

Instructing skills

Planning and instructing a group training session to music

Skills and qualities of a group training to music instructor

Approachable and friendly.

Effective communication and instruction skills.

Good posture and technique.

Professional appearance.

Sound knowledge.

Safe and Effective Session Structure

- As a group exercise to music instructor you must ensure that the session is safe and effective, therefore you must consider the following;



Pre-class set-up

- Head mic check.
- Music system and sound check.
- Equipment requirements.
- Range of equipment, including different weights.
- Space available.
- Spillages.
- Lighting.
- Air conditioning.
- Fire exits clear.
- Ceiling height.



Pre-class screening

- The purpose of pre-class screening is to check readiness to exercise and for the group trainer to understand if there are any contra-indications.
- The best time to carry out pre-class screening is at the entrance to the group training area, prior to the class beginning
- This should be done individually prior to the start of the class and again at the start of the class, addressing the whole group
- For example:
- *Are there any injuries, contra-indications, conditions or pregnancies that I should be aware of, or is there anything else that I should be aware of before we start? Please raise your hand and I will come to you.'*

Pre-class screening top tips

- Be aware of your body language and facial expressions when greeting the customers.
- Make them feel welcome and at ease to approach you if they have something they need to inform you about
- Once the verbal pre-class screening question has been asked, it is important to have an answer that doesn't appear to dismiss the injury or condition and that some guidance is given.
- Show empathy
- Ensure the pre-screening and information-gathering at the start of the class lasts no longer than two to three minutes.
- Communicate clearly and directly with customers if they need to inform you of something, and avoid long conversations that take up too much time.

Class Introduction

- The session may be full of regular participants and there is a likelihood that there will be a small number of newcomers.
- It is imperative that the first minute of the session begins with a quick informative overview of the class so that participants can visualise the session structure and flow.

What do you think you should include in the session introduction?

Class introduction example

'Welcome to this 45-minute dance cardio class. I am [say your name] and I'll be your trainer today. I have asked each of you about injuries or other conditions, so I am aware of those that may require some further support today.

Could I check if there is anything else I should be aware of from people who have just arrived? [If someone raises their hand, switch the mic off and go and talk to them where they are standing.]

Is there anyone new to this class? [Welcome newcomers if you haven't already met them.

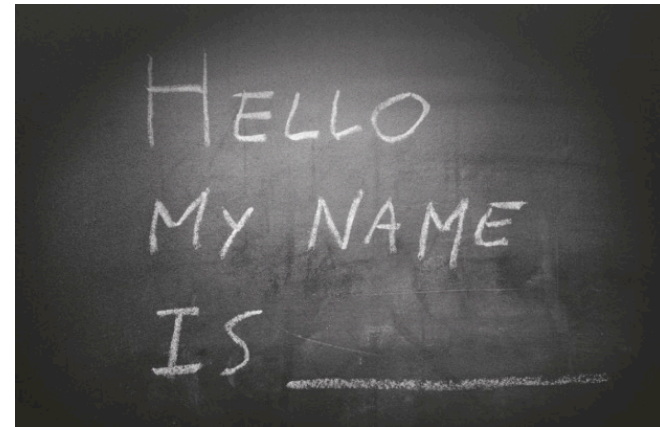
First, we'll complete a warm up for about five minutes, Next we'll build up to a dance cardio routine starting off with basic steps and building up to a finale routine!

After this we'll cool down gradually and then stretch.

Any questions? [Pause and observe group.]

Are you ready to begin? [Ensure you get a response from the group.]

Let's do this!'



Coaching method – ICM

I

- Instruct

C

- Communicate

M

- Motivate

Communication skills

Verbal communication

- Instructions and explanations.
- Motivational language.
- Voice tone and projection.
- Teaching points.



Visual communication

- Body language and facial expressions.
- Demonstrations and technique.
- Posture and alignment.



Active iQ

Communication

In a group training session it is important that the instructions given are:

- Clear.
- Concise.
- Consistent.
- Cued.



Consider how your communication will meet the 4 Cs.

Motivating clients

Consider ways in which you can provide motivation throughout group training to music session

- Positive and constructive language.
- Accentuate the positive.
- Reinforce good technique.
- Use encouraging phrases:
 - To improve technique.
 - To push through difficult exercises.

Examples include:

- 'Good job.'
- 'Two more and you can all do it.'
- 'Keep your form.'
- 'You're nearly there.'

Positioning

- Unlike one-to-one training, where the attention is on one person, a group training instructor must be aware of everyone in the class.
- Positioning must change throughout the session in order to see everyone at different points in the class, while not impeding any movement.
- The technique of those at the back, as well as those at the front, sides and middle, must be considered.
- If the exercise moves around the room you must ensure you are positioned out of the customers' path and in a position where you can interact with the majority.





TOP TIPS

Positioning top tips

- Choose safe spots to stand in to be aware of the whole class.
- Move position to get a different perspective and interact with others.
- While moving, don't impede participants' movement.
- When coaching, be on a level with participants (e.g. come down to their level while correcting/praising a plank).

Mirroring

- When facing the class you are their mirror.
- For the majority of the class, it is best to face the participants.
- This means that when you instruct the class to move to their right, you move to your left which is also known as the 'instructor right'.
- On occasions the class participants may find it useful for the instructor to turn and face the same way as them.
- This takes practice as when you turn, your right foot becomes the actual right as opposed to the 'instructor right'.
- From facing the class and mirroring, to turning to face the same direction as the class participants is called 'right footing'.

Cueing

- Cueing means communicating when to start, stop or change an exercise or movement pattern. It should always take place just before the exercise starts, stops or changes.
- There are two main ways to cue:

Verbal	Visual
These are instructions, and they should be clear, concise and consistent.	These are gestures, hand signals and the use of body language to communicate with class participants.

Cueing top tips

- The key to effective cueing is timing.
- The best time to cue is just before you want the class participants to start, stop or change the exercise. This gives them a little warning to be able to prepare themselves.
- If your cues are given too early, some people may start the exercise too early, which disrupts the flow of the class and makes the training protocol less effective for them.
- If your cues are too late, the class participants may feel rushed to start and perform the first few exercises badly, as they were not mentally prepared to start properly
- For example:

When cueing a new move to start at the beginning of a new phrase e.g. side mambo, say the name of the move on counts 5, 6, 7 (or 8) of the previous phrase so that the whole class starts the side mambo on count 1 of the new phrase.

Scripting

- Scripting is part of the planning process of the class.
- It means writing out the section introductions, key instructions, and motivational methods you plan to use in the class.
- During peak sections of the class, when the energy and mood are high, it can be easy to get carried away with this energy and forget about your script. If this happens, it can lead to using the same phrases repeatedly, such as 'Come on', 'Let's go' and 'Yeah! Woohoo!', which can be annoying for some class participants
- Aim to strike a balance between being yourself and allowing your own personality to come across and what you plan to say, which will give participants a great experience and encourage them to return to your class.

Key instruction points

- Be positive.
- Concentrate on what needs to be done, rather than what needs to be avoided.
- Use simple terminology – avoid jargon.
- Use precise instructions.
- User-friendly language.
- Be easy to understand.
- Clear and audible voice.
- Interesting tone.

