cardiorespiratory Training

Methods	Impact/Intensity Options	Arm Range Options
Continuous or Steady- State	LIA (low-impact aerobics)	Low-range
Interval Training	MIA (moderate- or mid-impact aerobics)	Mid-range
Intermittent Training	HIA (high-impact aerobics)	High-range
Circuit Training		

Muscular Strength and Endurance Training

Upper	Core	Lower
Arms – Biceps & Triceps	Abdominal – Rectus Abdominis & External / Internal obliques	Hip Flexors – Iliopsoas
Shoulders – Deltoids & Rotator Cuff	Back – Erector Spinae	Front of Legs – Quadriceps Tibialis Anterior
Chest - Pectorals		Back of Legs – Hamstrings Gastrocnemius Soleus
Back – Trapezius, Rhomboids, Latissimus Dorsi		Hips – Abductors (Gluteus Medius Tensor Fasciae Latae) Adductors
		Buttocks – Gluteus Maximus

Flexibility Training

Methods	Muscles	Special Considerations
<p>Static Stretches held 15-60 seconds per stretch</p> <p>Dynamic Stretching (movement through a full range of motion)</p> <p>PNF stretches involve an active contraction of the muscle prior to the stretch (often referred to the contract/release method)</p>	<p>Stretch all major muscles</p> <p>Muscles that tend to be tight:</p> <p>Pectorals Anterior Deltoids Upper Trapezius Erector Spinae Gastrocnemius</p>	<p>Intensity</p> <p>Speed and Control</p> <p>Range of Motion</p> <p>Body Temperature</p> <p>Heart Rate Monitoring</p>

Assessing Your Style

Although there are four different teaching styles, some instructors may be 100% one style, while others may be a combination of two or more styles. The key to successful instructing is to know your style, be comfortable with your style, and grow with your style. Teach how you teach best, and class participants will find it easy to respond to your unique style.

- Pragmatic – Motivates through strong, practical, thoughtful, organized classes and choreography.
- Amiable – Motivates using careful, kind, non-threatening, thoughtful approach.
- Expressive – Motivates through liveliness, vivacity, and personal interaction.
- Improviso – Motivates through natural charisma, uniqueness, and expertise.

References

Aerobics and Fitness Association of America, *Fitness: Theory Practice* (The Comprehensive Resource for Group fitness Instruction), 5th edition. (Laura A. Gladwin, MS, editor): 2010.

Accredited by Vital Research for its certification exams, the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America (AFAA) is additionally accredited by the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), for all courses offered in AFAA's Distance Education Center (DEC). The DETC is listed as a nationally recognized accrediting agency by the U.S. Department of Education, and is a recognized member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).