

Teaching

Teaching is a series of inter-related observations and instructions which aim to assist the learner to improve their golf swing. The instructional sequence described in this workbook is designed to provide a meaningful structure and flow to the process as well assisting the teacher to understand the important components of effective teaching.

Experience

Experience can help the teacher select the correction which will have the most significant effect on the swing.

A change may not seem directly related to a specific error. This is particularly true when the correction is made at the beginning of the swing. For example, a change in the line of the swing could also change and improve the angle of the club face or a change in the angle of attack will change the line of the swing. A single change will have a chain reaction on what follows. This means a change early in the swing can bring about many effects.

Learning Principles

1. Always provide the student with information about something they have done correctly. (Positive feedback).
2. Start by selecting the ball flight law to work on.
3. One correction is suggested.
4. Demonstrate the correction so the learner can see it in action.

Allow the student to hit several balls when trying the correction.

Teaching and Learning

Many topics which are necessary for the teacher to understand are often of no direct concern to the learner. However, they form part of the information which will be used to explain specific instructions and practice drills.

To become an effective teacher involves a wider range of different areas of study and skills than it takes to play golf. Coaching involves teaching as well as assisting the learner/athlete be successful in competitive situations.

Teaching is a set of behaviours designed to bring about learning on the part of the student.

Learning is a reasonably permanent change in behaviour. The main factors which impact on learning are:

1. Feedback
2. Sufficient Successful Practice
3. Optimal on-task activity
4. Instruction

The art of teaching lies in the combination of these factors along with the ability of the teacher to personalise the instruction to meet the individual needs and preferences of each student. For example, it may be necessary for the teacher to give the same instruction in several different ways. The learner, for several reasons, will not understand the first version; they may not have been listening intently enough or they may think the instruction

irrelevant. Sometimes, too, an instruction which has been successful with many students just does not work for others.

Experienced teachers can often make one suggestion and the student will immediately show significant improvement. The student looks at the teacher and ask show did that work. Wow! This is the art of teaching in action and is a culmination of playing and teaching experience.

Learning to teach also necessitates understanding of how the laws of the universe work and in turn how these laws can be of assistance to a golfer.

For example, an often-heard instruction is to keep your head still and watch the ball. Competent golfers know this is not strictly correct because the head moves throughout the swing and the club head is moving so quickly through the impact zone that watching the ball is virtually impossible. The head position at address and then at impact are important and most often virtually coincide.

Learners

It would be helpful for teachers to understand the frustrations and limitations of the 'average' golfer who holds on to two basic hopes. For some these hopes are dreams which can very quickly turn into nightmares without effective instruction and feedback.

Every time the average golfer addresses the ball they want:

Firstly, to hit the ball with optimal force (except touch shots from 100m in).

Secondly, the ball to go in the planned direction.

Ups and downs of learning

Do not be lulled into a false sense of security. All students will not be successful all of the time. When we graph several attempts at a skill the results form a curve with ups, plateaus, and downs. The downs, known as regressions, often occur immediately after an instruction or correction. The student may not be able to put into practice your instructions—which you think are simple but they have to process while simultaneously swing the club. Some may not believe your instruction will solve the problem. Often the learner does not believe they are actually doing what you describe. This later case is an example of the powerful role of video. A decline in their ability to swing also happens because the student has to shift their mind to the thinking stage of learning. They have to think about what they are doing, relate it to what they have done in the past, try to include the correction, and hope the result will be an improvement. All this has to happen in contrast to when they were in automatic mode.

When faced with a regression the teacher can select from the following strategies.

1. Reassure the student of their progress.
2. Take the student back in the swing to something basic and simple. An action at which they will be successful. For example, a practice drill.
3. The student executes the drill several times. Gradually add to the action until the student swings at the point at which the error occurred. As the correction is inserted the student can make progress then you can proceed.
4. At each stage the student is unsuccessful take them back to the last stage at which they are successful. Build forward from that point.

This process is based on the principle of building on success. Sometimes it may seem the student takes *three steps forward, and two steps back*. Often this is the nature of teaching and learning.

Golf is a simple game but for the majority of those who play it is not easy. A teacher who understands and implements the principles and ideas described in this workbook will do much to help the average golfer enjoy more success and fewer nightmares.

Video Recording

The ubiquitous smart phones, portable video cameras, and tablets present a technical temptation to every teacher and student. However, golf is played on the course not on an electronic device. The use of recording and then analysing the golf swing needs to be judicious and well considered. Video can play an important role in assisting the learner to change and improve their swing. They can also gain a visual understanding of the swing components and factors which impact on the outcome.

Video images of a student's swing can serve important purposes within the programme. They can ...

1. Provide visual moving evidence of what the learner is actually doing.
2. Show their swing after a correction has been adapted.
3. Be a record of progress.

The skill of the teacher will be the manner in which they can analyse the video and then suggest the most effective correction(s).

The learner must develop the ability to understand the cues and feelings associated with a successful set up and swing because it is not possible to take the video onto the course.

How can video be incorporated in a lesson? At the beginning the teacher can begin recording after the learner has attained some consistency—often after less than ten hits. The next step, after providing some positive feedback, will be to analyse the swing and suggest one correction. The next recording can be made when the learner has demonstrated some improvement. The teacher can send the electronic video to the student who can replay and examine it at their leisure.

Warning; the student comes to the lesson to hit balls and receive feedback from the teacher. Two, maximum three, views of the video swing plus a brief conversation would suffice. With all the additional tools available it may be tempting to spend time to discover, analyse, freeze frame, draw lines and circles and discuss. While for some learners this may be of assistance, the majority will gain more benefit from hitting balls. Video should be used as a learning tool, a means to an end, and not take up large portions of a lesson.

Suggested 30-minute lesson plan which includes use of video.

1. Short revision of last lesson and review of homework.
2. Student hits a few balls, 5 – 10, to gain consistency and warm up.
3. Teacher records 1 or 2 swings.
4. Teacher and student look at video, discuss, and agree on correction (2 – 3 minutes).
5. Enter the teaching/learning segment.
6. Revise the lesson, set homework.
7. Video emailed to student.

Video can be an indispensable tool for the teacher and student but it must be used in moderation. Less is better because the student must spend as much time as possible hitting balls.

Cues and Checkpoints

The use of clues is an effective means of ensuring the golfer adopts the correct posture before executing a swing. After experience they will also be able to monitor the cues during the swing. Although this procedure is a valuable aid for learners it is also helpful for competent players. All playing professionals have their personalised version of checking their posture before each shot.

Cues and checkpoints serve a vital role during the pre-shot routine.

The cues/checkpoints can be applied to the following:

1. Alignment

- a. Stand behind ball and pick a spot, leaf or twig, on line 1 metre ahead of ball.
- b. Set clubface and shaft square, at right angles, to target line.
- c. Align body parallel to target line.

2. Ball position

- a. Ball placed between centre of stance and front heel.

3. Posture

- a. Bend from hips; head and trunk straight.
- b. Bottom (seat) slightly out; shoulders over toes.
- c. Left foot turned out 30°; right foot straight.
- d. Knees flexed and pushed slightly towards target.
- e. Weight even on balls of feet.

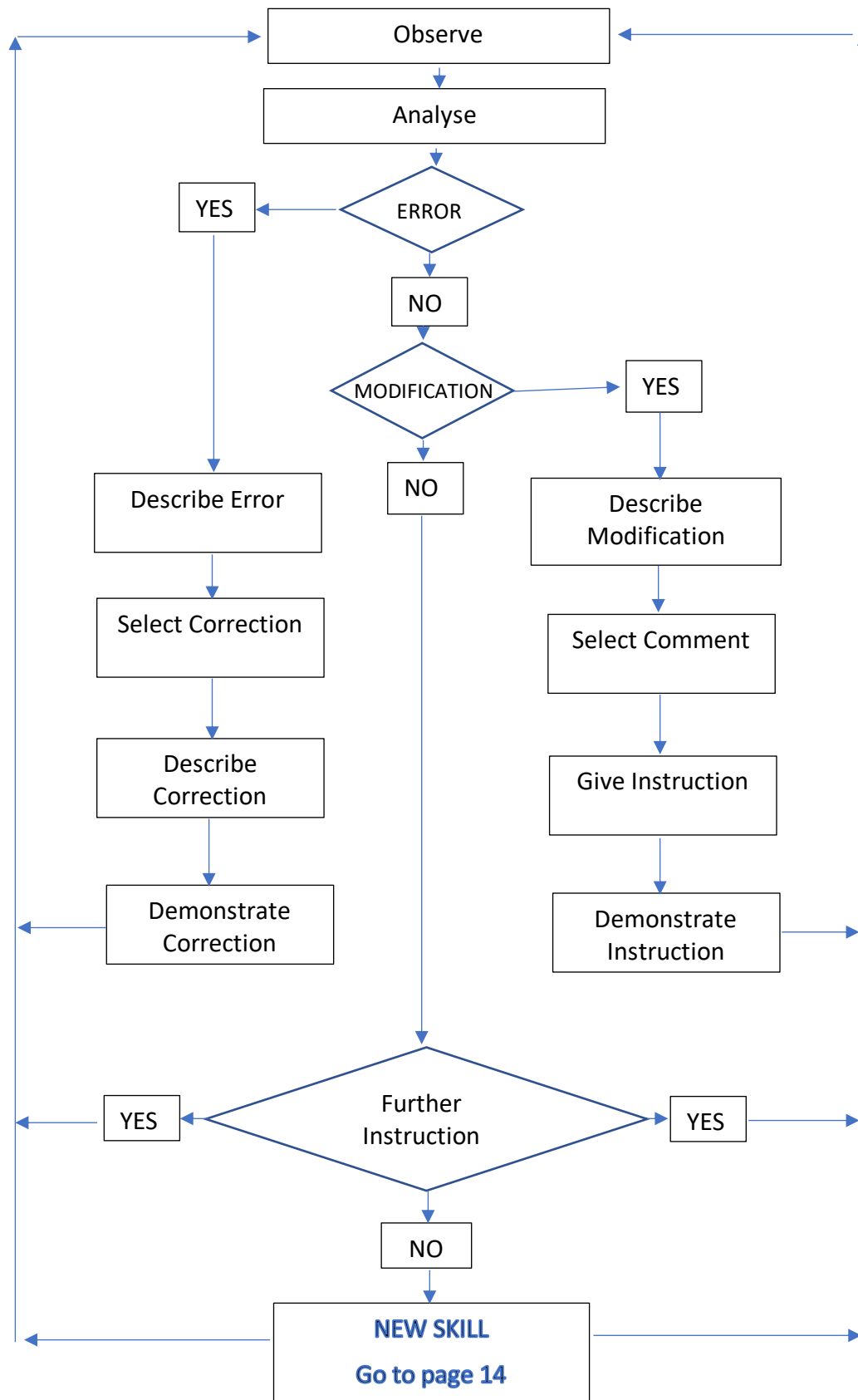
4. Grip

- a. Bend in left wrist; line between thumb and index finger points to right of chin.
- b. Left thumb position is right of centre.
- c. Right hand—grip in base of fingers; trigger finger is separated.
- d. Light pressure in grip.

How will the golfer know when they are in the correct position? The knowledge is achieved by comparing the relative position at selected landmarks—body parts and equipment. At set up, when looking down the golfer will describe what they see. The teacher can ask the student to describe the cues, checkpoints, they see at set up.

Instruction Flow Chart

The flow chart on the next page is an illustration of the instruction process. Two options are illustrated. The first, is the correction of an error and the second when the student requires a modification to their swing.



Checklist

Student:

Ball Flight:

OK
✓

Comments

Date

Initials

☐

Set up

.....

☐

Alignment

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☐

Grip

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☐

Takeaway

.....

☐

Downswing

.....

☐

Impact

.....

☐

Follow

.....

☐

through

.....

☐

Finishing

.....

☐

position

.....

☐

Tempo

.....

Teacher/Coach:

Lesson Summary and Homework

Student:

Lesson: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Main points covered during lesson:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Homework including drills:

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.....
.....
.....

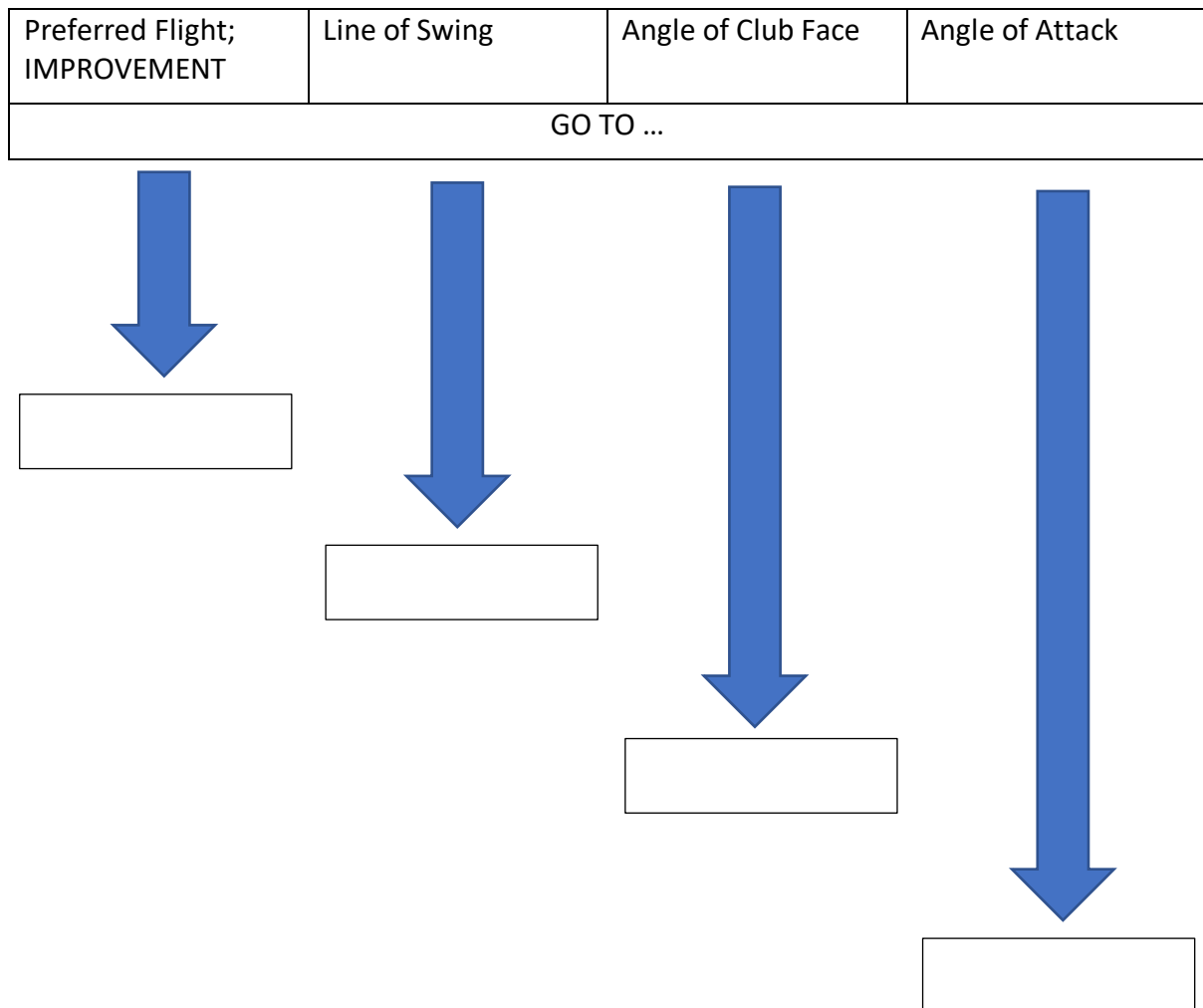
Teacher/Coach

Date:

The Teaching Process

1. Analyse shots, ball flight, trajectory, direction. Discuss what is going on. Provide positive feedback.
2. Decide on the cause which produces the effect.
 - Line of Swing
 - Angle of Club Face
 - Angle of Attack

Proceed to the appropriate page



Ball travels with preferred flight. IMPROVEMENT

Student practises the swing incorporating the changes learned during the lesson. The teaching professional reminds the student of the main points of the swing.

Describe the swing:

.....

.....

Provide Positive Feedback:

.....

You can at this point ask one or more of the following questions,

Would you like to hit ... or Have you thought about hitting the ball ...?

- a. With a higher trajectory?
- b. Lower?
- c. Further?
- d. With a controlled fade or draw?
- e. Do you want help with your short game?
 - 1. Putting
 - 2. Chipping
 - 3. Bunker
 - 4. Pitching

To adjust line of the swing

Establish correct set up and grip

Student hits balls (5-10)

Observe. What effect is there on the line of the swing?

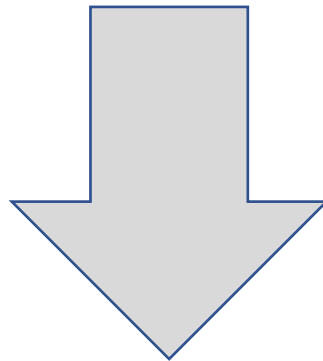
Describe:

.....

.....

Provide Positive Feedback:

.....



A. Preferred flight	IMPROVEMENT	
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B. Not preferred flight		
a.	Go to	Repeat adjust line of swing: this page.
b.	Go to	Go to adjust angle of club face.

To adjust Angle of Club Face

Establish correct set up and grip

Student hits balls (5-10)

Observe. What effect is there on the angle of club face?

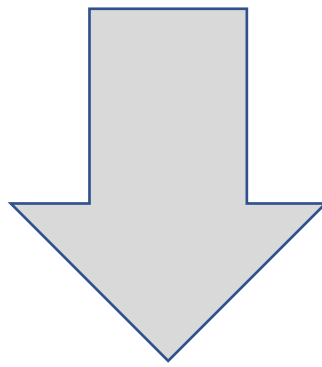
Describe:

.....

.....

Provide Positive Feedback:

.....



A. Preferred flight	IMPROVMENT	
---------------------	------------	--

B. Not preferred flight		
a.	Go to	Repeat adjust angle of club face. This page.
b.	Go to	Go to angle of attack.

To adjust Angle of Attack

Establish correct set up and grip

Student hits balls (5-10)

What effect is there on the Angle of Attack?

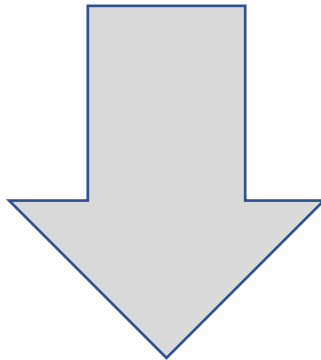
Describe:

.....

.....

Provide Positive Feedback:

.....



A. Preferred flight	IMPROVEMENT	
---------------------	-------------	--

OR

B. Not preferred flight		
a.	Go to	Repeat adjust angle of attack. This page.
b.	Go to	Line of swing.
c.	Go to	Angle of club face.